

THE NEW  
BIBLE TEACHER



ILLUSTRATED



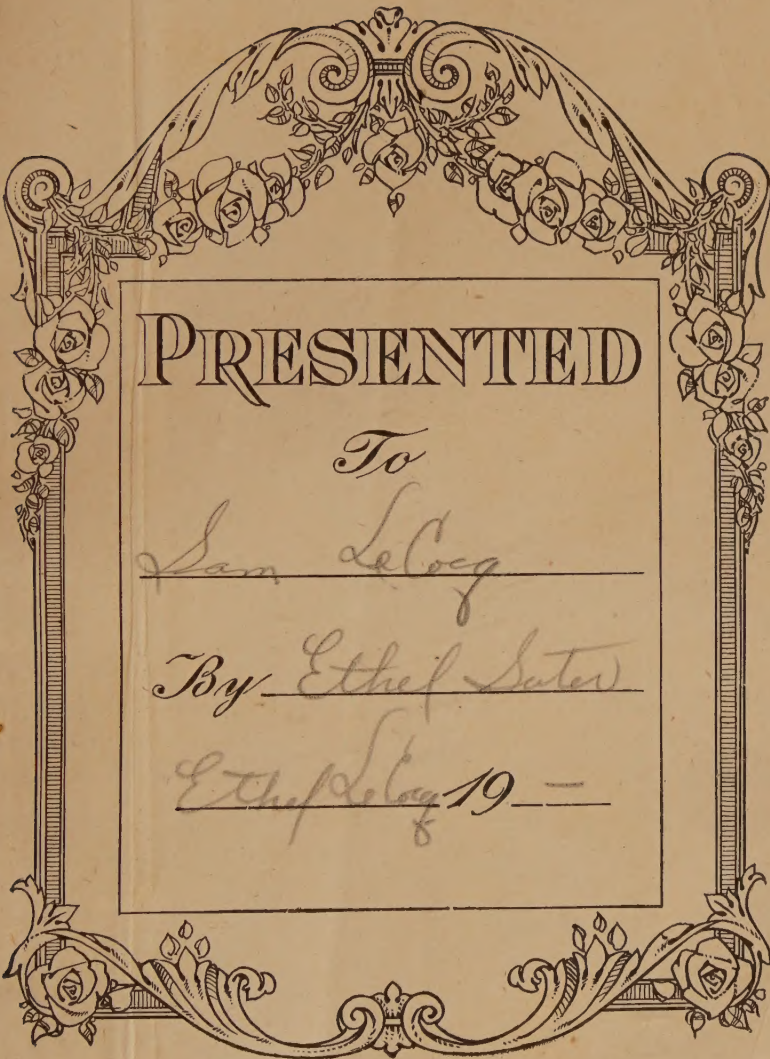












PRESENTED

To

Sam LeCoy

By Ethel Suter

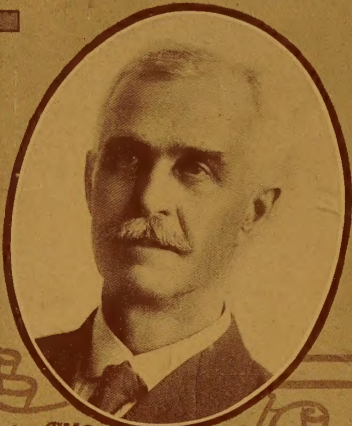
Ethel LeCoy 19\_\_



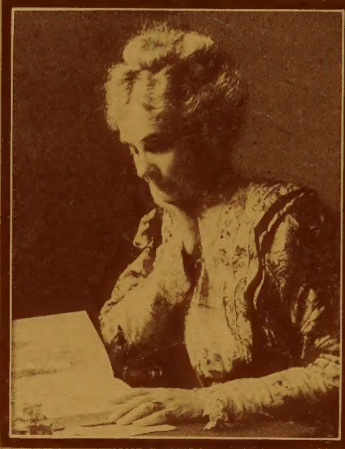




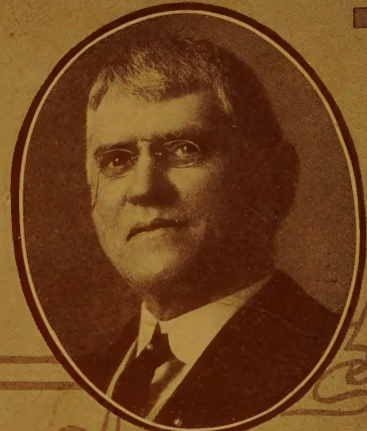




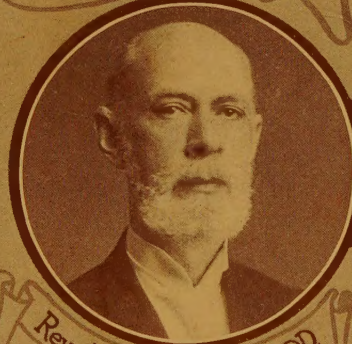
Rev. CHAS. FREDERICK GOSS,  
D.D.



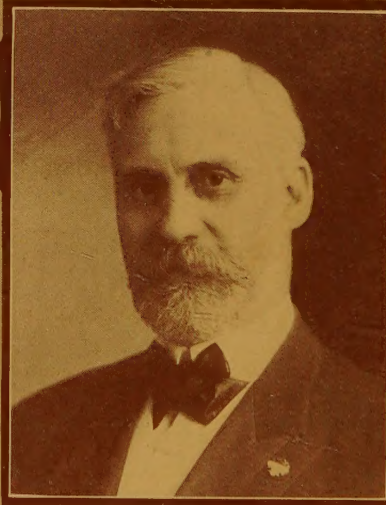
MARGARET WINTRINGER



Rev. H.M. HAMILL, D.D.



Rev. A.F. SCHAFFLER, D.D.



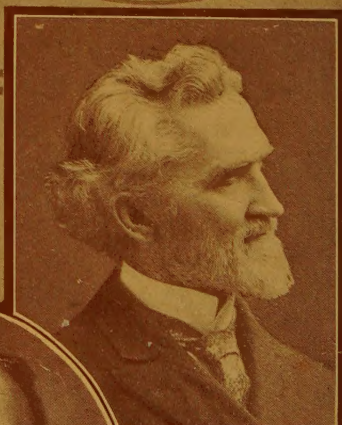
MARION LAWBRANCE



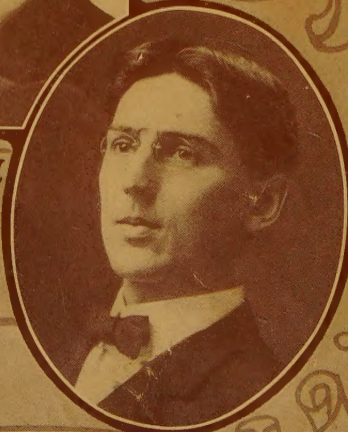
Rev. JUSTIN N. GREEN, B.A.



Dean W.J. LHAMON,  
D.D.



Rev. J.M. COON,  
A.M. - B.D. - LL.D.



Rev. THOMAS BURROUGHS ROBERTS,  
D.D.



Rev. CHARLES M. STUART,  
D.D.









A BIBLE STUDY COURSE FOR THE HOME

# THE NEW BIBLE TEACHER

THE SCRIPTURES SELECTED  
BY THE  
INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMITTEE,  
THE  
WORLD'S GREATEST BIBLE STUDENTS,  
AND  
USED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AS SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS  
FOR FIFTY YEARS

---

ILLUSTRATED AND EXPOUNDED

---

INTRODUCTION BY MARION LAWRENCE

---

## ARTISTS

MAX BIHN      JAMES BEALINGS

## WRITERS

|                                    |                               |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| REV. A. F. SCHAUFFLER, D.D.        | REV. H. M. HAMILL, D.D.       |
| REV. J. M. COON, A.M., B.D., LL.B. | REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN, B.A.    |
| REV. CHAS. FREDERICK GOSS, D.D.    | REV. CALVIN DILL WILSON, D.D. |
| DEAN W. J. LHAMON, D.D.            | REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS, A. M.  |
| MARGARET WINTRINGER                | LAURA ELLA CRAGIN             |
| REV. CHARLES M. STUART, D.D.       |                               |

---

INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTIVE SUNDAY SCHOOL LEAGUE  
CHICAGO



COPYRIGHT, 1912, BY  
THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

---

COPYRIGHT, 1915, BY  
THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

---

COPYRIGHT, 1922, BY  
THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

---

ENTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL,  
LONDON, ENGLAND.

MADE IN U. S. A.

## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE great library of Divine Truth which we know as The Bible, is primarily a home book. It begins with the establishment of a home on earth, and ends with the great home gathering of the redeemed about the throne of the Heavenly Father. Throughout the Bible the sacredness of the home is emphasized. Properly-trained children are necessary to the establishment and maintenance of Christian homes, and Christian homes are necessary to a Christian nation. Every nation that has rested upon any other foundation than the unchangeable truths of God has learned to its sorrow that it had built "wood, hay and stubble," and has passed away. The home is the fountainhead of all the streams that flow into the great sea of society and national life. The Bible and its teachings constitute the center of every Christian life and of every Christian home. Therefore, whatever will make plainer and more attractive to the family, and especially to the children in the homes, the wonderful truths of God's Word, is to be welcomed as we welcome a friend. On this account, I am glad to write this introductory note.

This book will be attractive to children, and also to those who teach them, as all books are that teach by pictures. We learn more through the eye than through any other organ of sense, and it is a pleasing way to learn. Furthermore, what is learned through the eye is usually longest retained. To many a mother this book will come as a boon to help her solve the double problem of how to instruct her children in the Word of God, and at the same time profitably to use innumerable Sunday afternoons and long twilight hours. After a few lessons from its attractive pages there will be no difficulty in inducing the children to gather about her knee, as she opens the book to them and guides them in their reading of the picture pages. It is not difficult to imagine that before the book has been long in the home, the children will gladly spend much time reading the pictures by themselves, the older brothers and sisters guiding the younger ones.

The many full-page illustrations which are, for the most part, reproductions from the famous masters—these striking, full-page engravings being printed in sepia—add largely to the elegance and beauty of the work, and give it a stamp of refinement not otherwise to be acquired.

But this is far more than a picture book. There is scarcely a subject in the Bible which has been studied in the Sunday Schools of our country during the last fifty years but what is treated here by experts in a way that makes the book a perpetual lesson help, available for all lessons and furnishing good teach-



## INTRODUCTION.

ing material for all departments. The treatment of the Bible lessons is quite full and suggestive, though very simple. On this account Sunday School teachers will prize the help it presents. To many a lesson, fully prepared from other sources, a few moments spent with this book will add just the attractive feature that often makes the difference between success and failure in teaching.

Probably, however, this book will be longest remembered by both old and young because it was the magnet which drew the entire family together, day by day, with the common purpose of looking up into the Heavenly Father's face and reading together some of His wonderful words of Life. As a devotional book in the midst of the family circle at the eventide, or in the morning, it will be found of great service. The short prayer and hymn in connection with each Scripture lesson are well adapted to this purpose, and will no doubt often form a part of the regular family worship. And we doubt not in many homes where no prayers are now offered, the reading of these prayers will open the way for something further and be the means of establishing the family altar.

This is not a book for the library shelf, but for the center of the table in the living-room, and there we predict it oftenest will be found; for when its merits are recognized it will be frequently used by every member of the family. We are sure it will find its way into many thousands of homes in America, and that its proper use will leave only blessings behind.

MARION LAWRENCE.

BOOK ONE

**THE BIBLE**  
**OLD TESTAMENT**





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## OLD TESTAMENT

|                                           | PAGE  |
|-------------------------------------------|-------|
| Specially Designed Page, "The Bible"..... | 3     |
| The Bible .....                           | 4     |
| The Bible an Inspired Book.....           | 6     |
| How We Got Our English Bible.....         | 8     |
| Divisions of the Bible.....               | 10    |
| Books of the Old Testament.....           | 11    |
| The Judges of Israel.....                 | 15    |
| The Six Periods.....                      | 16    |
| Robert Raikes and the Sunday School.....  | 18    |
| Charts from Adam to Christ.....           | 20-24 |

## FIRST DIVISION—THE PENTATEUCH—25-161

|                                                         |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Doré's "Creation of Light" described.....               | 28    |
| The Creation .....Gen. 1:1-31 .....                     | 28-29 |
| Eden .....Gen. 2:1-25 .....                             | 30-32 |
| The Fall .....Gen. 3:1-19 .....                         | 33-35 |
| Cain and Abel.....Gen. 3:1-6 .....                      | 36-38 |
| Noah and the Ark.....Gen. 6:9-22 .....                  | 39-41 |
| Noah Saved in the Ark .....Gen. 8:1-22 .....            | 42-44 |
| Confusion of Tongues.....Gen. 11:1-13 .....             | 45-47 |
| The Call of Abram.....Gen. 11:31-12:10 .....            | 48-50 |
| Abram and Lot .....Gen. 13:1-8, 11, 12.....             | 51-53 |
| The Covenant with Abram.....Gen. 15:1-18 .....          | 54-56 |
| Abraham Pleading for Sodom.....Gen. 18:16-33 .....      | 57-59 |
| Lot's Escape from Sodom.....Gen. 19:12-28 .....         | 60-62 |
| The Trial of Abraham's Faith.....Gen. 22:1-14 .....     | 63-65 |
| Isaac's Prosperity .....Gen. 26:12-25 .....             | 66-68 |
| Jacob and Esau.....Gen. 27:15-20, 22-40 .....           | 69-71 |
| Jacob at Bethel.....Gen. 28:1-22 .....                  | 72-74 |
| Doré's "The Prayer of Jacob" described .....            | 74    |
| Jacob's New Name.....Gen. 32:1-30 .....                 | 75-77 |
| Joseph Sold into Egypt.....Gen. 37:1-36 .....           | 78-80 |
| Schopin's "Joseph Sold by His Brethren" described ..... | 79    |
| Joseph in Prison.....Gen. 39:1; 40:1-4, 20-23.....      | 81-83 |
| Joseph Exalted .....Gen. 41:37-57 .....                 | 84-86 |
| Joseph and His Brethren .....Gen. 45:1-15 .....         | 87-89 |
| Jacob and Pharaoh.....Gen. 47:1-12 .....                | 90-92 |
| Last Days of Jacob .....Gen. 48:8-22, and 49:1-27 ....  | 93-95 |
| The Last Days of Joseph.....Gen. 50:14-26 .....         | 96-98 |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                                                                  | PAGE                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Israel in Egypt . . . . .                                        | Exodus 1:1-14 . . . . . 99-101        |
| The Childhood of Moses . . . . .                                 | Exodus 2:1-15 . . . . . 102-104       |
| The Call of Moses . . . . .                                      | Exodus 3 . . . . . 105-107            |
| Moses and Aaron . . . . .                                        | Exodus 4:1-9, 27-31 . . . . . 108-110 |
| Moses and the Magicians . . . . .                                | Exodus 7:8-22 . . . . . 111-113       |
| The Passover . . . . .                                           | Exodus 12 . . . . . 114-116           |
| The Red Sea . . . . .                                            | Exodus 14:13-31 . . . . . 117-119     |
| Martin's "The Destruction of Pharaoh's Host" described . . . . . | 117                                   |
| Quails and Manna Sent . . . . .                                  | Exodus 16:1-35 . . . . . 120-122      |
| The Ten Commandments . . . . .                                   | Exodus 20:1-26 . . . . . 123-125      |
| The Golden Calf . . . . .                                        | Exodus 32:1-35 . . . . . 126-128      |
| Free Giving . . . . .                                            | Exodus 35:20-35 . . . . . 129-131     |
| The Tabernacle Set Up . . . . .                                  | Exodus 40:1-30 . . . . . 132-134      |
| The Burnt Offering . . . . .                                     | Leviticus 1:1-14 . . . . . 135-137    |
| The Feast of Tabernacles . . . . .                               | Leviticus 23:33-44 . . . . . 138-140  |
| The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire . . . . .                        | Numbers 9:15-23 . . . . . 141-143     |
| The Report of the Spies . . . . .                                | Numbers 13:17-33 . . . . . 144-146    |
| Israel's Unbelief . . . . .                                      | Numbers 14:1-25 . . . . . 147-149     |
| The Smitten Rock . . . . .                                       | Numbers 20:1-13 . . . . . 150-152     |
| The Brazen Serpent . . . . .                                     | Numbers 21:1-9 . . . . . 153-155      |
| Moses Pleading with Israel . . . . .                             | Deut. 6:1-25 . . . . . 156-158        |
| The Death of Moses . . . . .                                     | Deut. 31:1-12 . . . . . 159-161       |

## SECOND DIVISION—THE HISTORICAL BOOKS—162-413

|                                                 |                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Joshua Encouraged . . . . .                     | Joshua 1:1-9 . . . . . 164-166    |
| Crossing the Jordan . . . . .                   | Joshua 3:9-17 . . . . . 167-169   |
| The Stones of Memorial . . . . .                | Joshua 4:4-24 . . . . . 170-172   |
| The Fall of Jericho . . . . .                   | Joshua 6:1-20 . . . . . 173-175   |
| Achan's Sin . . . . .                           | Joshua 7:1-26 . . . . . 176-178   |
| Caleb's Inheritance . . . . .                   | Joshua 14:5-15 . . . . . 179-181  |
| The Cities of Refuge . . . . .                  | Joshua 20:1-9 . . . . . 182-184   |
| Joshua Renewing the Covenant . . . . .          | Joshua 24:14-29 . . . . . 185-187 |
| The Time of the Judges . . . . .                | Judges 2:1-23 . . . . . 188-190   |
| Deborah and Barok Deliver Israel . . . . .      | Judges 4:4-16 . . . . . 190-192   |
| Gideon's Army . . . . .                         | Judges 7:1-23 . . . . . 193-195   |
| The Death of Samson . . . . .                   | Judges 16:21-31 . . . . . 196-198 |
| Ruth and Naomi . . . . .                        | Ruth 1:14-22 . . . . . 199-201    |
| Calderon's "Ruth and Naomi" described . . . . . | 202                               |
| A Praying Mother . . . . .                      | 1 Sam. 1 . . . . . 202-204        |
| The Boy Samuel . . . . .                        | 1 Sam. 3:1-29 . . . . . 205-207   |
| The Death of Eli . . . . .                      | 1 Sam. 4:1-18 . . . . . 208-210   |
| Samuel the Judge . . . . .                      | 1 Sam. 7:1-17 . . . . . 211-213   |
| Israel Asking a King . . . . .                  | 1 Sam. 8:1-22 . . . . . 214-216   |



# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                                                                          | PAGE                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Saul Chosen King.....1                                                   | Sam. 10:17-27.....217-219        |
| Samuel's Farewell Address.....1                                          | Sam. 12:1-25.....220-222         |
| Jonathan and his Armour Bearer...1                                       | Sam. 14:1-13.....223-224         |
| Saul Rejected as King.....1                                              | Sam. 15:1-31.....225-227         |
| David Anointed King.....1                                                | Sam. 16:1-13.....228-230         |
| David and Goliath.....1                                                  | Sam. 17:32-51.....231-233        |
| David's Enemy Saul.....1                                                 | Sam. 18:1-16.....234-236         |
| David and Jonathan.....1                                                 | Sam. 20:1-42.....237-239         |
| David Sparing Saul.....1                                                 | Sam. 24:1-22.....240-242         |
| Death of Saul and Jonathan.....1                                         | Sam. 31:1-13.....243-245         |
| David Becomes King.....2                                                 | Sam. 2:1-11; 5:1-25.....246-248  |
| David King Over All Israel.....2                                         | Sam. 5:1-12.....249-251          |
| David Brings Up the Ark.....2                                            | Sam. 6:1-19.....252-254          |
| God's Covenant with David.....2                                          | Sam. 7:1-17.....255-257          |
| David's Kindness.....2                                                   | Sam. 9:1-13.....258-260          |
| Absalom's Rebellion.....2                                                | Sam. 15:1-15.....261-263         |
| Absalom's Death.....2                                                    | Sam. 18:1-33.....264-266         |
| Solomon Anointed King.....1                                              | Kings 1:1-35.....267-269         |
| Solomon's Wise Choice.....1                                              | Kings 3:4-15.....270-272         |
| Building the Temple.....1                                                | Kings 5:1-12; 6:1-14.....273-275 |
| The Temple Dedicated.....1                                               | Kings 8.....276-278              |
| The Fame of Solomon.....1                                                | Kings 10:1-13.....279-281        |
| Schopin's "The Queen of Sheba at the Court of Solomon"<br>described..... | 279                              |
| Solomon's Sin.....1                                                      | Kings 11:4-13.....282-284        |
| The Kingdom Divided.....1                                                | Kings 12:16-20.....285-287       |
| Jeroboam's Idolatry.....1                                                | Kings 12:26-30.....288-290       |
| Omri and Ahab.....1                                                      | Kings 16:15-33.....291-293       |
| God's Care of Elijah.....1                                               | Kings 17.....294-296             |
| Elijah and Ahab.....1                                                    | Kings 18:1-20.....297-299        |
| The Prophets of Baal.....1                                               | Kings 18:21-40.....300-302       |
| Elijah on Carmel.....1                                                   | Kings 18:41-46.....303-305       |
| Elijah Under the Juniper.....1                                           | Kings 19:4-18.....306-308        |
| The Story of Naboth's Vineyard....1                                      | Kings 21.....309-311             |
| Elijah Translated.....2                                                  | Kings 2:1-18.....312-314         |
| The Widow's Oil Increased.....2                                          | Kings 4:1-7.....315-317          |
| The Shunammite's Son.....2                                               | Kings 4:8-37, 8:1-6.....318-320  |
| Naaman the Leper.....2                                                   | Kings 5:1-19.....321-323         |
| Gehazi the Leper.....2                                                   | Kings 5:20-27.....324-326        |
| Elisha's Heavenly Defenders.....2                                        | Kings 6:8-18.....327-330         |
| The Famine in Samaria.....2                                              | Kings 7:1-16.....331-332         |
| Jehu the King.....2                                                      | Kings 10:15-28.....333-335       |
| The Boy Joash Crowned King.....2                                         | Kings 11:9-17.....336-338        |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                                                     | PAGE                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| The Death of Elisha.....                            | 2 Kings 13:14-21.....339-341         |
| Captivity of the Ten Tribes.....                    | 2 Kings 17:1-23.....342-344          |
| Sennacherib's Invasion.....                         | 2 Kings 19:20-37.....345-347         |
| Hezekiah's Prayer.....                              | 2 Kings 20:1-17.....348-350          |
| The Captivity of Judah.....                         | 2 Kings 25:1-12.....351-353          |
| David's Charge to Solomon.....                      | 1 Chron. 28:1-10, 20, 21.....354-356 |
| Asa's Good Reign.....                               | 2 Chron. 14:1-15.....357-359         |
| Jehoshaphat's Good Reign.....                       | 2 Chron. 17:1-13.....360-362         |
| Jehoshaphat Helped of God.....                      | 2 Chron. 20:1-30.....363-365         |
| Joash Repairs the Temple.....                       | 2 Chron. 24:4-14.....366-368         |
| Uzziah, King of Judah, Humbled.....                 | 2 Chron. 26:16-23.....369-371        |
| Hezekiah the Good King.....                         | 2 Chron. 29:1-19.....372-374         |
| Hezekiah's Great Passover.....                      | 2 Chron. 30:1-27.....375-377         |
| Manasseh's Sin and Repentance.....                  | 2 Chron. 33:1-16.....378-380         |
| Josiah and the Book of the Law.....                 | 2 Chron. 34:14-28.....381-383        |
| Returning from Captivity.....                       | Ezra 1:7-11.....384-386              |
| Rebuilding the Temple.....                          | Ezra 3:8; 4:3.....387-389            |
| Dedicating the Temple.....                          | Ezra 6:16-22.....390-392             |
| Ezra's Journey to Jerusalem.....                    | Ezra 8:15-32.....393-395             |
| Nehemiah's Prayer.....                              | Nehemiah 1:1-11.....396-398          |
| Rebuilding the Walls of Jerusalem.....              | Nehemiah 4:7-21.....399-401          |
| Reading and Obeying the Law.....                    | Nehemiah 8:1-18.....402-404          |
| Keeping the Sabbath.....                            | Nehemiah 13:15-22.....405-407        |
| Schrader's "Esther Before Ahasuerus" described..... | 408                                  |
| Esther Before the King.....                         | Esther 5:1-14.....408-410            |
| Haman and Mordecai.....                             | Esther 6:1-14.....411-413            |

## THIRD DIVISION—THE POETICAL BOOKS—414-485

|                                 |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| The Afflictions of Job.....     | Job 2:1-10.....416-418      |
| Job's Confidence.....           | Job 19:23-27.....419-421    |
| Job's Restoration.....          | Job 42:1-13.....422-424     |
| The Way of the Righteous.....   | Psalms 1:1-6.....425-427    |
| The King of Zion.....           | Psalms 2:7-12.....428-430   |
| God's Works and Word.....       | Psalms 19:1-11.....431-433  |
| The Lord My Shepherd.....       | Psalms 23:1-6.....434-436   |
| Confidence in God.....          | Psalms 27:1-6.....437-439   |
| The Joy of Forgiveness.....     | Psalms 32:1-11.....440-442  |
| The Prayer of the Penitent..... | Psalms 51:1-17.....443-445  |
| Messiah's Reign.....            | Psalms 72:1-12.....446-448  |
| Delight in God's House.....     | Psalms 84:1-12.....449-451  |
| A Psalm of Deliverance.....     | Psalms 85:1-13.....452-454  |
| Security of the Godly.....      | Psalms 91:1-16.....455-457  |
| A Song of Praise.....           | Psalms 103:8-18.....458-460 |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                              | PAGE                           |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pilgrim Songs .....          | Psalms 121 and 122.....461-463 |
| A Psalm of Deliverance ..... | Psalms 126:1-6.....464-466     |
| The Captives in Babylon..... | Psalms 137:1-6.....467-469     |
| Proverbs of Solomon.....     | Prov. 1:1-19.....470-472       |
| Rewards of Obedience.....    | Prov. 3:1-10.....473-475       |
| Honest Industry .....        | Prov. 6:6-11.....476-478       |
| The Excellent Woman.....     | Prov. 31:10-31.....479-481     |
| The Creator Remembered.....  | Eccles. 12.....482-485         |

## FOURTH DIVISION—THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS—486-565

|                                                         |                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Isaiah's Message.....                                   | Isaiah 1:1-20.....488-490      |
| Isaiah's Vision .....                                   | Isaiah 6:1-13.....491-493      |
| The Prince of Peace.....                                | Isaiah 9:1-7.....494-496       |
| The Kingdom of Christ.....                              | Isaiah 11:1-10.....497-499     |
| The Nature of the Kingdom.....                          | Isaiah 35:1-10.....500-502     |
| The Suffering Saviour.....                              | Isaiah 52:13-53:12.....503-505 |
| The Gracious Call.....                                  | Isaiah 55.....506-508          |
| Jeremiah Tried and Acquitted .....                      | Jeremiah 26.....509-511        |
| Jehoiachim Burns the Roll .....                         | Jeremiah 36.....512-514        |
| Jeremiah Persecuted .....                               | Jeremiah 37.....515-517        |
| Jeremiah in the Dungeon .....                           | Jeremiah 38:1-13.....518-520   |
| Ezekiel a Watchman.....                                 | Ezekiel 3:4-27.....521-523     |
| The New Heart .....                                     | Ezekiel 36:25-38.....524-526   |
| The Valley of Dry Bones .....                           | Ezekiel 37:1-14.....527-529    |
| The Lifegiving Stream .....                             | Ezekiel 47:1-12.....530-532    |
| Nebuchadnezzar's Dream .....                            | Dan. 2.....533-535             |
| The Fiery Furnace.....                                  | Dan. 3.....536-538             |
| Rivière's "Daniel's Answer to the King" described ..... | 539                            |
| Daniel in the Lions' Den.....                           | Dan. 6.....539-541             |
| The Promise of Revival .....                            | Hosea 14.....542-544           |
| The Holy Spirit Promised .....                          | Joel 2:21-32.....545-547       |
| Israel Reproved.....                                    | Amos 5:1-15.....548-550        |
| The Story of Jonah .....                                | Jonah 1 and 2.....551-553      |
| God's Pity for the Heathen.....                         | Jonah 3 and 4.....554-556      |
| The Kingdom of Peace.....                               | Micah 4.....557-559            |
| Power Through God's Spirit.....                         | Zech. 4.....560-562            |
| Rebuking and Encouraging Judah...Mal. 3:1-18 .....      | 563-565                        |

## FIFTH DIVISION—TEMPERANCE DEPARTMENT—566-656

|                                                        |                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Rivière's "Daniel in the Den of Lions" described ..... | 569                        |
| Special Lettered Page, Temperance Topics.....          | 569                        |
| Noah's Drunkenness .....                               | Gen. 9:20-27.....570-572   |
| Nadab and Abihu.....                                   | Lev. 10:1-11.....573-575   |
| Disobedience and Drunkenness.....                      | Deut. 21:18-21.....576-578 |



# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                                                          | PAGE                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Nabal's Revel .....                                      | 1 Sam. 25:2-38.....579-581        |
| Defeat Through Drunkenness .....                         | 1 Kings 20:1-21.....582-584       |
| Evil Companions .....                                    | Prov. 4:14-27.....585-587         |
| Destructive Vices .....                                  | Prov. 16:25-33.....588-590        |
| The Curse of Strong Drink.....                           | Prov. 20:1; 23:20, 21.....591-593 |
| Intemperance .....                                       | Prov. 23:29-35.....594-596        |
| Woes of the Drunkard.....                                | Isaiah 5:1-23.....597-599         |
| Overcome with Wine .....                                 | Isaiah 28:1-18.....600-602        |
| World Wide Prohibition.....                              | 603-604                           |
| Daniel in Babylon.....                                   | Dan. 1:3-21 .....605-607          |
| Martin's "Belshazzar's Feast" described .....            | 607                               |
| The Handwriting on the Wall.....                         | Dan. 5.....608-610                |
| Sinful Indulgence .....                                  | Amos 6:1-12 .....611-613          |
| Parable of the Talents.....                              | Matt. 25:14-30.....614-616        |
| Death of John the Baptist .....                          | Mark 6:16-28.....617-619          |
| Watchfulness .....                                       | Luke 12:37-48 .....620-622        |
| Christ Freeing from Sin.....                             | John 8:31-36.....623-625          |
| Purity of Life .....                                     | Rom. 13:11-14.....626-628         |
| Personal Responsibility.....                             | Rom. 14:11-21.....629-631         |
| Abstinence for the Sake of Others...1 Cor. 8:8-13.....   | 632-634                           |
| The Race and the Prize.....                              | 1 Cor. 9:24-27.....635-637        |
| Two Kinds of Fruit.....                                  | Gal. 5:19-23.....638-640          |
| Wise Walking .....                                       | Eph. 5:15-20 .....641-643         |
| Sober Living .....                                       | Titus 2:1-12.....644-646          |
| Abstinence from Evil.....                                | 1 Peter 4:1-8.....647-649         |
| A New Heaven and a New Earth....Rev. 21:22-27 .....      | 650-652                           |
| Hew Down the Corrupt Tree.....                           | Matt. 7:13-33.....653-654         |
| Abstinence for the Sake of Others...1 Cor. 10:23-33..... | 655-656                           |

## BIOGRAPHIES OF GREAT ARTISTS

### OLD TESTAMENT

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Calderon, Philippe Hermogene..... | 202 |
| Doré, Paul Gustave.....           | 75  |
| Martin, John .....                | 117 |
| Rivière, Briton .....             | 539 |
| Sargent, John Singer.....         | 487 |
| Schopin, Henri F.....             | 79  |
| Schrader, Julius F.....           | 408 |

# ILLUSTRATIONS.

## FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

---

|                                                 | PAGE                |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| The Authors .....                               | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
| The Creation of Light.....                      | <i>Doré</i> 27      |
| The Prayer of Jacob.....                        | <i>Doré</i> 75      |
| Joseph Sold by His Brethren.....                | <i>Schopin</i> 79   |
| The Destruction of Pharaoh's Hosts.....         | <i>Martin</i> 117   |
| Ruth and Naomi.....                             | <i>Calderon</i> 202 |
| The Queen of Sheba at the Court of Solomon..... | <i>Schopin</i> 278  |
| Esther Before Ahasuerus.....                    | <i>Shrader</i> 408  |
| Daniel's Answer to the King.....                | <i>Riviere</i> 539  |
| Daniel in the Den of Lions.....                 | <i>Riviere</i> 569  |
| Belshazzar's Feast .....                        | <i>Martin</i> 607   |

Deaths

Samuel Richard Lecocq July 14<sup>th</sup> 1961

Births.

Samuel Richard Lecocq.

Born October 7<sup>th</sup> 1887.

Mary Ethel Lecocq.

Born May 30<sup>th</sup> 1891.

Alma Maxsein Lecocq

Born February 6<sup>th</sup> 1922.

Ethel M Suter and Samuel R Lecocq

Married Sept 4<sup>th</sup> 1912

Alma Maxsein Lecocq  
and

Kenneth Alexander Anderson

Married June 20 1945

Alma Maxsein Sept 13<sup>th</sup> 1955.

Kenneth Brett Anderson Feb 15 1910



## THE BIBLE

## This Book Contains:

The mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, doom of sinners, and happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. Christ is Its Grand Subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be open at the Judgment and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labor, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents.

"This Book unfolds Jehovah's mind  
 This Voice salutes in accents kind  
 This Friend will all our need supply  
 This Fountain sends forth streams of joy  
 This Mine affords us boundless wealth  
 This Good Physician gives us health  
 This Sun renews and warms the soul  
 This Sword both wounds and makes us whole  
 This Letter shows our sins forgiven  
 This Guide conducts us gate to Heaven  
 This Charter has been sealed with blood  
 This Volume is the Word of God."



THE BIBLE.

**A BOOK OF BOOKS.** Thousands of years ago it was said, "Of making many books, there is no end." If it was true then, how much more true is it in these days, when the printing press is pouring forth a ceaseless stream of books. Yet among all the books ever written, the Bible is by far the most precious.

The world is full of books of every kind and character, written by men of every land and profession, yet none of them can for one moment compare with this one Book. It records history, the oldest in the world: reaching back to the creation of all things. Many recorded events, once discredited by Bible critics as not only improbable, but impossible, have been proven authentic by the discovery, in recent years, of records and tablets buried for thousands of years in the ruins of cities and palaces of kings, who lived at the same time as the events recorded in Bible history occurred.

Many of its prophecies uttered thousands of years before have had their fulfilment in a wonderful manner, and others point still to the future. No other book presents so lofty a conception of the relation of the Creator to the human family as does the Bible: God walking, talking with and, through his Son, dying for men. Nor can any other book compare with it in its influence on and uplift of mankind.

**Authors.** We speak of the Bible as one book. In reality, however, it is a small library, a set of sixty-six books, smaller and larger, that have been bound in one volume. They have various authors, numbering about thirty-six in all. The oldest of these is Moses, the Hebrew Prophet and Lawgiver, who wrote about 1,500 years before Christ.

Many of these authors were unlearned men, yet there came from the strokes of their rude pens, characters immortal: everlasting characters, that stand like rocks among the waves of time; created in a few words, by a bare record of great things said and done. The latest author is John the Evangelist, who wrote the Revelation, about 100 years after Christ. So we see the Bible was about 1,600 years in preparation. No other single book has such a chronological record as this.

**Country.** Furthermore, it is worthy of notice that every one of the writers of the

Bible, with the exception of St. Luke, was a Jew. The "Beloved Physician" alone, was a Gentile. From this we see how great a debt the whole world owes to the Jewish nation, for its wonderful contribution to the religious literature of the world.

**Literature.** All the literature of Greece, the most cultured of the peoples of the old world, cannot match this one book in respect to poetry, philosophy, history, or narrative. If you want vivid narrative, such as takes hold of the heart, where can you find anything superior to the story of Joseph, or that of Ruth and Naomi? What story of friendship like that of David and Jonathan, or what portrayal of a father's grief over a wayward son more touching than that of David, when he hears the tidings of the death of Absalom?

Where can the lover of poetry find sweeter strains than those of the 23rd Psalm, or the 103rd Psalm? What writer has ever soared to such heights of poetic grandeur as has Isaiah, or the writer of the book Job? Testimony abounds on every hand, to the matchless genius of Hebrew poetry, and the lofty conception that these writers enjoyed of things human and things Divine.

**Teachings.** And what shall we say when we come to the matter of the religious teachings that are contained in this book? Search in all the religious writings of the heathen world for anything that can be compared with the Ten Commandments. In all the world they have become the foundation of good law and government. No other code of morals in the world sets so lofty a standard nor has any other code of laws ever been framed, whose observance so enhances the common good of mankind. Jesus said the sum of the Ten Commandments is, "To love the Lord with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself."

The historical writings of the Bible reveal God as a God of mercy, unending in His efforts to reclaim a lost world and lift man out of sin; punishing and pardoning as men reject his counsel or repent of their wrong. Even Jonah, when reproaching God for not fulfilling his prophecy against Nineveh, said, "I know that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness and repentest Thee of the evil." So,

too, His love and mercy are revealed in the number of prophets He sent to Israel in the days of their decline, seeking to turn them from their folly and sin.

Yet still more lofty in its conception of Divine truth than the Ten Commandments is the Sermon on the Mount of our blessed Lord. Here we have the law laid down, as it applies not to the outward life only, but as it appeals to the human heart and conscience.

But His love is best revealed in the gift of His Son. In the Cross of Christ we find His plan for the redemption of a sin-cursed world. The Bible teaches there is no other way than this given under Heaven among men whereby we must be saved. From whatever point of view we regard this Book, we can say of it as David once said of Goliath's sword, "There is none like it. Give it to me."

**Opposition.** Now, though all that we have said (and much more) is true of the Bible, it is strange that this Book has been more attacked than any other book that has ever seen the light. More than one hundred years ago the infidel Voltaire said, "In fifty years from now the Bible will not be read any longer." Voltaire has been dead for much more than a century, yet for one who reads a word of what he wrote there are millions who still read the Sacred Word. In the dark ages, deluded men burned this book in public, and they do still in some of the darker and more ignorant lands such as South America and parts of Mexico. And yet the great Book lives on in undisturbed majesty, and influences men for all that is highest and best and noblest.

**Original Languages.** Originally the Bible was written in three languages, the Hebrew and Chaldee for the Old Testament, and the Greek for the New Testament. Of course the work had to be accomplished with pen and ink. In those days, therefore, the Book was most expensive and only those who were wealthy could own a copy of the Sacred Writings. With the advent of the printing press, and the use of steam, it became possible to multiply copies so cheaply that even the poorest can now procure copies of the Bible.

**Translation.** So wonderful has the influence of this Book proved itself that many years ago men began to translate it into other languages than those of the original manuscripts. This process has gone on (and is still going on), until today the whole of

the more important parts of the Word have been translated into nearly five hundred languages. Many of these languages had first to be carefully studied and systematized, and an alphabet had to be created, so that the savage people for whom the work was done might be able to read the Word in their own tongue. For there are many tribes in Africa who had no alphabet before the missionaries came to them, and for these an alphabet had to be prepared, and the natives taught to read in their own language.

**Circulation.** When we come to the matter of the circulation of the Bible the figures are so vast as to be confusing. In the hundred years from 1611 to 1711 the number of editions of both Old and New Testaments was 526. The Lenox Library in New York City contains copies of 8,000 different Bibles. At this writing there are issued more than one thousand editions of the Bible each year, or double the number issued in the 16th century. The annual issue of Bibles by the British and Foreign Bible Society is over 5,000,000 copies, while that of the American Bible Society is about 2,000,000. In the last hundred years the total circulation of the Bible by the Bible Societies, has reached the stupendous figure of three hundred sixteen millions of volumes. No other book can for a moment compare with this. And the wonder of it is that as the years multiply these figures increase more and more.

**Students.** Finally no other one book is studied as is the Bible. Each Sunday in the world about thirty millions of teachers and scholars pore over this Book. In every land and in every tongue they come to see what God the Lord has to say to them, as shown in its pages. To no other book do so many turn from week to week for counsel, guidance, comfort and warning. The more we know of its wonderful teachings the more do we admire them. Of most books we soon weary. Who would think of reading a novel ten times? Yet there are those who have been poring over the pages of this Book for ten or twenty or thirty years, who still will say that they have not exhausted its treasures or grown weary of its presentations of truths Divine and sublime. In view of all this we may well repeat what Sir Walter Scott is reported to have said in his last illness. He asked to have The Book read to him, and when asked "What book," he replied, "There is but one Book." So of all books in the world we can say with the same significance, "There is but one Book."

DR. A. F. SCHAUFFLER.



## THE BIBLE AN INSPIRED BOOK.

**HOW INSPIRED.** What do we mean when we say that the Bible is "an inspired" book? Without going into any philosophical definition of the word "inspired" it will be enough for our purpose to say that by "inspired" we mean that the prophets and apostles, in what they said and wrote, were guided by the Holy Spirit in a manner higher than that of any men of their times. Rightly to understand and appreciate this we must be sure to bear in mind that these men, all of them, wrote in times when in all the world there was idolatry, and polytheism everywhere. Before the birth of Christ, when the Old Testament prophets spoke and wrote, all the world excepting the Jews was polytheistic (that is, worshipped many gods). Men worshipped beasts and creeping things, sun, moon and stars. When Jesus was born, and all through the times of the apostles, Greeks and Romans worshipped Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, Mars, and a host of false divinities. When under these circumstances we find **one set of men** uniformly preaching the truth of One God, and He a Spirit, we are forced to the conclusion that they did not invent, or discover, this truth unaided by the Divine Spirit. An influence higher than anything human must have pervaded their thought and governed their speech and writings.

**Heathen Writings.** The moment we compare what they said and wrote with the so-called sacred writings of all other nations we see how immeasurably superior their utterances were. Take the Koran, the book of the Mohammedan world, or the Vedas, the books of the Hindu religion, or the writings of Confucius, in whom the Chinese believe, or the Zend Avesta, the book of the Sun-worshippers of Persia, and compare any of them with the Bible, and you will need no other argument to force you to believe that the Bible writers were moved by a power far above themselves, and that they received revelations from God as to the true nature of God and of the way of salvation.

**Prophetic Types.** That men had direct revelation from God is beyond question. The wonderful miracles of the Old Testament are

evidence of that fact. The elaborate ritual and ceremonies of the tabernacle service were not the production of a people just out of slavery, nor of Moses, their leader, who was brought up in the courts of Egypt. Nor does Moses take credit for it, but declares it was after the pattern shown him on the Mount. Every part of it was a type pointing to a Kingdom that had its beginning 1,500 years later in the cross of Calvary. Even the tearing from top to bottom of the great veil before the Holy of Holies on the day of the crucifixion, was a type which betokened the fact that from that time every man had access to the Father through Christ as the High Priest of God.

**Three Arguments.** To put the matter more concretely, we believe that the Bible is inspired especially for three reasons:

First: Because it reveals more truth about God and the duty of man than any other book; Second: Because of the fulfillment of prophecy uttered hundreds of years before the events occurred; Third: Because of the influence it has had in the uplifting and the purifying of human society. Take these in their order.

**First.** Because it reveals more truth about God and the duty of man than any other book. And here let us pause to say that a book like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* speaks much about both of these truths. But bear in mind that Bunyan got his truth from the Bible. This is true of all books that draw their truths from this Sacred Volume.

Look at the patriarch Abraham. Remember that he was brought up as an idolator. Then look at the story, and see how he was led into the worship of one true and only God. How could this have come to pass unless there had been some Divine revelation to him? Take the grand utterance by Moses when he proclaimed, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

At the time that this was uttered all the world was sunk in idolatry, and from whom

could Moses have received this majestic truth if not from God direct? The gods of all nations at that time were for the most part represented as immoral and licentious. Yet Moses proclaims, "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" (Lev. 19: 2). Such lofty and perfect morality as this, was to be found nowhere in the world at that time. It corresponds with what our blessed Lord said when He commanded men to be perfect even as their Father in Heaven is perfect. Such utterances were not only not common in those days among the men of other religions, but they are not to be found among them **at all**. In the midst of Roman idolatry and polytheism we find our Lord saying, "God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Such a saying calls for more than mere human intelligence. It is nothing less than a Divine revelation.

The same is true with regard to what the Bible has to say about the duty of man. Here we find truth of the very loftiest kind, and in addition to this we find the way of salvation so clearly marked out that no one need fail of reaching it, if he so desires. John 3: 16 is of itself a proof of the inspiration of this book, for here we find the Gospel of salvation put in one sentence, the most precious sentence in the world, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

**Second.** Because of the fulfillment of prophecy uttered hundreds of years before. The first promise of the Bible for the future was the promise of a Deliverer from sin (Gen. 3: 15). That prophecy runs like a golden thread down through Old Testament times. To Abraham, God said, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blest." Jacob, in his last words, said of Judah, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet till Shiloh come." David, Isaiah and many of the other prophets "told before of the coming of the Just One" and almost all of these prophecies are referred to by New Testament writers as having had their fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. The captivity of Israel and Judah, and the destruction of Jerusalem, as well as the deliverance of the Jews from exile, was the burden of the prophecies of many of the later prophets, years before these events took place. Jesus Himself foretold the later destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple forty years before it occurred.

Then, too, we see, every day, results, con-

ditions, and experiences which are the direct fulfillment of the prophetic teachings of God's Word, many of which teachings, from a mere human standpoint, would seem paradoxical and absurd.

**Third.** Because of the influence that it has had in the uplifting and purifying of human society. Think for a moment. Is there any locality fifty miles square on the face of the earth, where the Bible has not come, where you would like to live and bring up a family of children? We are all worshippers of one God. But all of our ancestors were idolators. How did the change come about that has made us worshippers of one God? Simply because the Bible came to our forefathers, and, by the Holy Spirit's power, changed them. Take out from America all that has come to us from the Bible and the best part of our civilization would disappear at once. The fact is, that the best of all that we hold dear, and that makes us what we are, has come to us from this Book. If this does not prove that it is a book of Divine origin, I do not know what would prove it.

Look again at heathen lands. What is it that has changed many of the cannibal islands into places of peace and prosperity? Is it not this Book? Did ever any other book produce such results? What is it that has transformed Uganda, in the center of Africa, from barbarism into a Christian community, where the people gather by thousands in their own churches? Is it not this Book? What is it that is uplifting Korea in these days from idolatry into the worship of one God, so that the people are fast becoming Christianized? Is it not this Book? Did ever any people in all history accept the teachings of this Book without being uplifted by it, and spiritually transformed? And is it not true that the more perfectly we obey the teachings of this Book the holier and more Christ-like our lives become? The fact is that if you could discover a city anywhere in the world where everyone regulated his life perfectly by this Book there you would find a perfect community. Between that city and Heaven the only difference would be one of place. Both would be animated by the same spirit.

Thus we have briefly stated three reasons why we believe this Book is inspired. If you want one more proof of its inspiration, just try and regulate your own life completely by its teachings and you will find that it is truly none other than the very Word of God to your own soul.

DR. A. F. SCHAUFFLER.



## HOW WE GOT OUR ENGLISH BIBLE.

**O**RIGINAL LANGUAGE. Our English Bible is published in several translations or editions, the most prominent of which are the Authorized, or King James Version (1611), the Revised Version (1881-85), and the American Standard Revised Version (1901).

Everyone understands that our English Bible is only a translation from the languages in which the Bible was originally written.

Hebrew is the original language of the Old Testament, with the exception of a few sections that were written in the Aramaic tongue. Greek is the original language of the New Testament.

The Hebrew language of the Old Testament is simple in construction, has a very small number of words in actual use and is full of picture thoughts. It was the language of Israel during their life as a nation, but after the return from Captivity it degenerated into Aramaic.

The great sermons of the prophets and the beautiful poetry of Job and of the Psalms give us some idea of the tremendous expressive power of the Hebrew language.

**The Septuagint.** After the founding of Alexandria, B. C. 332, many Jews, on account of the commercial advantages and for other reasons, were attracted thither. At one time the city was said to contain 1,000,000 Alexandrian Jews.

This led to a new epoch in the history of the Bible. Greek was the prevailing language. Early in the third century B. C. the proportion of Greek-speaking Jews became so great that there was a call for the Bible in the adopted tongue. In answer to it the Hebrew Bible was translated into the Greek language (about 280-130 B. C.). Besides all the books of the Hebrew Bible it also contained several small books, now called "The Apocrypha." This Greek Bible is called the Septuagint (Seventy); because it was thought to have been translated by seventy men.

Wherever Alexander carried his conquests there the Greek language prevailed, and wherever the Jew settled there was found

the Septuagint. To the wide dispersion of this version of the Old Testament may be attributed in a great measure the general expectation of the coming of the Messiah over the whole of the East and the Magi's recognition of the star which proclaimed the birth of the King of the Jews.

In the time of our Lord it was generally used and quoted by New Testament writers, especially by Paul.

It was the Bible of the early Christian Church until the conquest of Rome and until the Latin-speaking world required a translation in the Latin tongue. The early Latin translations were all made from the Septuagint.

**The Vulgate.** The different Latin translations current in the second, third and fourth centuries, led Jerome to translate the whole Bible (384-405 A. D.) from the original languages into splendid Latin.

His translation differed so much from the others in general use that it met with great opposition at first. However, before many centuries, it became the Bible of the Latin-speaking world and was adopted by the Council of Trent, April 8, 1546, as the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. With the exception of the Psalms and the Apocryphal books included in this Bible, it is Jerome's translation.

**The Syriac.** Some time in the second century a translation was made from the Hebrew Old Testament into Syriac for the Christians of Northern Syria. This was what might be called a translation from one sister tongue into another, and while a beautiful piece of work, was rather too freely done to convey the literal text of the original.

There are none of the Apocryphal books of the Latin Bible in the Syriac version. From this it will be seen that the early Christian Church used the Bible mainly in three versions—the Greek Septuagint, the Latin Vulgate, and Syriac, the most prominent and valuable texts.

**Other Translations.** As Christianizing influences reached out to other peoples the Bible was translated into their language from one of these three or four great versions



of that time, hence we find the Bible in Arabic, Ethiopic, Armenian, Gothic, Slavonic, and other border languages.

The Bible was introduced into England early in the Christian centuries in one of the Latin versions of Western Europe. This was followed later by the Vulgate Latin.

Those who expounded the word, of course, had to interpret it in the language of the early English, consequently some portions of these translations in the Anglo-Saxon tongue remain to this day.

**The First English.** In the fourteenth century Wycliffe (1320-1384) translated the first English Bible, not from the original Hebrew and Greek but from the Latin Vulgate, a translation of a translation.

In the sixteenth century, after great opposition and trial, Tyndale succeeded in printing in Germany and distributing in England the New Testament in English, translated from the Greek (1526). His books, however, were confiscated and burned in London. Tyndale remained on the continent, and, in 1530, his translation of the Pentateuch appeared, and in 1531 the book of Jonah. He was finally kidnapped, imprisoned, strangled, and burned at the stake, October 6, 1536, because he translated the Bible into a language the common people could read. Within a year after his martyrdom a Bible containing a translation by him of all the books from Genesis to II Chronicles, inclusive, was published by authority of Henry VIII. For five centuries his version has shaped the diction and style of every other; the simple, sublime, and pure language of the authorized version is due to it. For several years Bibles issued from the presses of Europe, the most prominent being Coverdale's, Matthew's, and the Great Bible.

**Opposition and Progress.** Catholic opposition became aroused; Cromwell was beheaded; Bible publication was checked; while "Bloody Mary," burned at the stake many of the best men of the time, including Ridley, Latimer and John Rogers.

Queen Elizabeth's reign followed (1558-1603), and Bible translation and publication, both Protestant and Catholic, made rapid progress. The Geneva Bible, which is the first great Protestant translation, published

in 1560, was the work of eminent scholars expelled during Mary's fierce reign, among whom were Knox, Coverdale and Whittingham. They settled in Geneva and were assisted in the work by Calvin and Beza.

**Verses First Used.** The Geneva Bible was the first English Bible divided into verses and the first to print in italics the words not found in the originals.

Bishop's Bible appeared in 1568, the Rheims New Testament (Roman Catholic) in 1582. Of all these the Geneva Bible was received with the most favor.

**The Authorized Version.** Early in the reign of King James I (1603-25) he appointed \*fifty-four of the most learned Biblical scholars of England to produce a new and better translation of the Bible. They formed themselves into six companies, two of which met at Westminster, two at Oxford and two at Cambridge.

After several years of careful work they produced, in 1611, the Authorized, or King James Version of the Bible, the best known of all English translations. It is a model of good English and its influence largely has made the English language what it is.

**Later Versions.** In the 250 or more years following the publication of the Authorized Version, scholars found a large number of very valuable manuscripts of the Bible, older and nearer the lost originals than any previously known. With these came a desire for a new translation in the light of the better Hebrew and Greek texts now at hand.

At the Convocation of Canterbury, May 6, 1870, a committee was appointed, and these, with a committee from America, after ten years of conscientious and careful work, in 1881 gave us the Revised New Testament, and four years later, in 1885, the Old Testament, a translation based on the best manuscripts now known to the scholarly world. In less than six months more than four million copies were issued. The American Revision Committee, less conservative than the British Committee in the use of old English terms, phrases, etc., carefully revised this work, and, in 1901, issued the Bible known as the American Standard Revised Version.

—COMPILED.

\*Fifty-four Biblical scholars were appointed by the King, but only forty-seven served in the work.

DIVISIONS OF THE BIBLE.

**T**HE Bible is divided into two great parts, called the Old Testament and the New Testament. Between them there lies an interval of nearly 400 years.

In the word "Old" there are 3 letters. In the word "Testament" there are 9 letters. These two figures, "39," represent the number of books in the Old Testament; 3 multiplied by 9 equals 27, the number of books in the New Testament, making a total of 66 books in the Bible.

They are divided into three general classes: Books of History, Doctrine and Prophecy. In the Old Testament the first seventeen books are Historical. The first five of these are called the Pentateuch, the Greek name given to the five books of Moses.

The books of Doctrine are—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon. They are also called the Poetical books.

The remaining seventeen books are books of Prophecy. The first five, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel, being called the Major Prophets and the remainder the Minor Prophets.

This gives us the following division of the Old Testament:

**History.**

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| Pentateuch ..... | 5  |
| Historical ..... | 12 |

**Doctrine.**

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Poetical or Devotional..... | 5 |
|-----------------------------|---|

**Prophecy.**

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Major Prophets..... | 5  |
| Minor Prophets..... | 12 |

The same number of books of Prophecy as of History, with the five Poetical books between.

In the New Testament the books of History are the four Gospels and the Acts. The Doctrinal books number twenty-one; fourteen Pauline Epistles and seven General Epistles. Revelation is the only book of Prophecy.

This makes the New Testament division as follows:

**History.**

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Gospels ..... | 4 |
| Acts .....    | 1 |

**Doctrine.**

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| Pauline Epistles..... | 14 |
| General Epistles..... | 7  |

**Prophecy.**

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Revelation ..... | 1 |
|------------------|---|

In order to have a clear conception of the contents of the Bible it is necessary to know something about the plan of the Book as a whole.

We will find it of great value in studying a single book of the Bible if we know the writer's purpose, his main thought or theme. Many things otherwise hard to understand become clear to us when we know these or something about the writer and the people to whom or for whom he wrote.

God's word reveals His great purpose concerning the human family. He created Adam in His own image, perfect, free, sinless, with the power to choose between good and evil. Adam sinned, fell and spoiled God's plan concerning him. Then God began His great plan of redemption.

For at least 1,500 years men multiplied in the earth, and so did sin, until "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. 6: 5); so God made another beginning.

Commanding righteous Noah to build the Ark, He saved him and his family while He destroyed everyone and everything outside the Ark with a great flood.

Four hundred years later God again singles out a man of faith; calls Abraham out from his kindred and his people to make of him a great nation, through whom His Word and His Son should be given to the world.

How is that nation made? One of Abraham's great grandsons is sold into Egypt. God sends a seven-year famine and Joseph's brethren go down to Egypt to buy corn. They find Joseph lord of all Egypt. Jacob and his eleven sons move to Egypt, where they increase mightily and become enslaved.

There for 200 years they are welded together in the fires of affliction until God



raises up Moses, their deliverer, and they go forth out of Egypt to receive their code of laws, their organized church and priesthood, and forty years of discipline in the wilderness. Then they enter upon the conquest of Canaan and the possession of the promised land.

For more than three hundred years, during the time of the Judges, their history is one of oppression when they forgot God and deliverance from their enemies when they repented and turned again to Him.

These troublous times were followed by the kingdom under Saul, David and Solomon, when Israel's power and influence spread from Egypt to the Euphrates; their magnificent temple was built and Jerusalem became the religious center of the world.

After the death of Solomon, his son Rehoboam, reared in luxury, succeeded to the throne. Disregarding the counsel of his elders, he threatened to increase the burden of taxation, causing ten tribes to revolt and set up Jeroboam as their king. Thus the kingdom became divided into the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. From this time on, for 250 years, the kingdoms declined, through the wickedness of their kings, when the ten tribes of Israel were carried away into captivity by Assyria. Elijah and Elisha, mighty

prophets of God, had sought to turn them from their evil ways.

One hundred and thirty-five years later Jerusalem was destroyed and the people of Judah carried captive to Babylon. At the end of seventy years of captivity, Cyrus, king of Persia, allowed the captive Jews of Judah to return to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel and rebuild the temple, the prophets Haggai and Zechariah encouraging the people.

Of the sixty years which follow, nothing is known. At the end of that time, Ezra the prophet and scribe, returned to institute religious reforms, and thirteen years after Ezra returned, Nehemiah returned and repaired the walls of Jerusalem. After the time of the prophets Nehemiah and Malachi the Bible is silent 400 years.

Then the long-looked-for Messiah comes, a lineal descendant of the tribe of Judah and of the house of David.

The Four Gospels are the record of His life and work upon the earth. The Acts of the Apostles is the history of the founding of the Christian Church and the spread of the Christian religion.

The remainder of the New Testament deals with doctrines of the Christian faith, excepting Revelation, which is prophetic, largely, concerning the future of the Church.

## THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

### The Pentateuch.

**G**ENESIS. The word Genesis means "Beginnings." In this wonderful book we are told how this universe originated. We read, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This teaches that the world did not come into being by any chance, but that our Heavenly Father is the source of all created things. As compared with the story of the origin of all nature, as told in heathen writings, this is a most grand record, and one that satisfies the heart and the mind. Then, in Genesis, we have the beginnings of many other things. We have, for example, the story of the beginning of plant life, of animal life, of the human race. All this is told in the first two chapters. Then comes the story of man's sin, and his refusal to believe what God had told him, or to obey the commands of God. Most fortunately this is followed by the narrative of how God dealt graciously with sinful man,

and gave him the first great promise, that in time God would send some One to redeem man from his sin. This is found in Genesis 3: 15. Later on in this book we find the story of the beginnings of that "Chosen People," the Hebrews, through whom God was to give His revelation to mankind, and through whom at last the Redeemer was to come. This story begins in Genesis 12, and continues through the rest of this wonderful book.

One peculiarity of the book is that the first twelve chapters cover over 2,000 years at least, while the remaining thirty-eight chapters cover the lives of four men—Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. These are the four great patriarchs, and the study of their lives will repay any lover of the Word. More beautiful stories cannot be found anywhere in all literature.

Briefly, Genesis records the beginning of all life, of man, of sin, of sacrifice, of material civilization, of the Chosen People, and of



Redemption. It has been well said that "Genesis enfolds all that the rest of the Bible unfolds."

Moses is usually credited with being the author, writing the book during the wilderness wanderings, 1491-1451 B. C.

**Exodus.** In this book we have the story of the enslavement of the children of Israel in Egypt, and their "going out" from Egypt through God's mercy and great power. Then follows the charming story of the birth of the babe Moses, his training in the palace of Pharaoh, his experience in the wilderness as shepherd, and of his great contest with Pharaoh, and his victory. This covers chapters 1-12. The remaining chapters tell of the giving of the law on Sinai, and the building of the Tabernacle.

Exodus is the story of a nation enslaved, delivered and set apart in the service of God.

Moses is the author. Time of writing, between 1491 and 1451 B. C.

**Leviticus.** So called because it records principally the laws and ceremonies of the tabernacle for the priestly tribe of Levi. Also the civil and religious laws of the people of Israel.

Its spiritual meaning is significant. It was a prophecy of things to come: a type of Christ and His Kingdom; of the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. One idea, "Holiness," penetrates the whole of this elaborate ritual.

Moses is the accredited author. Time of writing, during the forty years in the wilderness, 1491-1451 B. C.

**Numbers.** So called because it relates the numbering of the people on two occasions, the first at Sinai in their second year in the wilderness, and the other just before the death of Moses in the fortieth year.

In brief, it is the story of the wilderness wanderings.

The book of Numbers is rich in fragments of ancient poetry, some of them of great beauty. (See Chap. 6: 24-26; 23: 8-10.)

The author, Moses. Time, between B. C. 1491 and 1451.

**Deuteronomy,** Which means "the repetition of the Law," consists chiefly of three addresses delivered by Moses to the people who had been born in the wilderness, in which he rehearses Israel's history after leaving Egypt, and charges them to keep the Law.

It closes with the Song of Moses, the Blessing of Moses, and the account of his death.

The book bears witness to its own authorship (Deut. 31: 19), and is referred to in the New Testament as the work of Moses. The last chapter, of course, has been added by another hand.

Time, towards the close of the forty years of wandering.

## Historical Books.

**Joshua.** The book of Joshua is divided into three parts:

(1) The story of the conquest of Canaan (Chap. 1-12).

(2) Division of the land among the tribes (Chap. 13-22).

(3) Joshua's farewell and death (Chap. 23-24).

Commentators, Jewish and Christian, regard Joshua as author.

**Judges.** The first sixteen chapters is a history of the Judges of Israel from Joshua's death until Samson's; the wars of deliverance, and the political and religious decline of Israel after the death of Joshua. Chapters 17-21 record the conquest of Laish by part of the tribe of Dan and the civil war that nearly blotted out the tribe of Benjamin.

The authorship is uncertain, though probably Samuel wrote the greater part of it.

**Ruth.** This is a beautiful story of fidelity out of the history of king David's ancestors, connecting the time of the Judges with the monarchy and giving David's genealogy.

Date and author are quite uncertain, although it probably was written as late as David's time. (See Chap. 4: 7, 17.)

**I and II Samuel.** Continues the history of the Judges, telling the story of Eli and Samuel, also the establishment of the Hebrew monarchy, Saul's reign and the rise and part of the reign of David.

Samuel is the accredited author of part of the book. Much of it, however, is later than Samuel's time.

**I and II Kings.** The history of the kingdom during Solomon's reign, the building of the temple, the divided kingdom to the captivity of Judah and the life stories of Elijah and Elisha.

There seems little doubt in the mind of most scholars that Jeremiah was the author, and that he wrote during the period of Captivity.

**I and II Chronicles.** The purpose of the writer of these books seems to have been to

set before the Jews a history largely of the kingdom of Judah, its prosperity under God, the sins that led to its overthrow, the Captivity and return.

The first book gives the history by sacred genealogies from Adam to David, including David's reign. The second continues the history of the kings of Judah without those of Israel down to the return from Captivity.

Ezra the Scribe is the accredited author of these books.

**Ezra.** Relates the return of the captives under Zerubbabel, the rebuilding of the temple; the second return of captives under Ezra, and Ezra's reformation.

Most of the book is undoubtedly the work of Ezra, though the first chapter was possibly written by Daniel.

**Nehemiah.** The main history covers a period of about twelve years, 445 to 433 B. C., and gives an interesting account of the state of Jerusalem at the time and the nature of the Persian government; the rebuilding of the Jerusalem walls under Nehemiah; civil and religious reforms; restoration of the temple service, etc.

The book has possibly more than one author; probably part of it is the work of Ezra. The greater part, however, is from the hand of Nehemiah.

**Esther.** The story of the deliverance of the Jews remaining in Persia from the plot of Haman to destroy them, showing the overruling power of Providence. God's name nowhere appears in the book, perhaps left out purposely so as to permit the reading of the book without irreverence at the hilarious feast of Purim, at which the Jews celebrated the event.

Interest is added to the story when we remember that the enmity between Haman and Mordecai had its beginning when Saul slew the Amelikites. Mordecai was a descendant of Saul's family, and Haman, of Agag, the king of the Amelikites.

Written probably as late as B. C. 444-434. The author is not known.

### The Poetical Books.

**Job.** Stanley says: "The whole book is a discussion of that great problem of human life: What is the intention of Divine Providence in allowing the good to suffer." The book of Job is not only the most remarkable in the Bible, but it stands alone in all literature.

By some the authorship is attributed to

Moses, but with no degree of certainty. The opinions of Job and his friends show a type of patriarchal religion belonging to the time of Abraham.

**Psalms.** A compilation of songs of praise and devotion, prayers, lamentations, expressions of faith, resignation, repentance, joy; national, historical and royal psalms—many of them referring to the Messiah. Among the Psalms there are some that are so sweet that we do well to commit them to memory. For example, the 23rd Psalm, most Christians already know. This is also true of the 103rd Psalm. Among other Psalms that are unspeakably rich and comforting are the 19th, the 32nd, the 46th and the 51st. This last Psalm is the cry of the soul convicted of sin, and its plea for pardon. How many souls have found in this Psalm the expression of their deepest feeling, who shall say?

David is the author of most of the first division (1-14), and of many of the others. The work of compiling and writing continued as late as the date of the Captivity.

**Proverbs.** A collection of practical rules of life, in which the teaching is largely by contrast, wisdom against folly, righteousness against unrighteousness, etc.

Principally the work of Solomon.

**Ecclesiastes.** A discussion of the problem: Can the world satisfy a man's need without God, and the writer's conclusion after trying it. "All is vanity" but the doing of God's will.

Solomon is in all probability the author and wrote looking back upon the experiences of his life when well advanced in years.

**Song of Solomon.** The evolution of a simple love story. It has received different interpretations, the most commonly accepted being, that it shows the victory of humble and constant love over the temptations of wealth and royalty.

Probably written by Solomon about B. C. 1012.

### The Major Prophets.

**Isaiah.** Prophecies concerning Judah and Jerusalem and the surrounding nations, foretelling their doom; prophecies concerning the Messiah, the return from Captivity, and the great future of the Church.

Isaiah, a prophet of Judah, is the author, and probably wrote at two different times. The last twenty-seven chapters belong to the time of the Captivity.



**Jeremiah.** The first forty-five chapters are prophecies regarding Judah or connected with Jeremiah's personal history. The remaining chapters are prophecies concerning the surrounding nations, excepting the last chapter, which gives an account of the destruction of Jerusalem.

Author, Jeremiah. Part of the book is no doubt the roll which Baruch wrote down at the month of the prophet in the fourth year of Jehoiachim (B. C. 604; See Jer. 36:2).

**Lamentations.** Five poems expressing the prophet Jeremiah's grief over the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, and the miseries of his people. Each chapter contains 22 verses, except the third chapter, which contains 66. In Chapters 1, 2 and 4, each verse begins with the corresponding letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In the third chapter every three verses begin with the succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, hence the 66 verses. In Chapter 5 the verses are not arranged alphabetically.

Jeremiah is regarded as the author and wrote in the last days of the kingdom or the beginning of the Captivity, B. C. 629-586.

**Ezekiel.** Chapters 1-24 contain prophecies before the destruction of Jerusalem and Chapters 25-48 after it, in which the prophet exhorts, denounces, reproves, in the first thirty-two chapters, and consoles in the remainder. Chapters 25-32 contain a group of prophecies against seven foreign nations.

Author, Ezekiel, one of the four greater prophets; a captive in Babylon, where he prophesied from about 595-573 B. C.

**Daniel.** The story of Daniel and other captives in Babylon, in which prophecies concerning the then world powers and the Messianic Kingdom form an important part.

Author, Daniel. Written during the Babylonian captivity.

### The Minor Prophets.

**Hosea.** Describes the infidelity of Israel to their God, the necessity for punishment and the final restoration of Israel.

Author, Hosea, a prophet of Israel (B. C. 784-725), prophesied in the time of Jeroboam II and succeeding kings.

**Joel.** A grand outline of the whole terrible scene of locusts, drouth, and invasion then impending on Judah; exhortation to repentance, fasting and prayer; with promise of deliverance and the coming Kingdom of Messiah.

Author, Joel, a prophet of Judah about 800 B. C.

**Amos.** Announces God's judgments upon the nations around Jerusalem, especially upon Israel: describes the condition of the two kingdoms, the coming of the Messiah and restoration of the Jews.

Author, Amos, a shepherd prophet of Israel and Judah about 808 B. C.

**Obadiah.** The book of Obadiah is a denunciation of the Edomites and a vision of the glories of Zion when God shall have wrought her deliverance.

Author, Obadiah, of whom scarcely anything is known. His prophecies were probably spoken between 588 and 583 B. C.

**Jonah.** The story of Jonah's mission to Nineveh, his endeavor to avoid it, and God's pity for the heathen.

Author, Jonah, a prophet of Israel about 820 B. C.

**Micah.** Describes the impending disasters coming on Judah and Israel for their sins, their final restoration and the coming of the King to Bethlehem.

Author, Micah, a prophet of Judah during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah (B. C. 758-698).

**Nahum.** The subject of this prophecy is the final destruction of Nineveh, in which the prophet shows the majesty of God and the certainty of His judgments against Assyria.

Author, Nahum, a prophet of whom little is known. He prophesied before 625 B. C.

**Habakkuk.** Consists of only three chapters, the first of which foreshadows the invasion of the Chaldeans, and the second foretells the doom of Chaldea. The third is a magnificent Psalm in which God's majesty is extolled.

Author, Habakkuk, a prophet of Judah, probably in the time of Josiah, about 630 B. C.

**Zephaniah.** A prophecy of God's judgments against Judah and the surrounding nations and a promise of restoration to the remnant of the Jews.

Author, Zephaniah, a prophet of Judah, of king Josiah's time (639-608 B. C.).

**Haggai.** An encouragement for the Jews to resume the building of the temple under Zerubbabel, after having been stopped by Artaxerxes.

Author, Haggai, first of those who proph-



esied after the Captivity. Prophesied in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, B. C. 520.

**Zechariah.** In a series of eight visions the prophet is told by the angel of the coming restoration of Jerusalem, with which he encourages the people to persevere in the building of the temple. Numerous references are made to the coming of the Messiah and His Kingdom.

Author, Zechariah, a prophet associated with Haggai, who began to prophesy two months after him, during 520 and 518 B. C. The authorship and date of the last six chapters are much disputed.

**Malachi.** A reproof of the evil practices of the priests of the temple and the people in Nehemiah's time, after the temple and walls had been rebuilt. Also prophecies concerning John the Baptist, and of the coming of Messiah.

Author. Nothing is known of him except what is learned from his book. Malachi prophesied about the time of Nehemiah's second visit to Jerusalem (B. C. 430-420).

It is interesting to note how many of these prophets belonged to the time of the decline of the Kingdoms and the Captivity, showing how God sought to reclaim His people from idolatry and sin.

## THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL.

The first judge, Othniel, was a son  
Of Caleb's younger brother,  
And he delivered Israel from  
The people of their mother.

Left-handed Ehud conquered Moab  
And drove him from the land,  
And Shamgar slew six hundred with  
An oxgoad in his hand.

Deborah, prophetess, arose,  
With Barak went along;  
They overthrew the Canaanites  
And then took up their song.

When Midian camped with beast and tent,  
Like locusts 'gainst them, then  
Brave Gideon put their hosts to flight  
With just three hundred men.

Abimelech cruel three years did rule;  
He called himself a king;  
When on his crown a woman down  
A piece of stone did fling.

Then Tola three and twenty years  
Judged Israel and died;

Then followed Jair, whose thirty sons  
On thirty colts did ride.

Samson the strong, the promised son,  
From birth a Nazarite,  
With nothing but a jawbone, slew  
A thousand in his might.

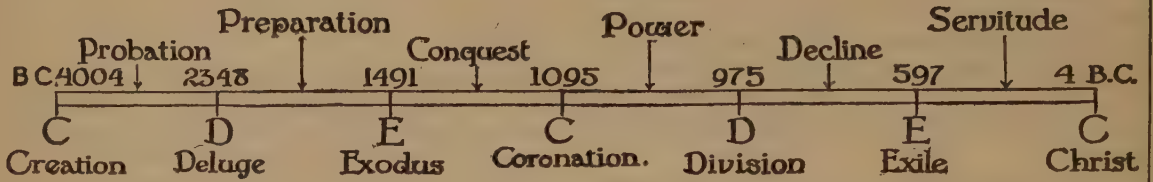
Good Jephthah made a foolish vow  
And killed his lovely daughter;  
Slew two and forty thousand men  
At Jordan's shallow water.

Ibzan next judged for seven years;  
Then Elon judged for ten;  
And Abdon judged for eight; his sons  
Were forty kingly men.

Old Eli judged for forty years,  
He being priest the while,  
But lost the ark to Israëel  
Because his sons were vile.

Samuel the last, the best, the child  
Whom God called in the night,  
Anointed Saul, foretold his fall  
Who spared the Amalekite.

THE SIX PERIODS.



**T**HE Old Testament is the oldest and most remarkable book of ancient history. Primarily, it gives the sacred record of the chosen lineage and nation of Christ; incidentally, the most important events of contemporaneous secular history. Its history is grouped naturally about six great periods, as follows:

1. **Probation.** The period from the Creation to the Deluge, commencing with the fall of Adam and closing with the failure of the human race.

2. **Preparation.** The period from the Deluge to the Exodus, tracing the movements of Providence towards the formation of the chosen nation.

3. **Conquest.** The period from the Exodus to the Monarchy, during which the Jewish nation fought its way into possession of the "Land of Promise."

4. **Power.** The period from the Coronation of Saul, the first king, to the Division of the Kingdom after the death of Solomon; the period of greatest extent and prosperity.

5. **Decline.** The period from the Division of the Kingdom to the Captivity of Judah and the loss of national liberty, the result of idolatrous worship and civil dissension.

6. **Servitude.** The period from the Captivity of Judah to the Birth of Christ, and beyond to the final extinction of Jewish nationality, forty years after the death of Christ, during which Persia, Greece and Rome were successive foreign rulers. The events of this period are taken in part from secular history.

### I. Period of Probation.

**Time.** From the Creation, 4004 B. C., (?) to the Deluge, 2348 B. C.—1,656 years.

**Place.** North and east of the River Euphrates.

**Events.** 1. The Creation, in six periods. 2. The Fall of Man and his expulsion from Eden. 3. The succession of antediluvian patriarchs, in eleven generations, from Adam

to Shem. 4. The translation of Enoch, who "walked with God." 5. The warnings of Noah for 100 years, followed by the Deluge, from which Noah's family alone was saved.

**Persons.** 1. Adam, the first man. 2. Enoch, the first prophet. 3. Methuselah, the oldest patriarch. 4. Noah, the builder of the Ark.

Note that the lives of three patriarchs—Adam, Methuselah and Shem—extend contemporaneously from the Creation to Isaac, more than 2,150 years. Adam was contemporary with Methuselah 243 years; Methuselah with Shem 100 years; Shem with Abraham 150 years, and with Isaac 50 years. Thus easily and accurately might have passed the story of the Creation.

### II. Period of Preparation.

**Time.** From the Deluge, 2348 B. C., to the Exodus, 1491 B. C.—857 years.

**Places.** The Valley of the Euphrates, Canaan and Egypt.

**Events.** 1. The Dispersion at Babel in Chaldea, the beginning of diverse nationalities. 2. The call of Abraham out of Ur of Chaldea. 3. The sojourn of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Canaan, 2,000 years before Christ. 4. The descent into Egypt of Jacob and his family at the call of Joseph, his son, chief minister of Pharaoh. 5. The 250 years of Egyptian bondage, closing with the ten great plagues and the exodus from Egypt, the real beginning of the Jewish nation.

**Persons.** 1. Nimrod, grandson of Ham, reputed builder of Babel. 2. Melchizedek, king of Salem, or Jerusalem, the friend of Abraham. 3. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, honored as the fathers of the Jewish Nation. 4. Pharaoh, ruler of Egypt.

**Contemporaneous.** The successive monarchies of Chaldea or Babylonia, Assyria and Egypt.

### III. The Period of Conquest.

**Time.** From the Exodus, 1491 B. C., to the Hebrew Monarchy, 1095 B. C.—396 years.



**Places.** Northern Arabia and Canaan.

**Events.** 1. The institution of the Jewish civil and ceremonial laws at Sinai. 2. The forty years' wandering in the Wilderness by the Jewish nation. 3. The entrance into Canaan under Joshua in 1451 B. C. 4. The partial conquest of Canaan in twenty-five years, during which conquered lands were allotted to the Twelve Tribes. 5. The succession of the fifteen Judges, closing with Saul, the first king.

**Persons.** 1. Moses, the organizer and law-giver of the Jewish nation. 2. Aaron, his brother, the head of the ecclesiastical system. 3. Joshua, successor to Moses and conqueror of Canaan. 4. Deborah, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson, greatest of the Judges. 5. Samuel, last of the Judges and first of the great national Prophets.

**Contemporary History.** Founding of Greece, the Trojan War, Homer.

## IV. Period of Power.

**Time.** From the coronation of Saul, 1095 B. C., to Division of Kingdom, 975 B. C.—120 years.

**Place.** The Jewish Kingdom, extending from the River Euphrates to the Mediterranean, and from Syria to Egypt.

**Events.** 1. Defeat and death of Saul at Gilboa by Philistia. 2. David's capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusites, removal thither of the tabernacle and capital. 3. David's victories over Philistia, Moab, Syria, Edom and Ammon. 4. Solomon's temple erected on Mt. Moriah. 5. Solomon's idolatry, and revolt of the Ten Tribes.

**Persons.** 1. Saul, David and Solomon, the three greatest kings of the Jewish nation, each reigning forty years. 2. Nathan the prophet. 3. Hiram, king of Tyre, Solomon's ally.

**Contemporary History.** Athenian "Archons," "Heraclidæ" of Corinth, Samos and Smyrna.

## V. Period of Decline.

**Time.** From the Division of the Kingdom,

975 B. C., to the Captivity of Judah, 597 B. C.—378 years.

**Places.** Canaan, Assyria, Babylonia.

**Events.** 1. Israel's idolatrous worship at Dan and Bethel. 2. Invasion of Judah by Shishak, king of Egypt. 3. Defeat of Ethiopia, Philistia and Arabia by Asa and Jehoshaphat, kings of Judah. 4. Siege of Samaria, the capital of Israel, by Benhadad, king of Syria. 5. Captivity of the Ten Tribes by Sargon, king of Assyria. 6. Miraculous destruction of Sennacherib's Assyrian army in the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah. 7. Destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

**Persons.** Judah's good kings were: Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah and Josiah. Israel's nineteen kings were all evil. The chief prophets in succession were Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah.

**Contemporary History.** Carthage founded; Nineveh destroyed.

## VI. Period of Servitude.

**Time.** From the Captivity of Judah, 597 B. C., to Birth of Christ, 4 B. C.—593 years.

**Place.** Canaan, now called Judea.

**Events.** 1. Restoration of Judah after seventy years of captivity, in 536 B. C. 2. Dedication of the Second Temple, 515 B. C. 3. Reforms and rebuilding under Ezra and Nehemiah, beginning 457 B. C. 4. The close of prophecy under Malachi and end of Old Testament history.

**Persons.** 1. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, prophets of the Exile. 2. Cyrus the Great, deliverer from captivity. 3. Ezra and Nehemiah, the reformer and the restorer of Judah. 4. Judas Maccabeus, the Asmonean liberator. 5. Herod the Great, first of the usurping Herodian line.

**Contemporary History.** The three great empires, of Persia, Macedonia and Rome, in succession.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

## ROBERT RAIKES AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

THE closing decades of the eighteenth century witnessed a number of philanthropic experiments in England with children of the "lower classes." These sprang, for the most part, out of pity for their degraded condition and apprehensions for the security of society, and were fruitful of good results. Only one of them went beyond the alleviation of immediate ills, and grew into a movement.

That Robert Raikes became the "founder of the Sunday School," while Moffat, Webb, Stock, Crampton and others who were engaged in the same work—some of them before him and perhaps with larger local success—did not exceed their local limitations, is due in part to Raikes' personality, but more to the special facilities afforded by his business and its connections.

Robert Raikes, whose personality has been recovered for us by his latest biographer, was born in 1726, the son of a Gloucester printer and editor, and inherited his father's occupation and position.

He is pictured as a "fair, well-looking man," above medium height, and comfortably stout, "buckish" and "stylish" in appearance, with his dark blue coat and white, buff or fancy waistcoat with silver-gilt buttons, cambric frills and ruffs, nankeen breeches, white stockings and buckles in his shoes. He was accustomed to carry a stick in his hand when it was not occupied with his gold snuff-box or the plain horn one for common use. He wore "a brown wig with a double row of curls," and a three-cornered hat.

He was a man of "gay and joyous temperament," an affectionate husband and father, of very transparent character and social instincts. In his religious views he is reported as "evangelical, with a leaning toward mysticism." He was "a good business man, steady, methodical and very tenacious of purpose," kindly and benevolent, but not without a touch of the vanity that often marks the "self-made" man.

As proprietor of the only printing press in several counties for many years, he was brought in contact with people of literary

tastes and those who were socially far above him. As a newspaper man he had forced upon his attention a situation that courted investigation and which under investigation could not fail to appeal to his benevolent disposition and Christian impulses.

His attention seems to have been first drawn to the deplorable condition of the prisons, and for a number of years his efforts were put forth to make more tolerable the lot of those confined in them, especially the poor debtors. From these he advanced to the study of the degraded classes from which there was coming a continual procession "ripe or ripening for the gallows." He had come to believe that their degradation was due to ignorance and idleness, and that reformation could be secured by restraint and instruction in the rudiments of morality. After some years of fruitless efforts with them, at some time before 1780 it came into his mind to attempt the problem through the children, "filthy, degraded, with the pitiable shum-born look written all over their faces," whom he saw in the streets of the cathedral town, "spending their Sundays in sports and drinking, with lewd and brutal songs." Gloucester was the seat of the pin industry, and child-labor was largely employed. On Sunday the children who had toiled through the week were turned loose to riot in all sorts of vice.

In 1780 he began an experiment, which he pursued without publicity for three years, to see whether these degraded children "when disciplined and instructed would show the same evidences of human feelings and instincts as those more favorably situated," and whether he was right in the suggestion that had come to him that salvation might be through the children.

He is not represented as sanguine of the result, and no wonder. If contemporary accounts may be trusted, the boys he first gathered in "Sooty Alley," and paid a poor woman a shilling a day to teach, were an unpromising set. There was not much encouragement in the laughter that greeted him and his associate, Mrs. Brandon, as they passed along the street with their charges,



and the cry, "Bobby Wild Goose and his ragged regiment."

But at the end of three years he was satisfied, and a great scheme of popular education began slowly to mature in his mind. Through his newspaper, and in other ways, he had secured the interest of such men as the Wesleys and Whitefield, and on November 3, 1783, the birthday of the Sunday-school as a movement, he published an editorial in his paper, and began to exploit his plans in the weekly issues, and in the popular and influential "Gentleman's Magazine." In 1784 there were five schools in Gloucester, with seventy-seven boys and eighty-eight girls, the girls uniformed in bonnets "which were provided for them after they were civilized." These schools were put under the management of a "board," and the rules for them, provided by Raikes, were aimed to secure personal cleanliness and to prevent cursing and swearing in church. Some time before 1785 he prepared and published a text-book for these schools, "Redinmadesy" (Reading made easy), whose contents were in harmony with the purpose of the Sunday-school as described by a contemporary, "to furnish opportunities of instruction to the children of the poorer part of the parish without interfering with any industry of the week days."

In four years the number of scholars in these schools in the kingdom had risen to 250,000; in Newcastle alone there were 5,000. The improvement in the morals of the children and in the conditions that produce and encourage vice and crime were remarkable.

But the new movement was not to go without opposition. It was a time of anxious fears. France was "under the shadow of the guillotine, and England was clamoring for more popular franchises." The cry was raised that the masses must be kept in their place. Even the "Gentleman's Magazine," which had been the steadfast ally of Raikes, was forced to admit to its columns in 1797 a fierce onslaught on the Sunday-school as "subversive of that order, that industry, that peace and tranquility which constitute the happiness of society; and that so far from deserving encouragement and applause it merits our contempt, and ought to be exploded as the vain chimerical institution of a visionary projector." A Scotch preacher's great objection is "the fear that they will destroy all family religion." Even the

friends of the schools feared the results, and in 1788 Raikes wrote: "It seems as if I had discovered a new country where no other adventurer chooses to follow."

But there were friends, some of whom saw farther than Raikes and his plans of bringing "the savage, unruly elements of society under control and providing them with an elementary education." As early as 1784 John Wesley wrote: "Perhaps God may have a deeper end thereto than men are aware of. Who knows but what some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians?"

The second great forward step in the eighteenth century was taken in Wales, where "Charles of Bala," who had received his impulse from Rev. Griffith Jones of Llanddowvion, and had been working on independent lines, gathered adults as well as children into the Sunday-school, and centered its intent and activity in the study of the Bible. He was the first to devise and hold public meetings in the interest of the Sunday-school, so that the twentieth century ideal of many was approached, as in his care the Sunday-school "wore more the aspect of a church in orderly operation than a school."

Robert Raikes retired from business in 1802; in 1804 the "freedom of the city" was conferred upon him; in 1811 he died, after an illness of scarce a half-hour's duration. The children of his own school followed his body to the grave and sang Sunday-school hymns as they went.

He had seen his company of twelve boys grow to an army of a quarter of a million, the movement that he originated adopted in Wales, Scotland, Ireland and America. "An experiment which now looks so simple and so humble as that of trying to lure these ragged children of wretchedness to the cathedral service and paying some poor woman a shilling a day to teach them, resulted not only in a marked improvement in morals among the children of Gloucester and a general amendment of the condition of the city," but gave to the nineteenth century and the world the most potent instrument for moral and religious advancement, to be passed on to the twentieth century for a development beyond the dreams of the most sanguine.

ROBERT R. MERRILL, D. D.

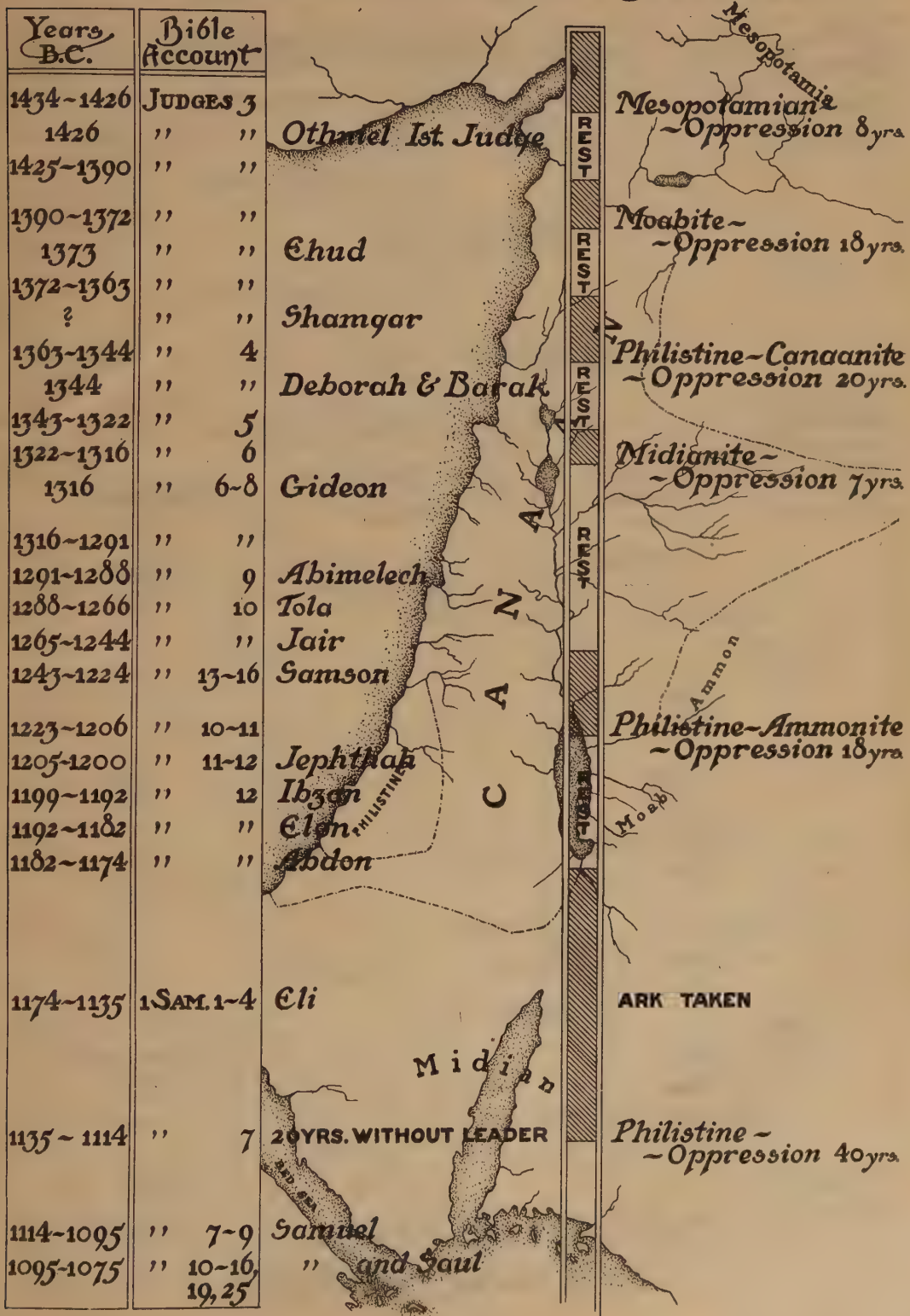
# The TIME of the PATRIARCHS

| Years<br>B.C. | Bible<br>Account |                                      |
|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 4004          | GEN. 2           | <i>Adam and Eve created<br/>Cain</i> |
| 3874          | " 5              | <i>Seth born</i>                     |
| 3017          | " "              | <i>Enoch's translation</i>           |
| 2948          | " "              | <i>Noah's birth</i>                  |
| 2348          | " 7              | <i>The flood</i>                     |
| 2247          | " 11             | <i>Babel</i>                         |
| 1921          | " 12             | <i>Abraham called</i>                |
| 1896          | " 21             | <i>Isaac born</i>                    |
| 1838          | " 25             | <i>Jacob born</i>                    |
| 1729          | " 37             | <i>Joseph sold</i>                   |
| 1716          | " 41             | <i>Joseph ruler in Egypt</i>         |
| 1709-1702     | " 41-2           | <i>Seven years famine</i>            |
| 1706          | " 46             | <i>Jacob goes to Egypt</i>           |
| 1571          | EXODUS 2         | <i>Moses born</i>                    |
| APRIL<br>1491 | " 12-14          | <i>The Exodus</i>                    |
| 1491          | " 19-31          | <i>Giving of the Law</i>             |
| 1491-1451     | EX. 15-J. 3      | <i>Wilderness wanderings</i>         |
| APRIL<br>1451 | JOSH. 3          | <i>Crossing Jordan</i>               |
| 1426          | " 24             | <i>Death of Joshua</i>               |





# The TIME of the JUDGES



# The TIME of the *KINGS*

*Bible  
Account*

I KINGS 9  
and  
I CHRON. 10

TO

I KINGS 11  
and  
II CHRON. 9

I KINGS 12  
and  
II CHRON. 10

TO

II KINGS 9  
and  
II CHRON. 22

## The United Kingdom

*Saul*

40  
yrs.

1095 B.C.

*David*

40  
yrs.

1055 B.C.

*Solomon*

40  
yrs.

1015 B.C.

*Israel* 975 B.C. *Judah*

*The Kingdom  
Divided*

*Jereboam*  
22 yrs.

*Nadab*  
2 yrs.

II Dynasty

*Baasha*  
24 yrs.

*Elah*  
2 yrs.

*Zimri*  
7 days.

930 B.C.

III Dynasty

*Omri*  
6 yrs.

929 B.C.

925 B.C.

918 B.C.

*Ahab*  
22 yrs.

*Ahaziah*  
2 yrs.

897 B.C.

896 B.C.

889 B.C.

885 B.C.

*Joram*  
12 yrs.

884 B.C.

*Rehoboam*  
17 yrs.

*Abijah*  
3 yrs.

*Asa*  
41 yrs.

*Jehoshaphat*  
25 yrs.

JOINTLY 4 yrs.

*Joram* 8 yrs.

*Ahaziah*  
1 yr.

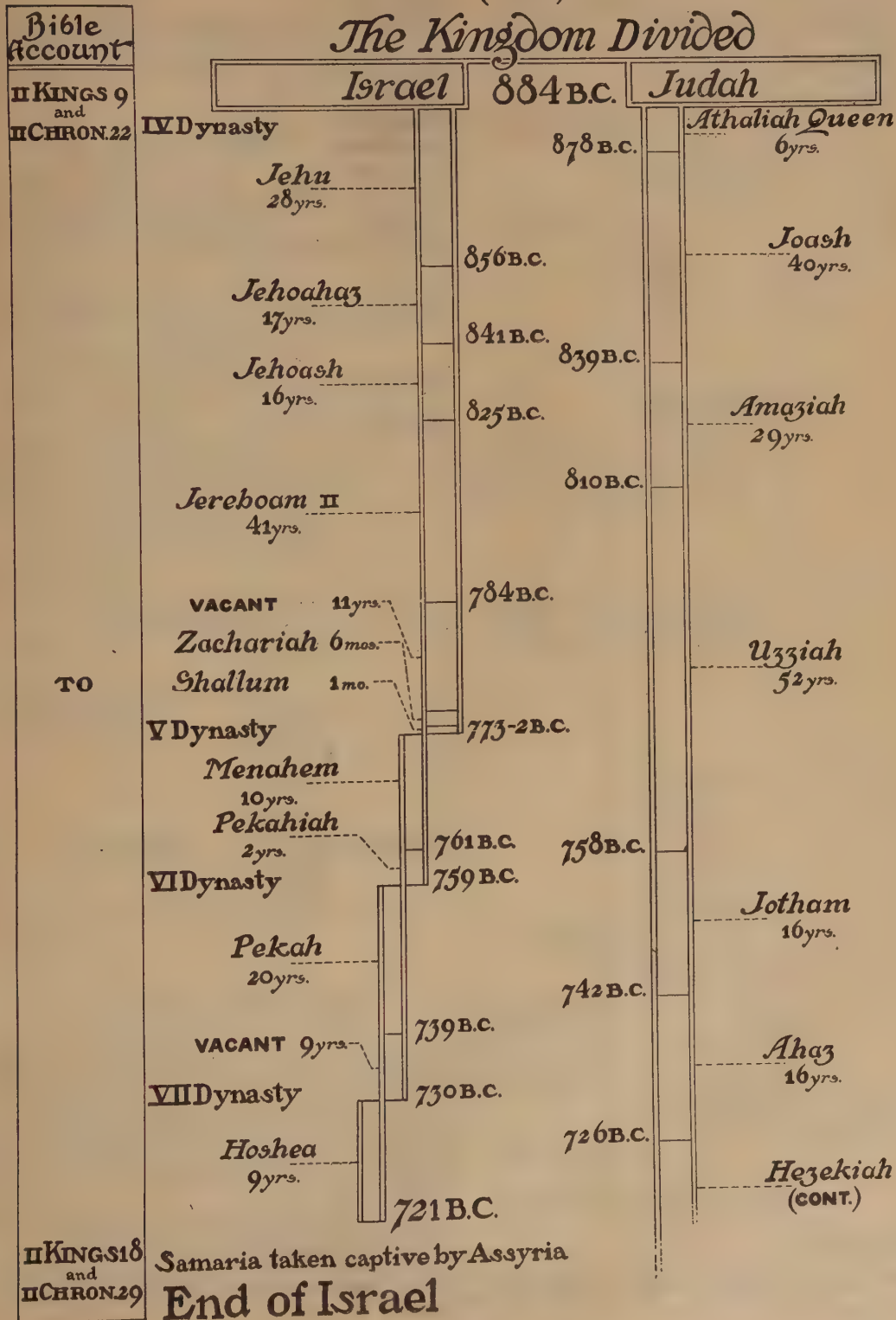
**Jehu slays both Kings**



# The TIME of the *KINGS*

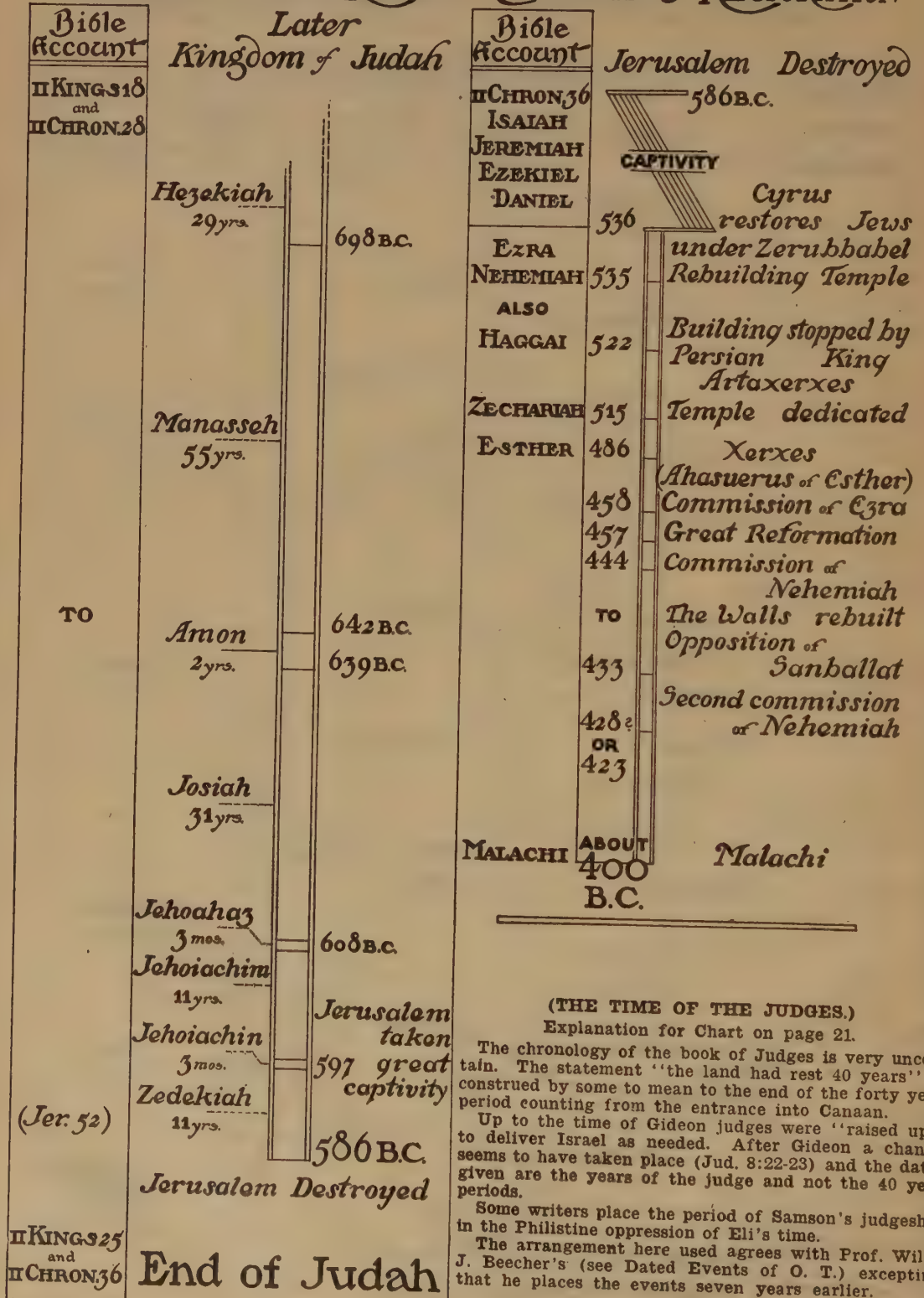
(CONT.)

## The Kingdom Divided



# The TIME of the **KINGS**

# CAPTIVITY & RESTORATION



## (THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.)

Explanation for Chart on page 21.

The chronology of the book of Judges is very uncertain. The statement "the land had rest 40 years" is construed by some to mean to the end of the forty year period counting from the entrance into Canaan.

Up to the time of Gideon judges were "raised up" to deliver Israel as needed. After Gideon a change seems to have taken place (Jud. 8:22-23) and the dates given are the years of the judge and not the 40 year periods.

Some writers place the period of Samson's judgeship in the Philistine oppression of Eli's time.

The arrangement here used agrees with Prof. Willis J. Beecher's (see Dated Events of O. T.) excepting that he places the events seven years earlier.



FIRST DIVISION  
THE PENTATEUCH







## THE CREATION OF LIGHT

BY GUSTAVE DORÉ

To write about the creation of the world is a hopeless task in view of the wonderful language of the first chapter of the Bible. It tells that the earth was formless, empty and dark. How shall a man picture darkness? The artist in representing something must depend upon actualities of form. There are no actualities in darkness. The French artist, Gustave Doré, in casting about for a figure of God—whom he had never seen—in the act of creating light, could only use the shape of a human being, and clothe Him in noble draperies, having no resemblance to ordinary garments.

We can imagine that the Divine Being had no need of something to stand on, but the invisible God could not be pictured unless He be like a man standing on something material. So Doré has drawn many forms of clouds, they being the least material of all things that we know, and still being visible. We see in the picture the shape of the globe without mountains, rivers or seas. The clouds are cleverly pictured in straight lines below and rolling forms above. On this cloud mass stands a figure whose draperies suggest wind as if the air were already stirring. With up-lifted hands he commands the light to burst forth. It is not yet the sun, but it does suggest light.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON



COPYRIGHT 1912 BY THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

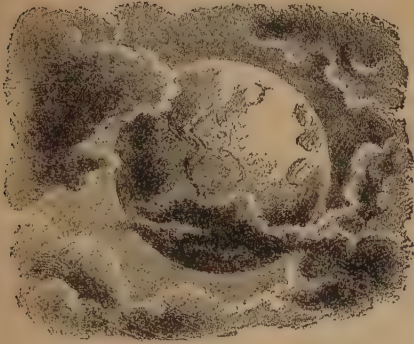
THE CREATION OF LIGHT After Doré's Black and White by Max Bihn.



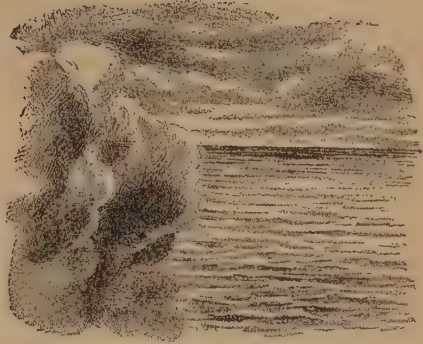


# THE CREATION

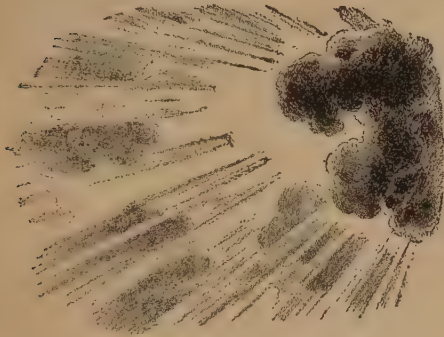
In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the



was without form;  
and void;  
and darkness was  
upon the face of

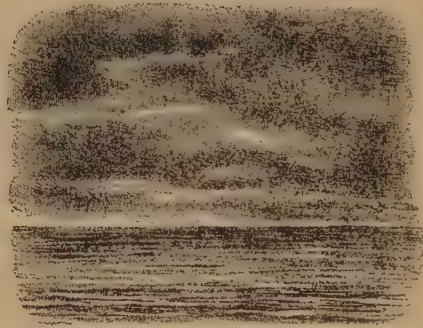


And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be

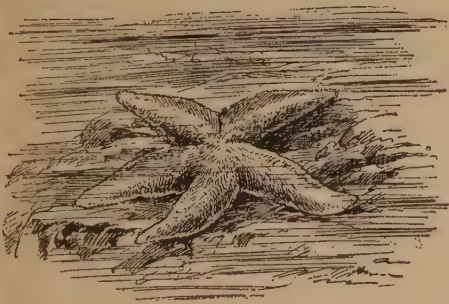


: and there was  
light.

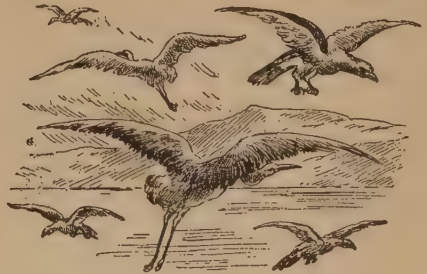
And God saw  
the light, that it  
was good; and  
God divided the  
light from the



And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and morning  
were the first day. And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving



that hath life, and



that may fly above  
the earth in the open  
firmament of heaven.  
And God created great



and every living  
creature that moveth,  
which the waters  
brought forth abundantly,  
after their kind, and  
every winged fowl after  
his kind: and God saw  
that it was good.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 1.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Creator of Heaven and earth. May we be able to see Thy hand in all things about us. May we feel Thy Spirit and heart beat. May we above all remember that we are created by Thee, for Thee and in Thy image and for Thy glory. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"The angel chorus ceased their song,  
And crowded in a shining throng  
At Heaven's gate, to view the sight  
As myriad flaming orbs of light,  
Flung out and far through endless space,  
Found each its own appointed place,  
And on its ceaseless course began  
As purposed in God's wondrous plan;  
God said again, 'Tis good,' and then  
The angels answered back, 'Amen.'"

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about B. C. 4004. Place, Where God touched the earth. **Persons,** God, His Spirit, angels.

**Scripture Setting:** **God Creating.** God's power in creation, Isa. 40:21-31. His wisdom, Psalms 104:1-12. Order of creation, Gen. 1:4-25. Voices of creation, Psalms 19. Wonders of creation, Job 37:1-24. God's challenge in creation, Job 38:18-35. Christ the creating God, John 1:1-18. Christ's greater creation, Col. 1:9-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Genesis is a book of beginnings, of foundations, of essentials. It is the golden gateway into the Bible temple. This first lesson gives us pictures of God and His creation. 1. Time of the creation. "In the beginning" allows all the time that may be needed, or that can be

shown to be necessary. 2. Author of creation. The phrase "and God said" occurs ten times; "let there be" occurs seven times. The human conscience and consciousness accept the name God as inclusive of all the powers conceivable for a Supreme Being. 3. Method and principle of creation. We accept what Scripture says, "The worlds were framed by the word of God." Only God is a Creator, for it is a making something out of nothing. 4. Kinds of creation—seven great lines or fields of creation. 5. The perpetual law of creation. Kind from and after its kind. 6. Perfection of creation. By the fivefold statement, "God saw that it was good," and at last, he saw that all was "very good." 7. Crown of creation. This is man, made to rule the world and worship God.

## HOW GOD MADE THE WORLD.

**The Land, the Sea, and the Light.** Can you find Chicago on the map? Yes, here it is, and it is only a dot. Your father may own a large house or hundreds of acres of land, but you can't find even a dot to show where either one is. The big round world contains thousands and thousands of homes and farms, more than anyone can count. How did they all begin to be? Well, it is a wonderful story of goodness and power. Much that we see now did not exist in these shapes and forms at first; but all the great cities and buildings and nations were made possible by what God did at first. What God did was different from anything that man can do. We call it creating because it is making something out of nothing. Man can't do that. He can only fashion things out of the material God has created. This makes it all so very, very wonderful. We learn this out of God's Word and know it to be really true. We could not find it out any other way. Many things man can find out by investigation and seeking. But he can know about creation only from God's Word, which is a revelation from Heaven. Many other things in these Bible stories may be hard for us to understand, but we believe them because God has revealed them in His Word.

Those first pictures show the things which God made the first days, when time began to be. God Himself never had a beginning and we mark time by starting when God

began to create land and sea and light. These are all very necessary for all else that God created later.

God said, "Let there be Light." Napoleon is said to have replied to some skeptical officers, who had been airing their atheism, by pointing to the moon and stars: "Gentlemen, what you say sounds well, but who made those things?" Nature is constantly teaching us. There is no sinful planet; no selfish and miserly sun; no wicked and discordant stars; no rebellious winds. The sea does not refuse service; the clouds do not loiter on their errands; the hills are not penurious; the ground does not refuse to yield its harvest.—Selected.

**Things That Fly and Swim.** The land and sea and light do not have life, but they are necessary to life. Even after the sun, moon and stars were created the great world was still and quiet. There were grass and flowers and trees, but no living animals or birds. There was only the rustling of the leaves, the tinkling of the little streams, and the breaking of the waves on the shore. It looked very much as if it was intended for something else. And on the fifth day the air was full of birds and the waters were full of fish. If anyone had been living then what a surprise this would have been to him. All kinds of beautiful birds sailing through the air and lighting on the trees; and the fish, great and small, in the waters, were created by the God who had fashioned the world. A very wonderful thing about the birds and fish, as also about the trees and plants, was that God made them so



that they would go on multiplying. Each kind would grow more of its own kind till the world should be full of them. Because of the Bible revelation concerning these things, we have no trouble about believing them.

**God Made It All.** In my home hangs a painting of beautiful roses. I never look at it but I think of the dear girl who painted it. It is a constant reminder of her love, though we have not met for years. In looking out upon the grand and beautiful in earth, sky and sea, I like to think, "My Father made it and pronounced it good." It draws us tenderly near the Infinite to think lovingly upon all He has made, and nature is as truly a revelation of God to us as His written word.—Selected.

**Things That Walk and Creep.** What a lot of them there are! The air and sea had things living and moving in them; and now the land is to be peopled by four-footed and many-footed animals. Can you tell the names of all those in the pictures? These were all created on the sixth day. On this day, too, God made all the little animals that creep and crawl and all the insects; and indeed everything on the land, except the birds, which were created the day before. Now we begin to see a reason why the world was created. How beautiful everything seems! All was so perfect that God Himself said "it was good." Again and again He looked at the work of each day, and it is said every time that "God saw that it was good." If He pronounced it good, we are sure it was really so. And all is beautiful, not only in appearance but in the harmony that existed everywhere. Sin had not come into the world to disturb and trouble. Everything had its place and did as God intended. All things receive their orders from God, and are supplied by His bounty. Plants, animals, fishes, birds, are all working for a living. God sees to it that each is successful.

**A Lesson of Trust.** Men must have food and raiment or perish. God has made provision for every need. He who created a body for the spirit, shall not He also make provision for that body? He who feeds the sparrow and clothes the lily, shall not He provide for the highest of His creations? Away, then, with foolish, anxious care! Do your work and do it well. Never fear, but trust God for everything. Luther said, "We are commanded to have dominion over all nature, and yet we behave so shamefully that a feeble sparrow must hold forth before our eyes and ears, teaching us to trust God, though we have the whole Bible and our reason to help us.—Selected.

**What Was It All For?** All that God had created thus far was good and beautiful. But God is not satisfied. He sees something more important than all else. What

do you think it is? Here are birds, and fish and animals—like so many living and moving pictures—in the sea, and air, and on the land. There was one thing needed that God saw to be very important. He wanted someone He could trust, and who would be able to rule and master all that was in the world. So God formed man out of the dust of the ground. In the next story we will learn that man is very different from all other animals. The picture shows the first man God created. He never could have grown from any of the other animals, as some people foolishly think. He was perfect in every way at the very first, and all the other animals saw it and knew it. Adam gave names to all the animals, and so he was better able to rule them. God helped him in all this, and then ordered that he should have dominion over the fish and the birds, the animals, and even the insects.

**Be True to the Image.** At the beginning it was said, "Let us make man in our own image." Nowhere is the proof that this image, though marred, has been lost. Looking upon humanity today, God may say, "Whose image and superscription has it?" The answer should come, "God's." This being so, there is then the response, "Render unto God the things that be God's." The whole motive of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to make this ownership good. The appeal is made to man: "You belong not to yourself or to evil—you belong to God."

**Quiz and Study:** 1. Name as many things as you can that God created. 2. How many attributes of God are implied in creation? 3. Why is the first book of the Bible called Genesis? 4. Who wrote it, and what other books did he write? 5. When did the day of rest begin and how? 6. What three reasons does creation suggest, why we should love and worship God? 7. How many big animals can you name? Small animals? Birds? Fishes? Insects?

**Challenge Text:** "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork," Psa. 19: (1).

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. Creation shows greatest evidence of wisdom and goodness—no chance about it. 2. God is the eternal "I Am," and we face eternity, whether we think of His past or His future. 3. The Old Testament is as necessary to the New as the foundation is to a building. 4. Nature and Revelation must agree, when rightly interpreted, for both books are from the same infinite and perfect Author. 5. The Bible "is in perfect accord with known science" (Dana), but its great mission and function is to reveal spiritual truth. 6. God, as Creator, has entire and undisputed ownership of all things. 7. God is a Being of infinite power, wisdom, goodness, and is worthy of obedience and worship. 8. God's will is His Word, and will and word are one with Him. 9. Atheism and materialism are extremest folly in the light of this sublime record. 10. As to the two testaments of Scripture, we may say:

"The New is in the Old concealed,  
The Old is in the New revealed."

DR. J. M. COON.



And the Lord God formed



of the dust  
of the ground,  
and breathed  
into his



the breath of  
life; and man  
became a  
living soul.  
And the Lord  
God planted a



eastward in  
Eden; and there  
he put the man  
whom he had  
formed. And out  
of the ground  
made the Lord  
God to grow  
every tree that is  
pleasant to the  
sight, and good  
for food; the



of life also in  
the midst of  
the garden  
and the



of knowledge  
of good  
and evil.  
And a



went out of Eden  
to water the  
garden; and from  
thence it was  
parted, and became  
into four heads.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS GEN. 2:1-25.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help us to see Thy finger marks on us and to feel the thrill of Thy breath in us. May we ever be mindful of our holy origin, and of Thy holy purpose in our creation. Grant that the homes of earth may be as Edens of blessed fellowship and worship; and made secure in and by Jesus Christ. In His name. Amen.

"And so these twain, upon the skirts of Time, Sit side by side, full-summed in all their powers, Self-reverent each, and reverencing each, Distinct in individualities."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 4004. Place, Garden of Eden. Persons, Adam and Eve, and God.

**Scripture Setting:** Man and his First Home. Man made by God, Job 10:1-2. His first home, Gen. 2:9-25. Greatness of man, Psa. 8. The offspring of God, Acts 17:22-23. Wonderfully made, Psa. 139. Re-created in holiness, Eph. 4:17-32. Man and the Sabbath, Mark 2:23; 3:6. The believer's rest, Heb. 4:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Some great lessons are taught in this account of man and his home. 1. Man's creation the result of careful deliberation. The "let us" suggests Father, Son and Spirit in council. 2. Man is created in the Divine

image; and therefore capable of, and responsible for, all that is Divine and God-like. 3. Man is given physical dominion over all the other creation, which explains all the marvels of discovery, invention and conquest. 4. Man is to get his food in and from the earth, because of the Divine law and by virtue of co-operating forces. His living is a perpetual miracle. 5. Man is the crowning act of God, the exponent of all that God has to reveal by flesh and blood. 6. "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy His power." His business is spiritual worship and development. 7. The Lord's day is God's constant challenge and help to man to rise to his Heavenly privileges.

### GOD MAKING THE FIRST HOME.

**What Makes the Real Home?** Did you ever try to think how many homes there are in the world? You know what your home is, and something of what it means. There are millions and millions of homes; some like yours, some possibly better, and many not so good. God built the first home and this story tells us about it. The very first thing needed, and much the most important, were two persons, a man and a woman. We have pictures of God making a man. In the first picture he is alive, but only as a beautiful animal. The second picture shows how God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life," so that man became a living soul.

God had seen that all He created was good, but He now wanted someone who could talk with Him, love Him and understand much about what He was doing. So God said, "Let Us make man in Our own image." God is three Persons in one, and so he spoke that way. We saw that man was more powerful than all else created, and so was to rule all; but now we see that he is to have many powers that other creatures did not have. Since he is created in God's image, he must be like God in many ways. But a man alone can't make a home, however good and great he may be.

God saw that one more act of creation was necessary. He caused the man to fall asleep and he took a rib from his side and with it made a beautiful woman. He brought her to the man and she became his wife. God really married them, and they were able to talk to each other and love each other. The man's name was Adam, mean-

ing "ground," and the woman's name was Eve, meaning "life." They two made the first real home, and from them came all other families in the world.

**Man Related to God.** The king of Prussia, visiting in one of his villages, was welcomed by the school children. When it came his turn to speak he thanked them for their welcome, and taking an orange, asked, "To what kingdom does this belong?" "The vegetable kingdom, sire," said a little girl. Holding up a gold coin, he asked, "To what does this belong?" "To the mineral kingdom," was the quick response. "To what kingdom do I belong, then?" asked the king. The child blushed. She did not like to say "The animal kingdom," lest their royal visitor might be offended. Then there flashed into her mind the thought, "God made man in his own image," and looking up brightly she said, "To God's kingdom, sire." The king was deeply touched. A tear stood in his eye. Laying his hand upon the child's head he said, "God grant that I may be accounted worthy of that kingdom."—A. C. M.

**The First Dwelling Place.** This was a beautiful garden, more of a park than a building, but it was all they needed in that warm climate. Adam and Eve were very happy in loving each other and in loving and worshiping God. I think the very first thing they did was to rest and praise God. The seventh day God had rested and so set an example for all people and for all time. God was specially pleased with the man and woman He created. Of all else He "saw that it was good," but now He "saw that all was very good."

This garden home was very large, and was named Eden, meaning "pleasure." It was not only very beautiful, as is shown in that large picture, but it furnished all that they needed to make life happy. We might



know this was so when God had prepared it specially for them. When Adam and Eve first knew this large, beautiful park was to be their home, how glad they were! Doubtless the first thing they did was to walk through it and around it. I am sure, too, that they kept saying, "How beautiful it all is!" and "How good God is to us!"

**The Touch of God.** A gentleman visiting a glass manufactory saw a man molding clay into the great pats which later were to be used in shaping the glass. Noticing that all the moulding was done by hand, he said to the workman:

"Why do you not use a tool to aid you in shaping the clay?"

"There is no tool that can do this kind of work," replied the artisan. "We have tried a number of tools, but somehow it needs the human touch."

So nothing but the touch of God can explain the beauty and fitness of the world to be the home of man.

**Trees, Trees, and the Tree.** As Adam and Eve lived together in this garden they grew to be more and more like each other. All the pictures show a great many trees. We know that God would plant all the beautiful trees and shrubs in this park home. Also, He filled it with trees that would bear fruit and nuts for Adam and Eve to eat. The Bible says that the garden had "every tree that was pleasant to look at and good for food." All they had to do was to care for the grounds, trim the trees and gather the fruit and nuts. There was great abundance of everything, for God would see to that.

All this time, we do not know how long, Adam and Eve would meet God often and talk with Him. They had no thought of doing anything that would displease Him. But God wanted them to be intelligent in their goodness, and so he made a test for them. He planted a tree in the center of the garden and named it the "tree of good and evil." He told them they must not eat of that tree, for if they did they would die.

In this way, every time they passed that tree they remembered God's command, and so had a new thought about God. Also, every time they might have a desire to taste that fruit, but would resist the desire, they would get stronger and better in their own lives. It was really a fine way of testing them, and helping them to do and be their best.

"Thou Shalt not." Here is the announcement of a great principle, that human life is a restricted life, a life subjected to law; and he who confesses this subjection remains in Eden, and he who denies it is banished. As God made the ocean to roll between shores, and said to it, "Thus far and no farther," so he placed the created soul between

banks, and said, "Here only may thy bright waters flow." The banks are not narrow. Human life need not be called a river, for it is as vast as the ocean, deep and strong and sublime; but it has a shore all around, and along that shore the cherubim stand, and flaming swords gleam, to banish those who cross the boundary marked all around by the finger of the Almighty.—Professor Swing.

**God's Great Water Color Painting.** The last picture shows us what really kept the park in all its beauty. It was the river flowing through it. Without the water from stream or cloud, all would have dried up and become brown and black. At last all the trees, shrubs, flowers and grasses would have died out. The water would keep all alive and growing and also would give the great variety of color which one sees in the garden or park. The soil and sun, the trees and grasses, are the paints God uses, but He mixes all with water, to produce the beauty, fragrance and fruitage which we see everywhere. To men and animals, and even to trees, water is as necessary as air, light and food. The way the water was kept in its place told of God's wisdom and power. The two banks held it like two great walls. The stream would flow along, watering the garden, but would not overflow to flood and destroy. Water, like fire, is a good servant but a hard master.

**God's Face in Nature and In Man.** There was a tradition that the face of Dante was painted on one of the walls of the Bargello, in Florence. One day an artist ordered the walls cleaned and the rubbish to be removed. Gradually the face was found, in dim outline at first, and finally in every distinct feature. God's image is in every man—obscured by neglect, defaced by sin, covered over by the rubbish of worldliness. It is the Christian's business to restore the image, both in himself and others.—J. W. Sylvester.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell of another garden, and who suffered there? 2. What garden is mentioned in connection with Christ's death? 3. What is better than the garden of Eden? 4. How was the creation of Adam different from that of an animal? 5. How was Eve's creation different from that of Adam? 6. Why do we observe the first day of the week as Lord's day?

**Challenge Text.** "God created man in His own —, in the image of — created He him." Gen. 1: (2).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Man alone, the crown of creation, is the only rebel against God! 2. It is man's duty to care for the soul, and not to forget the body, the soul's casket. 3. The family and the Sabbath are the foundation stones of society and the nation. 4. Because created in God's image, (1) man is capable of being saved; (2) he is worth saving; (3) he has promise and potency for highest achievements; (4) he should use all powers and resources for God's glory and the progress of his kingdom. 5. Man and woman are co-equal and co-ordinate, each superior to the other in some respects.

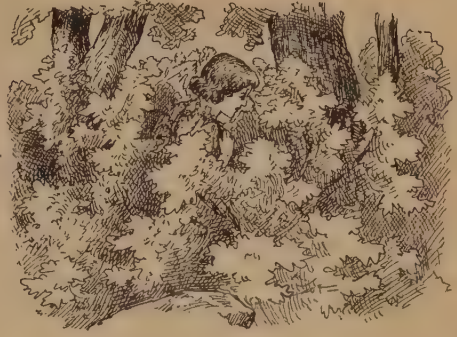
DR. J. M. COON.



And the Lord God called unto



and said unto him,  
Where art thou?  
And he said, I  
heard thy voice in  
the garden, and I  
was afraid,  
because I  
was naked, and I



myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the



whereof I  
commanded  
thee that thou  
shouldest not  
eat? And the  
man said, The



whom thou gavest to be with me, she



and  
I did



And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The



beguiled  
me, and  
I did



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 3:1-19.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help us to see how weak we are in ourselves, and how determined Satan is to lead us into sin. May we ever seek to know only Thy will and faithfully perform it. Keep us from parleying with sin, or thinking it is "only a little one" or only "for this once." Be Thou our Helper, Guide and Saviour. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Deep are the wounds which sin has made.  
Where shall the sinner find a cure?  
In vain, alas, is nature's aid;  
The work exceeds her utmost power.  
But can no sovereign balm be found,  
And is no kind physician nigh,  
To ease the pain and heal the wound,  
Ere life and hope forever fly?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, beginning of the race of man, perhaps about B. C. 4004. Place, Garden of Eden. Persons, Adam, Eve, Satan in the form of a serpent, God.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Sin. Man's greatest enemy, Jas. 1:1-15. Sin and death, Rom. 5:12-21. Consequences of sin, Gen. 3:17-24. All have sinned, Rom. 3:19-26. Our great adversary, 1 Pet. 5:6-11. Need of forgiveness, Psa. 51:1-19. The earth cursed, 2 Pet. 3:1-14. God's great remedy for sin, John 3:1-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Sin is a small word, but with great issues, and therefore one of the

greatest of themes. We are impressed with certain great facts about sin. 1. Two things stand out clearly: that it is disobedience to God and comes by Satan's temptation. 2. It is cunning and deceitful, seeking to undermine the character of God. 3. To try to throw it off is child's play, as every one's conscience must admit. 4. It grows rapidly to be gross, insolent, deceitful, selfish, cruel. 5. Sin is its own detective and secures its own arrest. Then God convicts it out of its own mouth. 6. Mercy in spite of sin: God will defeat sin and Satan.

### HOW SIN BEGAN IN THE WORLD.

**Don't Parley with the Tempter.** Everyone has seen a snake of some kind. What is the largest one you ever saw, and what kind was it? Do you think a man would play with a rattlesnake, or a copperhead? No; he would kill it as quickly as he could. If it were a woman, or girl, or small boy, that saw it, the safest thing to do would be to run. Sin is far, far worse than the most poisonous snake. The only safe thing to do with sin is to kill it, or to flee from it. That snake in the picture represents sin, or Satan. One day, when Eve was alone, and walking about in her beautiful park home, she was surprised to hear the snake speak to her. She wondered at it, and stopped to listen. Satan had entered into the snake, to try to make Adam and Eve sin. He was sly, and watched for a time when Adam was not present. It was really Satan speaking through the snake. The first thing he said was, "Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree?" As much as to say, "Are you real sure about that command? There must be some mistake, for this is the one tree whereof you ought to eat. Eve should not have stopped to parley at all with anyone who found fault with God. The longer she waited, the harder it was to break away. Eve said that they had plenty to eat, and did not need the fruit of this tree, and also that they would die if they ate of it. "Oh, no, you won't," said the snake; "that is just to scare you."

**Choosing the Battle-Ground.** Wise commanders always seek to choose for every conflict the region where the surroundings favor themselves and impede the enemy. Sometimes they even fall back in order to

reach what is for them a good place to fight. So we should do in fighting Satan. It is possible to choose such good fields upon which to meet temptation that the battle becomes much easier; the victory with faith and courage certain. The Christian home, the church of Jesus Christ, a helpful friend, these are ways by which we may get the advantage over the tempter.

**"Just This Once"—"For the Good It Will Do."** They were right by the forbidden tree then, for Satan was cunning and planned it so. And the snake said, "Why, if you eat of this tree you will be as gods, and know good and evil." As he pointed to it, Eve looked, and saw that it was "good for food," "pleasant to the eyes," and that it would "make one wise." Almost before she thought what she was doing, she took and ate. Sin is apt to be quickly done, for Satan knows that if one takes time to pray, or even to think carefully about it, he may decide not to sin. The picture shows Eve and the snake talking it over. Eve looks worried, because it is against God's order; but when the snake says it will be so much better for her, she decides to do it. The snake lied to Eve, but she did not know that. Her great mistake was in doing anything that was different from what God commanded, or even considering it. By eating the fruit she did begin to know evil, and know how to do it, and even have a desire to do it.

But where is the snake? It has done its work, and has glided away. So always with Satan. When he gets his wicked work started in the heart and life, he knows the wickedness will go on working of itself.



"Just this once," is Satan's plea as to wine drinking, or card playing, or dancing, or theater-going, or cheating, or any kind of sin. The sly old fellow knows that "this once" will go on repeating itself and multiplying itself day after day. And do you know, he will often send the first bad thought, or desire, into the mind by his system of wireless telegraphy? Oh, he is a sly one!

**"Adam, Where Art Thou?"** This is God calling, but what does He want Adam for? Why, just as soon as the snake left Eve, she hunted up Adam and told him what she had done. It was easy for him to be tempted by Eve, and so he also ate of the forbidden fruit. You see that sin not only goes on repeating itself in the one who first sins, but it goes out and gets others to sin. Satan knows this, too, so he did not need to hunt up Adam. By sinning, Eve stops serving God and begins to serve Satan. Why did God have to call for Adam? He had hidden away among the trees, for he knew that they had both done wrong. The little alarm clock called conscience, that God puts in every one, had made them afraid. They did not want to meet God, or even think of Him. But God will find them, and really for their good. First, He will punish them for disobedience, and then He will provide a way by which they may come back to love and worship Him.

Now, I want you to remember that all sin is against God. It is true that sin hurts the one who commits the sin. Then it hurts others that may be influenced to sin. It reaches out and out, tainting and defiling very many. But, at the very first, and always afterward, every sin is against God.

**God's Way of Covering Sin.** Cover your own sins and they will have a resurrection some time. Let God cover them, and neither devil nor man can find them. Notice the four expressions in the Bible showing what God does with sins: 1. He "puts them behind His back." 2. He has "blotted them out as thick cloud." 3. "He casts them into the depths of the sea." 4. He removes them "as far as the east is from the west." Let God handle your sins, and you may be sure they will be forgiven and remembered against you no more.—Moody.

**"It Was Not My Fault."** Did you ever know anyone to say that? Yes; that is a very common way for one to throw off responsibility and make excuse. I know a boy once who had broken a valuable dish, and when there was no one he could blame, he said, "Why, it just broke itself!" Now,

let us see what God said to each of those connected with this first sin. God speaks to Adam first, for Adam is the head of the family. When Adam told God he was afraid, God said, "Why are you afraid? Have you eaten of the forbidden fruit?" Adam replied, "The woman Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me and I did eat." God turned to the woman and asked, "What is this you have done?" And Eve said, "The snake told me it would not harm me, but do good, and I took some and ate." Each one tried to put the blame on some one else. In doing so, each sins some more, and each shows a cowardly and selfish spirit. When sin begins, you can never tell where it will end. Then God pronounces a curse on each—on Satan first, then on Eve, and lastly on Adam. So Adam and Eve lost their beautiful garden home, and were driven out into the world. They ceased to be holy, and became wicked. And, worse yet, all their children and children's children, to the very end of time, are wicked, for the children will always take the nature of their parents. The parents' sinful nature is impressed on the soul of every child.

**A Faithful Photographer.** In the bank of Paris, above the desk of the cashier, there is a photographer with his camera. When desired this photographer is signaled and the picture of the man signing a check is taken. Many a forger and suspicious character has thus been caught, the photograph showing him in the very act of crime. Thus we have a lifelike picture of this first sin. So, too, sins are being photographed on human faces, consciences, souls, and on others whom we come in contact with and influence.—Dixon.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name the four steps in Eve's sin. 2. At what four gateways does sin usually enter the soul? 3. Put in three columns what the serpent said, what the woman said, what God said, and compare them. 4. What names and works of Satan are mentioned in Scripture? 5. Tell what you can of Christ's temptation in the wilderness. 6. Name three results from Eve's sin.

**Challenge Text.** "By one man \_\_\_\_\_ entered into the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by sin." Rom. 5:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. It is always dangerous to parley with any temptation, although seemingly trifling. 2. One sin leads to another, and one sinner leads to another. 3. To every one there is some forbidden fruit—of pleasure, ambition, appetite, desire. 4. This whole earthly life is a schooling, a trial and testing. 5. Man is more apt to fear the consequences of sin than the sin itself. 6. The work of Satan is half done when he persuades us to listen to his whispered insinuation. 7. He who would conquer sin must accept Christ, who alone can crush the serpent's head. 8. All suffer temporarily from the consequences of sin, but each may be saved eternally from the power of sin by Christ. 9. Adam stood only in his own righteousness and strength; the saved sinner stands in the righteousness and strength of Christ.

DR. J. M. COON.

# CAIN AND ABEL

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the



of the  
ground an



unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his



and of  
the fat  
thereof.  
And the  
Lord had  
respect  
unto Abel  
and to his



But unto Cain and to his  
offering he had not respect. And  
Cain was very wroth, and his



fell. And Cain



with Abel  
his brother:  
and it came  
to pass,  
when they  
were in  
the field,  
that Cain  
rose up  
against  
Abel his  
brother,  
and





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 3:1-6.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help us to interpret the word "brother" as Thou didst. Inspire within us a hatred of selfishness and envy, and a love of right, goodness and mercy. May we have Thy Holy Spirit to prompt us to all right services to Thee, and to help us to all right services towards our fellow man everywhere. Keep us from having the Cain face and spirit and mark, and make us followers of Abel and Abel's God. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Dare we close our eyes  
And pray, 'Have me excused'?  
How shall we stand  
Guiltless before Thee  
At Thine own right hand,  
When Thou shalt say  
Where is thy brother—where?  
I died for him as thee.  
Didst thou not care?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 3875. Place, Outside of Eden. Persons, Cain, Abel, God.

**Scripture Setting:** The First Murder. Way of Cain, Jude 1:13. Works of Cain, 1 John 3:4-15. The All-seeing God, Psa. 139. Cause of murder, Gal. 5:13-21. Blood of Abel, Matt. 23:29-39. Faith of Abel, Heb. 11:1-10. Our brother's keeper, Luke 10:25-37. The speaking blood, Heb. 12:18-26.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We are studying first things in the book of Genesis, which means beginnings. This is a study of the first murder. 1. For its cause we go back to the first sin in Eden. Like an angry flash of lightning is this cruel deed, but the cloud from which it comes rose from Eden. 2. Its occasion is a strife in and about an act of worship. 3. Its degree is seen in that it is while in

the very presence of God, as they worship; and also in that it is after the Divine warning. 4. Its beginning just now is in the voice and act, as they "talked." No matter how Abel may have tried to avoid it, Cain lashes himself into a fury and strikes the fatal blow. 5. Its detection and exposure are by its own attempts to throw off responsibility and hide behind excuses. God makes Cain's conscience confess. 6. Its punishment is inevitable —by the conscience, by the contempt of all good people, by the very ground "crying out" against him, by the righteous anger of a just and holy God. 7. Its glimmer of hope is in the promised mercy of God. The "mark" protected him against man; the marks of the Christ invite him to a full and free salvation.

### THE FIRST TWO BROTHERS.

"According to Its Kind." What kind of a tree do apples grow on? Why not on a walnut tree? Yes, God made them so. We learned that in the very first story. Again and again it is said "after its kind." That meant that the crops would always be like the seed. So it is in the case of man. The baby looks or acts like father or mother, or aunt or grandfather. But this law is more important in the world of people than of plants. It includes the inner life also. So when Adam and Eve sinned their children were sinful, and then their children's children, on and on forever. Scripture says that "all have sinned," and that the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." It is because all have come from sinful Adam and Eve. The child was "after its kind." Yes, you say, for Cain showed it in his angry talk and cruel act; but how do we know Abel was sinful? We know it by the sacrifice he brought, and we will talk about that in a few moments. After Adam and Eve were driven from their beautiful garden home, they began to see how terrible a thing sin is. Adam had to work much harder to get enough to live on. Eve also suffered as God had told her. God gave them a baby boy and they named him Cain, meaning "possession." This was the first baby in all the world. Their second baby was named Abel, meaning "breath." They grew to be men; Cain was a farmer, and raised crops of all kinds. Abel was a shepherd, and kept flocks. God used to

come and talk with Adam and Eve in the garden. Now they could come to Him only by an offering on an altar. The altar was made of stones, and the offering was burned on it, as is shown in the first two pictures.

**Like Produces Like.** A plant or tree never forgets itself. Cheat it out of its root, and its stem remains faithful. The smallest twig put out to grow upon the arm of another tree feels the thrill of this great first law in its least fiber, and breathes loyal in every motion of its life. Just so in human plants. Boys and girls are sinful because their parents are sinful; and their parents are sinful, back and back to Adam who sinned. Only in and by Christ and His Spirit can this nature be changed.

**The Right Kind of Offering.** The offering that must be made first was a blood offering. This pointed to the sacrifice of Christ, whose blood would take away sin. God must have told Adam and Eve how to make the right offering, for they could not know any other way, and it was very important for them to know. This is the great lesson taught them by all the many sacrifices. They all pointed to the great sacrifice of Christ, who was to come in due time. The lamb represented Christ, who is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

Cain knew this as well as Abel, or might have known it. But he brought an offering of the "fruits of the ground" only. Abel made an offering of the "firstlings of his flock." He brought the right kind of an offering, and it was offered in the right spirit. Cain failed in both these things. He

seemed to think and act as he pleased, not as God had ordered. Now we have the proof that Abel, too, was sinful, for he brought the offering for sin. God was pleased with Abel's offering, and forgave his sin. This is what is meant by accepting his offering. He could not accept Cain's wrong offering, and so Cain was not forgiven. In some way Cain knew that he was not accepted, and he was angry. His offering was large and generous, as shown in the first picture, but it was the wrong kind, and from a bad heart. Abel offers a lamb, and then prays to God that both it and he may be accepted. Cain had the same chance to know about offerings that Abel had.

**He Should Have Known.** What about the captain who wrecks his ship on a rock and pleads ignorance, when he had not looked at the chart in his cabin, on which the rock was plainly plotted? What about the engineer who wrecked his train because he failed to read the orders handed him? And what about you if you wreck your life and then plead ignorance, if you have not studied the Guide-Book which God has given?—Cumberland Presbyterian.

**How the Face Speaks.** The heart usually shows itself in the face. This is a good story as a study of faces. How reverent and good Abel looks, as he bows before the altar. Poor Cain! You can see in his face, envy, pride, anger, evil purpose, murderous hate. No one would want such a face as that. In the next picture, when they are talking, the faces are brought together. This seems to make the goodness of the one better, and the badness of the other worse. You can almost hear what they say, as face and hand are talking in the picture. Some people think they can have what they please in their hearts, and that no one can see it in the face or hand. They may conceal it for a short time, but the face soon tells on them. The next time you are on a busy corner in the city, or in a crowd, anywhere, just take a look at the faces you can see. You will see all kinds—strong or weak, bright or sullen, kind or sour, beautiful or ugly, noble or beastly, manly or tricky, holy or sinful, contented or envious, peaceful or hateful. Try it sometime, and you will be surprised at the moving picture. It will also help you to watch that your own face shall be true and good. The only way you can be sure of this is to accept Christ, who has been offered as a sacrifice for all. When He comes into the heart and life He begins to make the face beautiful.

**The First Murder.** As soon as the Lord saw that Cain was angry, He hunted him up and showed him that he only was to

blame for his offering not being accepted; and that even yet he could repent and bring a right offering. But he would not listen or heed. He is hot with rage, and finds Abel in the field by the burning sacrifice. He begins to talk about the matter, and probably he blames Abel. We can tell that he is loud and boisterous, and we know that Abel is meek and forgiving. Perhaps Abel is saying that his offering had not prevented Cain from making the same kind of an offering. He may have said also that God alone had the right to choose one and reject the other. The last picture shows the terrible end to their conversation. The sin which began in the heart of Eve now is seen in the hand of Cain. It has grown to be murder of the worst form, the murder of one's own brother. Were they alone? Perhaps Cain thought so, but God saw the dreadful deed. He found Cain, and said, "Where is Abel?" And Cain answered, "I do not know. Am I his keeper?" Then God said, "Your brother's blood is like a voice crying to me from the ground." Then he cursed him and made him a wanderer in the earth. Cain was afraid that everyone would hate him and try to kill him. So God put a mark on him that would keep anyone from killing him. Cain and his family went to live in a land by themselves.

**What Kind of a Face Are You Painting?** Have you seen on a human face the forgiveness of hope? Have you seen on a human face the hate of despair? I will name the hope, which is the offspring of another human being's forgiveness, love and friendship. I will name the hate, which is the offspring of another human being's distrust, intolerance and ostracism. The heart of hate says, "There is no forgiveness for you." The heart of love says, "I freely forgive you." Ah, yes, it is the heart that paints the face.—Selected.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Find seven things about Cain. 2. What four sins did he commit? 3. What are some of the "first things" in the world up to this time? 4. What other hard hearts and faces does the Bible speak of? 5. What bright and shining faces? 6. What good boy was envied and hated by his brothers, and why?

**Challenge Text.** "And wherefore ——— he him? Because his own ——— were evil, and his ——— righteous." I John 3: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Cain's offering looked good, but Abel's was good. "Obedience is better than sacrifice." 2. Cain's chief trouble was unbelief; Abel's chief virtue was faith. 3. Acceptable worship requires a right act, a right method, a right spirit. 4. Here is the first coward, the first liar, the first murderer, the first outcast—all from that first sin of Adam. 5. Everyone, everywhere, who is in need, is our brother; most of all he who is in need of the gospel. 6. We should avoid the incentives to anger, and avoid even the appearances of evil. 7. Sorrow for the consequences of sin is not repentance; Cain had the former, but not the latter.



# NOAH AND THE ARK

And, behold, I, even I, do bring a

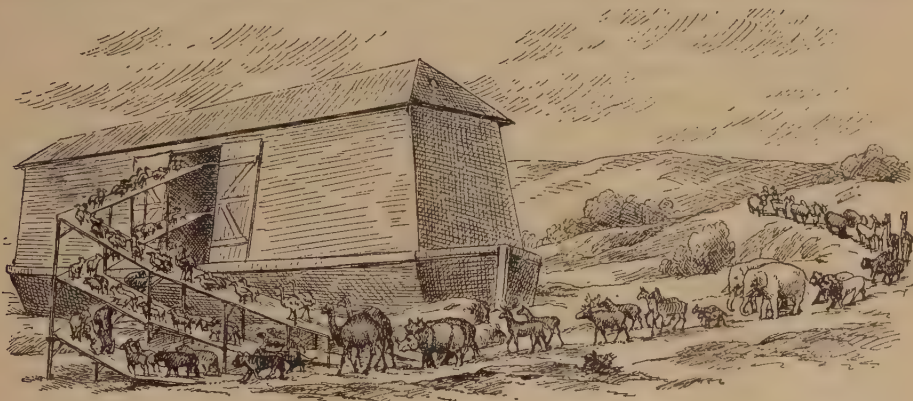


upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and



everything that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come

thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons'wives with thee And of every living thing of all flesh,



to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female. Of



of the earth after his kind, two of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

GEN. VI: 17-20.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 6:9-22.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast created the world of nature, and of man. Thou seest and controllest both, to work out Thy gracious purposes. Grant us faith like that of Noah, that will trust God in the darkest hours and amid the worst conditions and enemies. May we remember that Thou art able to make all things work out Thy glory and our good. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Steer on, though dark the path before  
And endless ills betide;  
Thy sure reward the shining shore  
Where joy and love abide.  
Then shalt thou see, no longer blind,  
The Pilot of thy soul;  
Thy wounds all healed, in peace shall find  
"Thy faith hath made thee whole."  
—J. Edwin Lodge.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 2348 Place, Some part of Armenia. **Persons,** Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth, with their wives.

**Scripture Setting:** Judgment and Mercy. The flood, Gen. 7:1-24. The new earth, Gen. 8:1-22. Covenant with Noah, Gen. 9:1-17. A flood of fire, 2 Pet. 3:1-18. The mercy of God, Isa. 54:1-17. Refuge in trouble, Psa. 46:1-11. The tempest stilled, Mark 4:30-41.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson is a striking illustration of mercy in judgment. We see in it the plan of deliverance for the righteous amid the overwhelming destruction of the wicked. 1. The plan includes the finding of a righteous man,

who is so by his faith in God. 2. It keeps that man's faith bright and strong for over a hundred years, amid the severest trials and temptations. 3. It shows that God is constantly aware of the life and works both of the wicked and of the good. 4. It reveals that God takes the righteous into His counsels and makes known His purposes to them. 5. It teaches that God must and will destroy the impenitent wicked, and that they are punished even in this life. 6. God attends to every part and feature of man's deliverance for His own glory and for man's good. 7. The remarkable temporal deliverance points to the work of Christ which saves from the storm and flood of sin.

### A STORY OF FOUR BIGGEST THINGS.

**The Biggest Flood ever Known.** We are apt to boast of big things, but it is seldom that four biggest things are found near together, and connected like these. The seven wonders of the ancient world were separated both by time and land, but these four are closely related. How big was the greatest rain storm you ever saw, or the worst flood you ever heard of? This was many, many times bigger than that. We shall learn more about it in the next story. Why did it happen?

After Abel's death, and Cain's leaving home, Adam and Eve had another son, named Seth; also many other sons and daughters, for Adam lived 930 years. Then he and Eve died, for God had said they should die, because of their sin. The world began to fill up with people very fast, and they grew to be very wicked. One man was good, for it is said of him that he "walked with God; and he was not, for God took him." He was one of the two persons who never died. In each case God honored them by calling them to be with Him. At last God said, "The world is evil, and evil continually. I will not stand it longer, but will destroy them." But there was one good family; Noah and his three sons. God told him what he intended to do, and that He would save him and his wife, also his three sons and their wives. The wicked people were to be destroyed by this great flood as shown in that first picture, but Noah and his sons, with their wives, were to be saved alive.

**Believe and Go Forward.** In country roads one sometimes comes to a self-opening gate. It seems to stand firm and strong across the road. If the traveler stops before getting to it, it will not open; but if he will drive right at it, the wagon wheel presses the spring, which makes the gate swing back. Whatever be the barrier or obstruction across the path of duty, if the believer pushes straight forward toward it the way will open, and God will deliver from his perplexity.

**The Biggest Boat Ever Known.** There was a very large ship built once, called "The Great Eastern," but the owners never could make it sail. One of the largest vessels on the ocean carries 3,700 passengers. But the ark—for that was what God named His boat—was equally large, and made to carry animals, mostly. God commanded Noah to build this ark, and told him just how to build it. God could have saved Noah and his family by a special miracle if He had wished. But he chose this way both to test the faith of Noah, and also to make it a warning to call the people to repentance. It was a long warning, for Noah was building it for 120 years. Besides the building of the boat, Noah preached to the people, for he was a "preacher of righteousness." But the people seemed to become even more wicked. They laughed and scoffed at Noah and kept on in every kind of wickedness.

At last the ark was finished. It was made so that no storm could upset it, and no water could flow into it to sink it. I expect the people were now even more ready to make fun of Noah than ever. Perhaps they said, "See how the sun shines, and not a cloud



in the sky. What will you do with your big boat now?" Those who are true to God, in the face of persecution of any kind become more and more beautiful in character. Think of Noah being true to God for 120 years while all the neighbors jeered and laughed. God's Spirit must have encouraged him to keep right on doing as God told him.

**The Biggest Procession Ever Known.** But you are asking, "If only eight persons were to be saved, why was so large a boat needed?" It was because the animals were to be taken in also, and food was needed for nearly a year for them. The pictures show the animals coming and entering the ark in some one of the three stories. Do you wonder how the animals were gathered, and made to walk together into the ark? It would have taken an army of people to do it, and there was no one ready to help at it, so God must have directed and influenced them. He gave instinct to the birds and animals at the first so that they act in certain ways, and He could do something like that in this case.

What a long procession! There must have been thousands of species or kinds, from the big clumsy elephant to the quick moving insect. Yes, in many ways it was the biggest procession ever known. Are there any fish there? Why not? and why are the birds there, since they can fly? They were all to be male and female, one pair of each kind. Then, of the ones most needed by man, there were to be seven.

**God's Care of Us.** As we think of the thousands and millions of people in the world, in many countries and conditions, we may say, "It is hard to believe that God cares for them all." But we see here that he cared for the animals and birds, and even the least insects that creep or fly. The Bible tells us that even a sparrow does not fall to the ground without His knowledge. Surely, then, He cares for men and women, boys and girls, that have souls to live forever. He provides for their souls, and also cares for all their needs and wants.

**The Biggest Menagerie.** The largest ships can take supplies for only a few days. Here was food for man and animals, birds and insects, for almost a whole year. Some have wondered how all could be accommodated in even so large a boat. It is estimated that each species would have about 200 cubic feet. How they were all fed daily we are not told, but probably by Noah and his sons. It was

lodging house, and boarding house for this strange and motley menagerie family.

God must have given a good spirit to all the animals for the selfish effects of man's sin was felt in the animal world as well. But God could make them tame and easily managed. Noah is now 600 years old, and he lived more than 300 years after the flood. Those figures almost take our breath, for we are used to 70 years as the life of man now. Here is a list of some beginning with Adam: Adam, 930 years; Seth, 912 years; Enos, 905 years; Cainan, 910 years, Mahalaleel, 895 years; Jared, 962 years; Enoch, 365 years; Methusaleh, 969 years; Lamech, 777 years; Noah, 950 years. Who is the oldest man? They were all quite long-lived. Well, after all the animals were in the ark, God shut the door, and it began to rain. The people were wicked to the very last. It kept on raining for forty days and Noah kept on praying, trusting, waiting. In his grateful heart he perhaps kept humming to himself a song, something like this:

"Yes! for me, for me He careth,  
With a brother's tender care,  
Yes! with me, with me He shareth  
Every burden, every care.

"Yes! o'er me, o'er me He watcheth,  
Ceaseless watcheth night and day;  
Yes! e'en me, e'en me he snatcheth  
From the perils of the way.

"Yes! in me, in me He dwelleth,  
I in Him, and He in me;  
And my empty soul He filleth,  
Here, and through eternity."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How is this flood a picture of destruction at last? 2. What is the one way of salvation from sin? 3. How is Christ like the ark? 4. What did the waters do at creation showing God's control of them? 5. How old was Noah at the flood? 6. When he died? 7. Who was the oldest man? 8. What did Moses do when God threatened to destroy Israel? 9. Who were the two men who never died?

**Challenge Text.** By faith — being warned — —, by things not seen as yet, moved with — prepared — —," Heb. 11: (?)

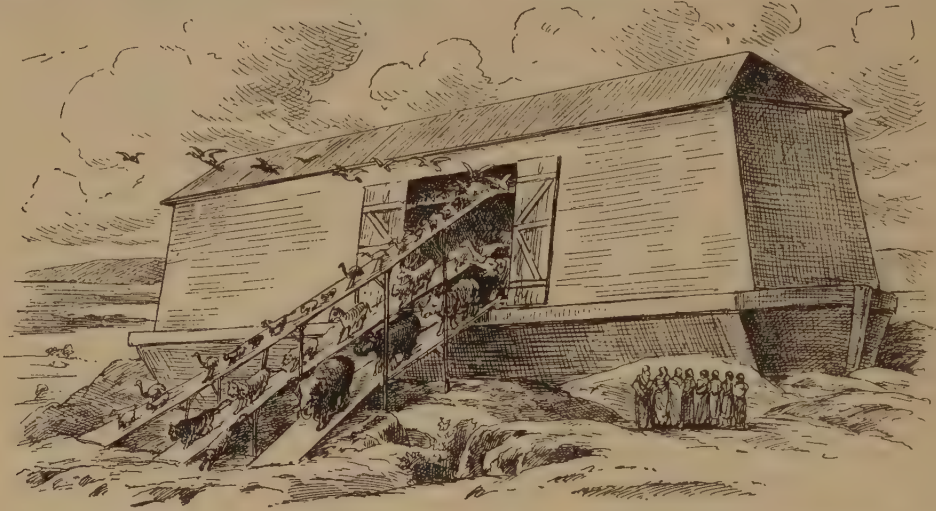
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The lesson is a picture gallery of great truths; the flood, a picture of sin; the ark a picture of Christ; the procession of animals a picture of providence; floating on the waters, a picture of safety. 2. Noah like the good of all ages was in partnership with God. 3. When sin becomes general and popular, we may expect that judgment is near at hand. 4. The flood came by natural laws but God ordered it when it did. 5. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." 6. The flood was universal as far as man was concerned; and the animals don't care to discuss the question. 7. Noah believed and Noah obeyed, but it was God who saved. 8. The wicked shall not defeat God's purpose to have a righteous world. 9. Nor will God let a single righteous person be destroyed.

DR. J. M. COON.

## NOAH SAVED IN THE ARK

And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:  
Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after

their  
kinds,  
went  
forth



And  
Noah



unto  
the  
Lord;  
and  
took  
of  
every  
clean



and of every clean



and  
offered



on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour; and the Lord said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 8:1-22.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the Rock unto which if we flee we are safe. Thou art the Ark into which if we come we are kept. Thou dost supply all the needs of the creatures of Thy hand. May we be held, fed, guided, guarded by Thee, and at last come to the Heaven Thou hast prepared. By faith may we enter into all the blessings Thou dost promise. For Christ's sake. Amen.  
How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,

Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said,—  
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?  
“Fear not, I am with thee; oh, be not dismayed,  
For I am thy God and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.”  
—George Keith.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 2348. Place, The Ararat range of mountains. **Persons,** Noah and family.

**Scripture Setting:** **Deliverance of the Righteous.** Safety of the godly, Psa. 91. Refuge in trouble, Psa. 46:1-11. Deliverance of Daniel, Dan. 3:16-28. Of Peter, Acts 12:1-11. God controlling, Psa. 2. God overruling, Job 12:12-19. Praise for deliverance, Deut. 26:1-11. God keeps his Covenant, Psa. 105:8-25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The delivering providences of God are many and marked in the Bible. This is a striking illustration of that great truth. 1. God has the righteous in constant remembrance.

He provides the ark for him, keeps him in the ark, and leads him out. 2. God makes the forces of nature his ministers of protection and help. Winds, seas, rivers, storms may be agents of destruction, and were to the wicked; but God makes them serve the righteous. 3. God uses man himself to help work out his deliverance. 4. God gives continuing hope and faith: controlling the elements in man as truly as the elements in nature. 5. God sets His own bounds and times. The deliverance was assured at the very first and completed as planned, God knows the end from the beginning. 6. God assigns new conditions and duties after the deliverance, thus leading man to gratitude, praise and worship.

### A PICTURE OF SALVATION.

**The Saved Animals.** Is a dog or a horse any better for the Christian religion? Yes, indeed; and all other animals are, too. One reason is because it takes sin out of the world, and the world is made pleasanter in every way. Another reason is that a Christian man will treat his dog and horse better. He will be better to all the animal world. This means much, for God put all the animal world under man's care and rule. Paul says that by the gospel “the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.” Someone has said that you can tell when a man is really converted by the way he treats his dog or cow. So in that first picture we see not only the eight people who are saved, but also the thousands of animals, birds, insects and creeping things. All are glad to get out of the close quarters of the ark into the fresh air and the large fields. They were safe from the storm while in the ark; and now they are saved to a new life of freedom and service. It is a beautiful picture of Christ saving sinful man and the sin-cursed earth. All about were the angry waves of sin, and above were the lightnings of God's wrath, and the destructive storm of judgment. In the love and mercy of God Jesus Christ comes and is made in the likeness of sinful man, in order that he might save him from his sinful life and sinful nature.

**Sermons Everywhere.** Jesus preached from a lily, and from a handful of wheat, and from the stones of the temple, and from the vines, and from a coin. Lessons of faith and honor and purity and charity

exhale with the morning dew. Every sunrise is a poem and every sunset the peroration of a noble discourse from God to His children. The man who feels with, and suffers with, and smiles with nature; to whom every flower and every grain of sand is a thought of God, and every leaf a note in a continuous coronation song, has an ever increasing resource from which to draw as a wise lover and leader of souls. As Goethe says, “To such there came trooping up out of the meadows and singing down out of the skies thoughts like free children of God, crying out: ‘Here we are! Here we are!’” — William Mountford.

**A Church that Everyone Can Build.** That second picture does not look like a church, nor even a house. But it is intended for worship, and so serves the same purpose as a church building. God taught Adam to serve Him that way, and Cain and Abel each built altars. The offering was placed on the top of the pile of stones, which was called an altar. Then the offering was burned with fire and God was pleased with it. Everything looks clean and new. God is giving man a new start and a new chance. You have noticed how clean the streets are after a great storm. The whole world was like that, after the flood storm. But it could not wash away the sins of the heart and life. Only God can do that, and He began by telling man to build an altar and make offerings. And man always has been prompted to some kind of worship. Altars are built everywhere and sacrifices are offered. This is reasonable, for man knows that creation is the work of a Supreme Being who is worthy of worship. Then his conscience tells him that he needs the help of such a Being. Be-

cause of this almost all nations and races have had some blood sacrifices to wash away sin. Another reason for worship of some kind is the gratitude one has for deliverance from danger and enemies. Also all are concerned about the future, and this, too, inspires to worship. Everyone, everywhere, should have his altar of worship and praise to God. Even a little boy or girl may build an altar to God in the heart.

**The Right Way to Worship.** The animals and fowls in the third and fourth pictures suggest how man is to come and meet God. You will see that they are called "clean" animals, and "clean" fowls. This is in order that they may be used as offerings. The mistake Cain made was in offering fruits and grain instead of the clean animals. The blood of the animal or fowl was to picture forth the blood of Jesus Christ, who would be the great sacrifice at last. He was pure and holy, and by the shedding of His blood it was possible for man to be cleansed from sin. Another principle of right worship, suggested by these animals, was that God should have the best. That altar, with its fire consuming the sacrifice, is much like Abel's offering. We know it must be right, for Abel's offering was accepted. The blood has been shed, which was a type of Christ's blood, which was later shed on Calvary. The fire consuming the sacrifice is a picture of the spirit of consecration every believer should have. As Noah stands and reverently thinks of God, we can almost hear him say, "Here I give my all to Thee." Noah felt specially grateful because God had delivered him and his family. All their friends and relatives had been destroyed by the flood. These eight persons were all that were left of the thousands who had lived. But we should be even more grateful, for we have had many more blessings than Noah had, and therefore we should be more consecrated.

**Secret of Success.** "When I looked into Gen. Booth's face and saw him brush back his hair from his brow, heard him speak of the trials and conflicts and the victories, I said, 'General Booth, you tell me what has been the secret of your success all the way through.'

"He hesitated a second, and then I saw the tears come into his eyes and steal down his cheeks, and then he said, 'I will tell you the secret. God has had all there was of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, men with greater opportunities, but from the day I got the poor of London on my heart, and a vision of what Jesus Christ could do with the poor of London, I made up my mind that God would have all of William Booth there was; and if there is anything of power in the Salva-

tion Army today it is because God has all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life.'"—J. Wilbur Chapman.

**The Seven-Colored Seal.** When God saw how anxious Noah was to know and do the right, He was pleased. He made a covenant with Noah that He would remember him and bless him. Did you ever see a lawyer's document with the notary's seal on it? It might have been a will, or a deed, or even a contract. Well, God made a contract with Noah. It is called a "covenant," because there is so much of God in it. God blessed Noah and his sons, and gave them the mastery over every living thing, just as He had to Adam. He also gave him permission now to eat the flesh of clean animals. Then He said He would never destroy the world again by a flood. Also that seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, should never cease. And this was the sign or seal that all this should be true: God said He would put His bow in the cloud, and when man saw it he would know that God had promised and would keep His promise. This bow was the rainbow of seven colors and appeared often in connection with a rain storm. The colors are caused by the light shining on the water, as it falls from the clouds. But the rainbow is God's voice to man, and it says, "Behold, I am here, and I will keep the waters from destroying you."

**God in the Cloud and Back of It.** The abiding presence of God is the heritage of every child of God. The Father never hides His face from His child. Sin hides it and unbelief hides it; but the Father lets His love shine all the day on the face of His children. The sun is shining day and night. Your sun shall never go down. Come and live in the presence of God.—Andrew Murray.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. There were ten great men in the early world. How many can you name? 2. What is the difference between them and Christ? 4. Name the seven colors of the rainbow. 5. How long was Noah building the ark? How long did it rain? How long did the waters continue? 6. What birds did Noah send out to test the waters?

**Challenge Text.** "I do set my — in the cloud, and it shall be for a — of a — between me and the earth. Gen. 9:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Nature speaks of God's grace and goodness—as the rainbow, the star of Bethlehem. 2. If the believer is remembered of God he need not fear what may happen. 3. As God shut Noah in the ark, so the believer may be shut in by affliction. 4. The rainbow implies the cloud, but also the sun above it and in it. 5. The ark of salvation has been prepared by Divine direction, and all may enter in and be saved. 6. There is a "too late" in salvation, and those who refuse to come are lost. 7. "God sets his rainbow of mercy and love on every storm of sorrow, trouble or sin."

DR. J. M. COON.



And the whole  
earth was of  
one language,  
and of one  
speech. And it  
came to pass,  
as they



that they found  
a plain in the  
land of Shinar;  
and they dwelt  
there.  
And they said  
one to another,  
Go to, let us

and

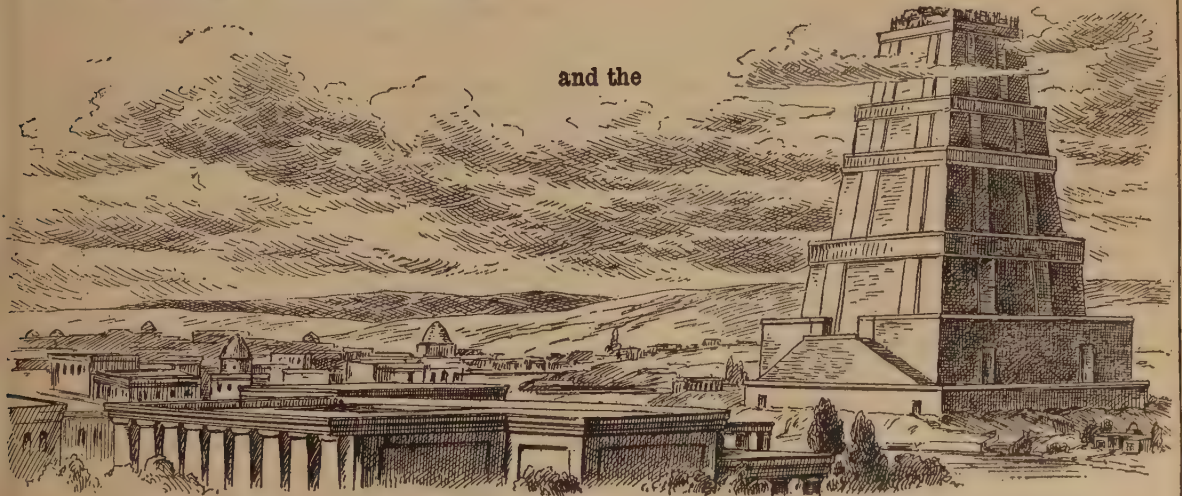


thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven;  
and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

And the Lord came down to see the

and the



which the children of men builded. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon  
the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 11: 1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we be willing to stay where Thou dost put us, and do Thy bidding. Thou hast made us with great ambitions and desires. Help us that we may not seek to go and do contrary to Thy will and plan. When Thou dost check us in life may we submit to the Divine will and guidance. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Only so much of power each day—  
So much nerve-force brought in play;  
If it goes for politics or trade,  
Ends gained or money made,  
You have it not for the soul and God—  
The choice is yours, to soar or plod.  
—E. R. Sill.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 2247. Place, land of Shinar. Persons, the people from different sections.

**Scripture Setting:** God Governing Man. God overruling man, Job 12:12-19. God's controlling providence, Psalms, 2. God vindicating His purposes, Rev. 20:1-15. In the hands of God, Heb. 10:26-39. God and human works, Rom. 2:1-13. Obey God first, Dan. 3:12-18. Prosperity of fools, Prov. 1:20-33. Unbelief limits God, Psalms, 78:34-41.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The teaching of the passage emphasizes God's control of human con-

duct. Some of the truths suggested are the following: 1. God is the creator of all men; shown by the one language and blood. 2. Man is filled with irrepressible energy, going here and there and seeking his self-interest. 3. His constant temptation is to gratify his own vanity and pride. 4. God is watching man's movements, and planning for his truer and better development. 5. His dealing with them is often to thwart their plans and give them new conditions and opportunities. 6. The seeming limitations and difficulties may be a challenge and inspiration to larger life and work.

### A WONDERFUL TOWER AND A WONDERFUL POWER.

**Helping Others to Sin.** If a crowd of boys get together, and one of them is bad, he is likely to influence all the rest. The testimony of wicked people usually is that they were led away by bad companions. This is one reason why the saloon and dance hall are such places of peril to young people. The worst people are found there and they are always ready to help others to sin. This is the very thing which is illustrated in the first two pictures. The people gathered together in cities, and they were growing worse and worse. After the flood, the world had come to have many people again. Of Noah's three sons, Ham was specially wicked and he was cursed by Noah. A grandson of Ham, by the name of Nimrod, was a leader among the people. He was called "the mighty hunter," and was very popular. He became a kind of king, and built many cities. Another of Ham's descendants, by the name of Canaan, was rich and popular, and became a leader. These were all wicked people, and were banded together in their wickedness. They not only became worse themselves but kept influencing others to sin.

**The Pigs and Beans.** The other day I saw a drove of pigs following a man. To my great surprise I saw them follow him even to the slaughter house. I said to the man, "How do you induce the pigs to follow you?" "Oh," he replied, "I have a basket of beans, and drop a few as I go on." So the devil has his beans and his crowds, and he gets multitudes to go in the way of death. All the crowded cities are strewn with the beans that tempt to sin, and filled with the multitude who sin and lead others to sin.—Rowland Hill.

**Fighting Against God.** That second and third picture do not look much as if they were fighting against God. It is much as

people are doing today. The making of brick and building of cities and towers are good enough in themselves. But the Bible tells us the spirit and reason for this work. They wanted to make a name for themselves, and built a great city so that they would all be together. The high tower could be seen for a long distance, and all people would be apt to say, "What a mighty nation that is!" Possibly they thought this high tower, away up from the earth, would be a place of refuge if another great flood came. In all this they showed a rebellious and proud spirit. The place they chose was a fertile plain called the land of Shinar. There was no stone there, so that it was necessary to make brick. The second picture shows this and also the great furnaces where the bricks were baked. Now all seemed to be going ahead as they wished and planned. The city is built with its mansion and beautiful buildings. The tower has gone up, one, two, three, four, five, six stories. It seems to be many times higher than the tallest buildings. It seems to say to God in the heavens, "See what we can build! We intend to plan for ourselves." With many people, especially young people, this fighting against God is by indifference and neglect. But the end is just as bad, for the Bible says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

**Why He Failed.** A little fellow came running into a railroad station just as the train drew out. "You didn't run fast enough," said a by-stander. "O yes, I did, but I didn't start soon enough," was the reply. Carelessness! neglect! Great masses of people neglect Christ. They do not reject Him. They are not opposed to Him. They simply do not feel the need of Him. They are like the man that could not roof in his house when it was raining, and



when it was fair he did not need any roof. Let us remember that the most dangerous thing in life is to drift.—R. P. Anderson.

**God Says to Stop.** That tower was a wonderful thing for those days. It was perhaps nearly as high as some high buildings in these days. But now a more wonderful thing happens. God was watching them all the time, and He was reading their hearts. He knew what wicked purposes they had in mind. He said it would be bad for them, and for all the world for so many wicked people to be together. So he determined to put a stop to their tower building and check the bad influence on others. Perhaps they intended this tower to be a kind of temple to some idol god. If the true God said to stop building it, then all the people would know He was mightier than the false god. God speaks in many ways to man. How do you think He spoke this time? He caused the men to forget their own language, and speak words the others could not understand. In the next pictures how surprised they all seem. No one knows what others are saying, or even thinking. No one can tell to the others what he thinks or wants. Well, it would be impossible for the work to go on. In a building everything must be exact and well understood. This was God's way of saying, "Stop," and there was nothing else to do but to stop. Sometimes God speaks to one's conscience, and says "Stop."

**A Good Rule to Follow.** It is well to be very careful to listen to conscience. If one is in doubt about a certain matter, or course to pursue, it is better to stop until they have more light on the subject. If an amusement is questionable avoid it. A thing may be right for others; but, if doubted or questioned by you and for you, the only safe course is to stop. The conscience is given us for a guide, and if we dull or bind it then it soon will be a whip to lash us or a sharp lance to torture us.

**What Happened Next?** Several things happened, and they were all planned in God's purpose. For one thing the tower was

unfinished. Instead of being a proof of man's greatness it stood as a monument of his folly. For another thing it kept the people from planning any more wickedness together. No longer could they help others to sin. Then it must have made them think seriously of the great God who could do so wonderful a thing. It takes a long time to learn a language usually, but God flashed this into their minds at once. Still again, it made the people divide up and go in different directions. God wanted all parts of the earth to be inhabited, and so different nations and countries were started. This unfinished city was called Babel, which means "Confusion." It afterwards was called Babylon and became a very wicked city. It became so wicked that God sentenced it to destruction. It became a heap of rubbish, with only owls and wild beasts there. See Isa. 14:14-24. To obey God is to secure blessing and happiness.

**I Ought, Therefore I Can.** The commands of Jehovah are themselves a basis of hope. If He bids us forsake evil, we know that we can do so. "I ought, therefore I can." God asks only what is reasonable and possible. In contrition and aspiration there are pledges of the opened gates to new and Divine life. Part of our task is negative. "Wash," "put away," "cease." We can never build our temple until we clear away the rubbish. But our real task is positive—"learn," "seek justice," "relieve." The religion of Isaiah was very practical, which is the only judgment day kind (Matt. 25).—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who came from the East at the birth of Christ, and why? 2. When was the making of bricks an occasion of persecution? 3. What is the highest tower you ever saw, or read of? 4. What happened to the tongues of the people at Pentecost? 5. What great city was named from this town?

**Challenge Text.** Why do the ——— rage, and the people imagine a ———. Psa. 2: (?)

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. Man's thoughts and acts are naturally selfish and sinful. 2. The wickedness of man is increased by sinful associations. 3. The idolatry of the tower brought down the judgment of God. 4. God can work out His purposes in many ways.

DR. J. M. COON.

# THE CALL OF ABRAM

And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an



unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a



on the east of Bethel, and



and there he builded an altar unto the

having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east:

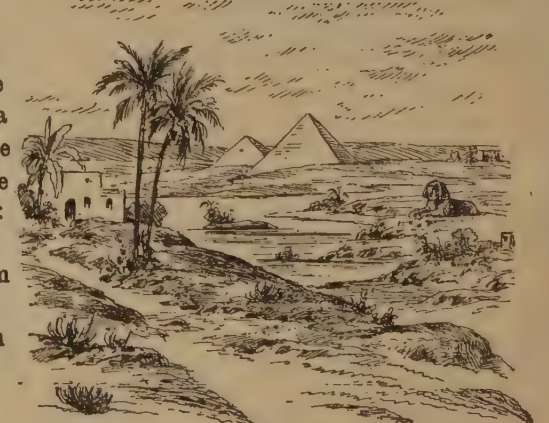


Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord. And

journeyed, going on still



And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into



to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 11: 31-12:10.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We are thankful that Thou dost not leave us to ourselves. Thou art ever planning large things for us. And Thou dost call us, call us to this larger and better inheritance. May we hear and obey, and so receive what Thou hast to give. May we be willing to "go out" from land and friends, and even from home and business, if Thou shalt call on us to do so. For Christ's sake. Amen.

And, as the path of duty is made plain,  
May grace be given that I may walk therein,  
Not like the hireling for his selfish gain,  
But, cheerful, in the light around me thrown,  
Walking as one to pleasant service led,  
Doing God's will as if it were my own,  
Yet trusting not in mine, but in his strength alone.  
—J. G. Whittier.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1926-1921. Places, Ur of the Chaldees, Haran, Canaan. Persons, Abram, Sarai, Lot, servants.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Faith. Faith of Samuel, 1 Sam. 3:1-21. Faith of Elijah, 1 Kings 19:4-18. Faith of the blind man, John 9:1-15. Faith of Zacchaeus, Luke 19:1-10. Faith of the centurion, Matt. 8:5-13. Faith of Paul, Acts 9:1-20. Faith children of Abraham, Gal. 3:7-29. Faith always obeys, Heb. 11:8-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Faith is so prominent a trait in Abraham that he may almost be taken as a model believer. We see him to be: 1. Called and chosen of God; corresponding to the commission of the soul. 2. Complete surrender to God's claim;

typical of the sacrifices the soul must make at conversion. 3. Absolute trust in the promises of God, although they seem most difficult or even impossible. 4. Careful obedience to the Divine commands; this is a vital sign of true faith, even a part of it. 5. Helpful influence and example upon all others. 6. Peculiarly blessed and honored of God; he is called the "Friend of God" and "Father of the faithful." 7. His conquest and consecration of worldly interests and possessions. All is given to him of God; but all is entered into and appropriated by his personal traits of character—as fidelity, humility, courage, benevolence, gentleness, honor, self-sacrifice. What a cluster!

### GOD'S NEW PLAN TO MAKE THE WORLD GOOD.

**The Altar and Tent.** "Now do not open it until Christmas." This is what persons often say, when they give a present in advance. The person who gets it has it, but he does not know just what it is, nor what it means. That was the way God made a gift to Abraham. He was to have a land, but he did not know where; he was to have many descendants, but he did not know how. What did God want to do through Abram? He was going to try a new way to save the world and make it good. You remember that He made all good at first and after He created man He saw that it was "all very good." But Satan tempted Adam and Eve to sin, and so man became very bad. Then He destroyed all the people by the flood and saved one good family for a new start. After people began to increase in the earth again, they grew bad, and God scattered them from Babel to different parts of the earth, so as to keep them from being so wicked. Now it is nearly five hundred years since the flood and the world is full of people. But they are wicked, worshipping false gods and fighting among themselves. There were a few good people like Job, in the land of Uz, and Melchisedek in Canaan, who was a priest of the Most High God." This would mean also that there were others who believed as he did. The new plan was to use the altar and the tent, as shown in the first and third pictures. The altar was to show that one believed in the true God. It would also help to hold the people to the worship of the true God. The tent was to show that

man should go from place to place, telling about the true God, and how to worship Him. Abraham, as the "father of the faithful," was a pioneer in that life and work; and the Bible constantly refers to his good faith as an example to others.

**A Man of Great Faith.** This new plan needed some one as a leader, and one who would trust God and do as He told him. God chose Abram to be this leader. The Noah plan destroyed the wicked; but the Abram plan was to separate the good from the wicked, in order that they might at last win the wicked back. Now why was Abram chosen? Well, he came from one of the good sons of Noah, whose name was Shem. Someone has said if you would make a good boy you must begin with his grandmother. So Abram had a good start, and followed the good example that was set for him. Then he kept true when many others were disobeying God. Even some of his own family went off into idolatry. God saw all this, and we may be sure that He picked out the very best man to work the new plan. When God tested Abram He found he was the right kind of a man. After he was chosen for this great work God kept guiding and helping him. Wherever he went he built, an altar, and every altar seemed to say, "This place belongs to God." It is like when our sailors find a new island, they plant the United States flag there, and that claims it as our territory. Abram came to be known as the man of faith and at last as "the

father of the faithful." Take a good look at him as he sits thinking of God.

**Come, "Follow Me."** Pizarro once tested a company of homesick followers thus: "He drew a line in the sand with his sword and said: 'Comrades, on that side,' pointing to the south, 'are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, battle, and death. On this side,' pointing to the north, 'are ease and safety. But on that side lies Peru, with its wealth. Choose, each man, what best becomes a brave Castilian. For my part, I go to the south.'" Our Commander went "to the south," with its suffering and death, and He calls upon us, His followers, to choose what best becomes a brave Christian.—Exchange.

**Going by "Sealed Orders."** Do you know what that means? Sometimes our nation will send battleships out to sea with orders locked up or sealed, and which are not to be opened until a certain time or place. Even the captain of the ship may not know what he is to do, or where he is to go. Abram had been going from place to place in that way. The battleship captain knows that the government will stand back of him in all that he does, provided he is obedient. So Abraham knew that God would keep him and provide for him. There was one thing that God told Abram that greatly encouraged him. He said that Abram would become the father of a great nation; and his children should be more numerous than the stars or the sand on the sea shore. Also God told him that He would make him a blessing to all nations. God meant that some one of Abram's descendants should sometime become the Saviour of the world. Can you tell who that was? This, too, was like a sealed order, for Abram and his wife were now old, and they had no child. Abram believed God, although he could not understand how it all could be done. That picture next to the last shows that Abram had come to have a good many servants and cattle. He was a good man and his servants were ready to obey him. It is always safe to go by God's "sealed orders."

**The Profit of Godliness.** Said a skeptic to a Christian: "If I should become a Christian, I may lose all I possess." The Christian replied: "If you really lose anything by it, I will make it good and give you my note for it." The skeptic was surprised, convicted, converted. Later he returned the note, saying, "No one can ever truly say that he has been a loser by accepting Christ."—M. F. Negus.

**Tempted to Forget God.** As Abram went from place to place he was guided by God, and he set up an altar to Him. But now when he "journeyed toward the south" it seemed to be different. We do not learn that God told him to go that way, and we

are not told that he built an altar there. It was a very beautiful and fruitful land, near where that big bunch of grapes was found afterwards. Perhaps Abram was so pleased at the rich and fertile country that he forgot to seek God's guidance. Or, he may have thought that he could take care of himself in so pleasant and goodly a land. Sometimes people do think that way, when all is prosperous; and they may do it carelessly and thoughtlessly too. God did not forget Abram, but He tested him by sending a famine. Now you would think that Abram would ask God what to do. Now, he learns that there is plenty in the land of Egypt and he hurries off down there. This gets him into more trouble and he commits a worse sin, and nearly loses Sarah, his wife. Then God actually speaks to the wicked king of that land and saves Sarah, and brings Abram back again to a life of faith and trust.

**A Life-long Battle.** The battle between duty and inclination, between the ideal and the actual, will continue as long as the body endures. It is not an unmixed evil. In the end right is never worsted. The way that leads to holiness is long and sometimes bloody; but it always develops strength and courage. The fight for each individual will be ended only by the full and perfect choice of truth and virtue, which are always the will of God. The victory will be secure long before it is fully won. Enough for us to know that conformity to the will of God at last will be the end of strife. It is not well to be overmuch troubled when we see those whom we love fighting a hard battle against inherited tendencies and an evil environment, for the fight, however fierce, is a good sign. Those alone are to be pitied who are drifting and not resisting.—A. H. Bradford.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name three good qualities in Abram's character. 2. What three ties did God ask him to break? 3. Who else went down to Egypt, and how and why? 4. When and how did Christ go to Egypt? 5. What other name did Abram receive from God?

**Challenge Text.** By faith Abraham, when he was called \_\_\_\_\_ went out, \_\_\_\_\_ whither he went. Heb. 11: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God tries plan after plan to reach men. Christ came "to seek and to save." 2. Abram's journey is a type of life in its obedience, separation from the worldly, trials, blessings, promises, sacrifices, obligations. 3. Everyone is increasingly obedient to God, or increasingly disobedient. 4. God speaks to man by many experiences and providences and judgments, and all for his good. 5. Regeneration is a new heart, and is the gift and work of the Holy Spirit; conversion is a new life, and is the purpose and struggle of the changed nature. 6. The Christian should take his convictions with him everywhere, and live in and by them. 7. The best and safest investment is in the things of God. 8. The believer's power is measured by his faith and prayer; all else will follow. 9. We influence our friends most and best by fidelity and loyalty, not by compromise and laxness.



## ABRAM AND LOT

And Lot also, which went with Abram, had



and



and



And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together: for their substance was great, so that they could not dwell together. And there was a



of Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land.

And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no

strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren. \* \* Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east; and they

themselves the one from the other.

Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan,



and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his



toward Sodom.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 13:1-8.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Make us pure and strong in the springs of being. Help us to have high ideals and make right choices. Cleanse Thou the fountain of the heart, and abide in us by Thy Holy Spirit. Then shall we see as Thou seest, and fulfill all Thy will. May we have the faith, love and courage of Abraham, and thus be blessed and be a blessing. For Christ's sake. Amen.

If you are a vertebrate,  
Walk straight,  
Talk straight,

Write straight,  
And fight straight!

Never whine about your fate,  
Anywhere and everywhere  
Just be on the square.  
Give the other man a chance;  
Help him on while you advance.  
If you are a vertebrate,  
Just live straight!

—L. W. Zochert.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1918. Places, Bethel, Hai, plain of Jordan, Sodom. **Persons,** Abram, Lot, the herdsmen of each.

**Scripture Setting:** The Worldly Believer. Godly and ungodly, 2 Pet. 2:1-9. Beware of selfishness, 1 Cor. 10:24-33. Beware of covetousness, Luke 12:15-21. Evil of strife, Prov. 17:1-14. Rule against selfishness, Matt. 7:1-12. Strife among Christians, 1 Cor. 1:1-15. Timely counsel, 2 Thess. 3:6-15. Spirit of the true believer, Matt. 5:38-48.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage gives us a picture of the worldly believer. 1. Lot has had the advantages of true Christian fellowship. Abram

had a moulding and helpful influence on him. 2. He has been prospered in material possessions, due partly to association with Abram. 3. He has a worldly sense of his rights, and maintains them in a true worldly fashion. 4. He allows the earthly and temporal things to control his choices and conduct. 5. He lives on the border line between the worldly and spiritual, with strong tendencies which pull him towards the world. 6. He does not have the abundant life, but is "saved as by fire." 7. He never rises to the possession of spiritual convictions, visions, ambitions, achievements.

### A STORY OF TWO CHOICES.

"Do you see those two men?" one friend asked another. "Yes," was the reply, "and I was just noticing how different they were in looks, in language, and in conduct." "Well," said the first speaker, "they are brothers, and had the same advantages in youth. The great difference between them, which shows also in their homes and in their business, all came from one choice. In a revival service, one of them chose Christ as a Saviour, and the other rejected Him. That was long years ago, and they have been going different ways ever since." This story is about two choices which lead in opposite directions.

**Back to the Old Home.** Abram had been in Egypt for some time, but was now returning. We are not told that he built any altar in Egypt, but though he apparently forgot God for a time, God did not forget him. At last he is back, and he is glad, for Abram is at heart a true lover of God. He comes by day's journeys, and when he reaches Bethel the old spirit revives again and he "called on the name of the Lord." The word "journey" is itself a picture. It means to "pull up," and shows that at each trip they pulled up the tent pins and went forward. He soon gets to talk with God as a friend. Do you remember the old home, with its well-worn Bible, and the family altar where all gathered for prayer? Perhaps the very thought of it will help some one to come from the

Egypt of wandering into the Canaan of a religious life.

**Too Great a Price.** We are living in an age in which thousands of people around us are extremely anxious to amass great fortunes. To accumulate money men wear out their strength in labor that exhausts their nerves; they grow hard and brutal and in some cases they stoop to the use of means of which they should be ashamed. In the story entitled "A Certain Rich Man" we see the gradual deterioration of a character originally fine and noble, when John Barclay sets out to become, first, the richest man in his town, next, the richest man in his state, and, next, the richest man in his country. He gains his end, crushing everyone who is weaker, ruining the happiness of those dear to him and sacrificing his own honor. It is too great a price.—Exchange.

**Which Is Better—Rights or Right?** Now the herdsmen of Abram and Lot stood together, and Abram is going to take a hand in this battle. Will he stand up for his rights, or will he do the right as God would have him do? Remember that Abram had a real right to this land, for God had given it to him; he was stronger than Lot, and could have taken all from him; he would have used it to a better purpose than Lot; he was older, and so had a better claim to it. But what does Abram do? He says, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee for we be brethren." Then he told Lot to choose where he would go, and he himself agreed to take what was left. Abram saw the world was big enough for them both, if they only planned it out. There were wicked



neighbors looking on, and Abram knew they might mock at them for their quarreling; and such quarreling might even give them a wrong impression of the true God. Was not this a noble thing for Abram to do? Kindness and yielding will settle any quarrel, and will prevent it before it begins. The old saying is, "It takes two to make a quarrel." That fifth picture shows how successful Abram was, for they are dividing the cattle to go in different directions.

**The Real Test of Character.** One's ability to "keep sweet" is never really tested until he is treated with downright unfairness. There is no credit in being sunshiny while everything is sunshiny around us. Any one can be courteous, and loving, and agreeable while others are so, and while everything that is his right is being given to him. But how many of us make it the deliberate purpose of our lives to be courteous, and loving, and positively radiant of sunshine when our rights are rudely over-ridden, and we are ignored, or snubbed, or even misrepresented.—S. S. Times.

**Beware of the Grasping Spirit.** Those first pictures are proof of great prosperity. Both Abram and Lot have become rich. Now, it is no sin to be rich. Rather everyone should earn and rightly use all the money he can. The sin is in getting earthly possessions in a wrong way, and in using them for a bad purpose. We do not learn that Abram was hurt in heart or life by his riches. But the servants of both Abram and Lot were selfish and grasping. Lot, too, seemed to have become tainted by a spirit of selfishness and greed. It had been a good schooling for Lot to be with such a great and noble man as Abram. But he had learned other lessons in the school of prosperity. These had made him grasping and worldly, with a desire to look out for "number one." Some people are not good enough to have great riches, or even to be greatly prospered. The most of us need to pray the prayer in the book of Proverbs, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." It did not take long for these herdsmen to get into strife for the best fields, for pasture and water. That fourth picture shows one of the battles they had. You can almost hear them shouting out, "It's mine!" "No, it's mine!" Did you ever hear any boy or girl say that?

**Clean Hands and a Pure Heart.** "He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart!" The words were part of a psalm which had been read at morning prayers, and they had fastened themselves in the memory of a boy who repeated them over and over many times that day. He looked at his own hands, which were brown and hard from much handling of the hoe in work time and much tossing of a ball in play time.

Clean hands and a pure heart, linked together in a chain not to be broken, possessed a spiritual

significance which made a sure appeal to the boy's sensitive conscience and quick brain.

Even in boy life there are subtle temptations to play with conscience, to win something for which one has not paid full value in toil and pains; in short, to gain a prize at the expense of moral purity.—Exchange.

**Lot's Wrong Choice.** Lot had a chance to match Abram's generous offer. He might have said, "Why, uncle, you have the better right to all this land; and surely you ought to have first choice." But Lot does not do that. He just looks around for the best and takes it for himself. It is well to be prudent and provident, and to try to get on in the world. But it never pays to be grasping, covetous and forgetful of others. Lot's choice was bad also in another way. He chose simply for worldly advantage, and did not think of his higher needs. He put himself near to wicked people, and was also fronting that way. Everything helped to take him nearer and nearer to Sodom. He had a quick eye for a sharp bargain, but he was blind and deaf to the best things for himself and his family. If our choice takes us into bad company, or a wrong business, or a sinful pleasure, or a selfish life, it is a choice like that of Lot. Lot's choice was by the eye merely, and for the present. Abram's choice was in a spirit of peace and self-sacrifice, for his higher life, for God and for the future. That last picture shows Lot pitching his tent, that means making his home, over towards those wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

### Two Most Important Persons.

If U and I are cross, you see,  
There's bound to be a fuss;  
If U and I untidy are,  
Somewhere there'll be a muss;  
If U and I are selfish, mean,  
Some one will suffer wrong;  
If U and I rob birds' nests, why,  
The world will lose a song.

—Sabbath-School Visitor.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What four special traits in Abram's character? In Lot's character? 2. What two Christian workers in the New Testament quarreled, and why? What other two, and why? 3. What is the blessing to the peacemaker? 4. Who is the great peacemaker? Mention some of Christ's "peace" titles.

**Challenge Text.** "See ye first the \_\_\_\_\_, and His righteousness, and all \_\_\_\_\_ shall be \_\_\_\_\_." Matt. 6:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** Here is a sure preventive of quarrels: "It takes two to make a quarrel." 2. The choice of a home is of great importance, for life is far more than mere money-making and a good time. 3. Money may be a blessing or a curse, according to the man behind it. 4. We have many blessings for the sake of the righteous people in our midst. 5. To choose evil companions is to bring us down to their level.

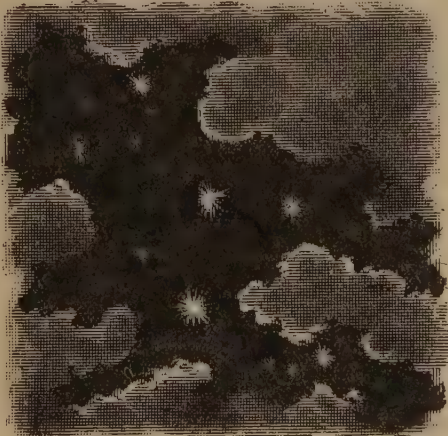
DR. J. M. COON.

# THE COVENANT WITH ABRAM

After these things  
the word of  
the Lord came  
unto Abram  
in a vision,  
saying,  
Fear not,



I am thy shield,  
and thy exceeding  
great reward. And  
he brought him forth  
abroad, and said,  
Look now toward  
heaven, and tell the



if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for



And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it? And he said unto him, Take me an



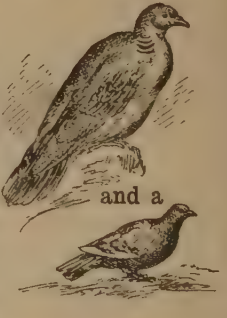
of  
three  
years  
old,  
and  
a she



of  
three  
years  
old,  
and  
a



of  
three  
years  
old,  
and  
a



And he took unto him all these, and



and laid each  
piece one  
against  
another:  
but the



divided he not.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 15:1-18.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast done a wonderful work for man. By Thy death, Thou hast redeemed him from sin; by Thy Spirit Thou hast given him a new nature; by Thy intercession Thou dost keep and bless him. May we come into this blessed relationship under the covenant of grace, and so have conscious fellowship and partnership with Thee. For Christ's sake. Amen.

God did anoint thee with His odorous oil,  
To wrestle, not to reign; and He assigns  
All thy tears over, like pure Crystallines,  
For younger fellow-workers of the soil  
To wear for amulets.

—Mrs. Browning.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1912. Place, Hebron, the home of Abram. Persons, Abram and God.

**Scripture Setting:** Covenant of Faith. The faith of Abraham, Rom. 4:1-13. True children of Abraham, Gal. 3:1-12. God's purposes sure, Psa. 2. God's purpose with believers, John 15:17-27. Faith winning the world, 1 John 5:1-12. Example of faith, Heb. 11:1-16. An abiding inheritance, 1 Pet. 1:1-9. A new covenant, Heb. 8:6-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** God's covenant with Abram is prophetic, typical, and made universal by the sacrifice and work of Abram's greater son, Jesus Christ. 1. The covenant is in mercy and love, starting from God and ever directed and fos-

tered by Him. 2. This covenant is sure and steadfast, for the mighty God is pledged to make it effective. 3. This covenant is all inclusive and progressive, looking towards the redemption of the whole family of man. 4. This covenant is in and by faith, a principle and medium of co-operation that is possible to all everywhere. 5. This covenant is possible and operative in all classes and conditions of man, for it accommodates itself to man as he is. 6. This covenant is a conquering and conquest covenant, for it is in and by the power of God, as well as by His love and grace. 7. This covenant is ever new, and is perpetual in its application and operation.

### A WONDERFUL PARTNERSHIP.

**The Starry Host.** What is the largest firm or company you ever knew of? Some are very large, having members in many states, and sometimes in other countries. These are called organizations, or corporations. Many have grown to be large and strong, and then have begun to die out. This is the story of a company that God formed, and it was wonderful in many ways. It was to continue forever, and God was to be the Head of the firm. It was to grow to be so large that no one could count all who belonged to it. God told Abram to look at the stars, or the sands on the sea shore, and he would have a picture of the great number who would join this company. They were called Abram's descendants, because they were to be like him in faith and in loving God. Every time Abram looked up in the sky he would remember this great promise of God, and the company that was formed.

So, too, when he looked at his feet and saw the sand he would see the same great promise spelled out. These signs were given Abram to strengthen his faith. He had asked God about it, that he might be real sure, for he had not even one child, and yet they were to be his children. Then Abram knew that all would be as God said, and that he was not mistaken.

**How to See the Stars of Promise.** Astronomers put what they call diaphragms into their telescopes, which narrow the field of vision. What for? In order to secure a sharper definition. And we have to do the same thing, to shut off a great deal, to do as a man does that is looking at a distant

object. He puts his hand to his brows in order to shut out everything else, and fixes his gaze on that.

That is what we have to do. Look off, if you would look on. Look away from "the things that are seen and temporal." You will never see the stars in a street blazing with electric lamps; and you will never see Christ and His stars of promise as you ought, if your thoughts and desires and aims are all centered upon this fleeting present life.—Exchange.

**The Divided Sacrifice.** Then God told Abram to prepare animals, such as were to be used as sacrifices. They were a heifer, a goat, a ram, a pigeon and a turtle dove. These he divided lengthwise, separating the halves so that a person could walk between them. This was the method of making a solemn agreement between two persons. They passed each other between the divided parts, and then the given agreement was as if written in blood declaring them to be as one person. This was the beginning of those sacrifices which pointed forward to the blood of Christ. Abram was not asked to walk between, for God had made the promise to Abram, and He only needed to ratify it to him. As the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews says, "When He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself." The birds were not divided, for one of them could be put on each side, since there were two of them. It was very important that such divided animals be kept pure and clean until the agreement was made. So Abram watches them all day, and drives away the birds of prey that might tear them or defile them. He waits patiently for God to do

what He wishes to next. At last the sun is setting, the birds have gone, and God has put Abram into a deep sleep. Then God gave him that nightmare vision of the future afflictions of the chosen people. But this was to be after Abram's day. Several of these stories will treat of that. And we shall see that God overruled all their affliction.

**Seeing by Faith and Prayer.** What we need is the power to see—to see the chariots and horses on the mountains; to see God all about us; to see the strong, right arm of the Almighty stretched out to help us; to see that the darkest clouds and most threatening surroundings are under the all-controlling power of the Everlasting Father. And seeing this, we shall have the prophet's hope and the prophet's faith, and the prophet's trust that they who are with us are more than they who are against us. The prayer, then, that befits our lips day and night continually is, "Lord, we pray Thee, open our eyes, that we may see."—Walter Jubb.—Exchange.

**The Smoking Furnace.** This and the burning lamp were symbols of the Divine presence and power. The furnace fire stood for the consuming fire of God's holiness, to which sinful man could not approach. The furnace walls and the smoke were as a gracious veil, protecting the sinner, for no man could see God and live. The burning lamp, or flame of fire, was a picture of light and salvation. Both together meant about the same that the ark and the over-arching angels did in the tabernacle. God began to teach great lessons by objects and pictures. We shall find more and more of this in some other stories. In that next picture you can see the burning lamp passing between the divided sacrifices. In this way God was pleased to enter into covenant with Abram. Do you think Abram ever could forget that night, and its wonderful visions? Those pictures of the Divine presence and power and mercy were hung in his memory forever. Many a time afterward he thought of them and was strengthened and comforted. This is often the purpose of God's dealing with us. Thus to Abram the stars and the sand, the day and the night, the animals and the birds, the furnace and the lamp, would all speak of God, and of His care and love.

**The Covenant Keeping God.** "There had been storm, a wild sea and a dense fog, so that no one could tell where we were, and then the vessel struck the rocks," so said a lady recounting her experience in a recent shipwreck. "We knew we were in great danger, and beyond that we knew nothing; but the thing that impressed me most was the wonderful voice of the captain—calm, strong, commanding. It quieted all confusion, it gave confidence to all who heard it, it guided every movement in perfect order. We simply obeyed it, and without

panic or a single outcry were transferred to the lifeboats and everyone was saved." So God is watching over and keeping all who have come into his covenant of grace.—Exchange.

**The River Boundaries.** The covenant is completed, and God will tell Abram just how far his land extends. The boundaries of one's farm may be shown by a tree, or stone, or spring, and so far in given directions. Rivers, mountains and seas are often the boundaries of nations. These two rivers mark the northern and southern boundaries. The Mediterranean Sea is on the west, and the great impassable desert on the East. Altogether, it is about 450 miles long and an average of 75 miles wide. This land was a passage way of the nations for commerce and for war. This often led to the oppression of the Israelites, but it also gave an opportunity to bring the true religion to the world. This is the main reason why God chose it. There is a larger meaning in all these pictures. The great body of Abram's descendants are those that are like him in faith. This small land would not hold them all, so the greater teaching is that of Jesus Christ, who is as a glorious lamp bringing light and salvation, passing between God and man in an everlasting covenant. The land of this God-loving nation is "from the rivers to the ends of the earth." The sign of fulfilment is not an outward one of stars or sand or fire, but the inner one of an indwelling Holy Spirit. The story is full of the Divine promises, the Divine mercy, the Divine power, the Divine gifts.

**The Unseen Helper.** Some time ago I saw a picture representing two women in great sorrow. Standing behind the chairs on which they were sitting there appeared the figure of Christ stretching out His hand over them. They could not see Him, because their eyes were dim, but He was none the less present with them. He was near in all His effulgent brightness, with all His sympathetic consolation, and with all His helpful power.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What covenant sign was given in the heavens to Noah, and what did it mean? 2. What sign was given of the coming of Christ? 3. What two figures did God use to show Abram how many descendants he would have? 4. How may we claim to be among his descendants?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God's promises may sometimes seem to go contrary to present experiences. 2. A Divine promise is the surest guaranty one can have, for it is mightier than all obstacles. 3. Faith is weak in proportion as we forget the promise, or are ignorant of it. 4. The delays of covenant blessings may both increase the blessing and increase God's glory. 5. The sure basis of all missionary enterprises is the covenant of God, including all lands. 6. All past fulfillments of covenant promises strengthen our faith for the future. 7. God's greater and truer covenant is in and by the blood of His Son, and this is offered to all.



And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me and if not, I will know And the



turned  
their  
faces  
from  
thence,  
and



Sodom. but Abraham stood yet before the Lord And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Peradventure there be fifty righteous within



wilt thou  
also destroy  
and not  
spare the  
place for  
the fifty  
righteous  
that are  
therein?  
That be  
far from



thee to do after this manner, to

the righteous with the wicked and that the



should  
be as  
the



that be far from thee. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 18:16-33.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus,, Thou hast spoken to us in Thy Word, and Thou hast encouraged us to speak to Thee in and by prayer. Help us to see how many and what great blessings are possible to us by prayer. Enlarge our hearts that we may seek the salvation of all everywhere.

May we see Jesus Christ as the great Intercessor, who thus is our pattern in prayer and who also secures answers to our prayers. For Christ's sake. Amen.

More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

—Tennyson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1897. Place, Hebron. Persons, Abraham, angels, God.

**Scripture Setting: Intercessory Prayer.** By Moses, Num. 14:1-21. By Samuel, 1 Sam. 7:1-12. By Nehemiah, Neh. 1:1-11. By Daniel, Dan. 9:1-19. By David, 2 Sam. 24:10-25. By Christ, John 17:1-26. By the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:11-27. Intercessory blessings, Rom. 8:31-39.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This first recorded case of intercessory prayer gives us some important truths about prayer for others. 1. We pray for others only when we realize their peril; not simply know the peril but feel it. 2. We pray for

others only when our life is consistent and we are in right relations with God. 3. We pray for others only when the Holy Spirit breathes upon us and moves us so to do. 4. We pray for others only when we have a true view of God's purposes, and realize His great mercy. 5. We pray for others only when our faith inspires to persistent and earnest appeal. 6. We pray for others only when we see God to be just, holy and righteous as well as merciful and gracious. 7. We pray for others only as we see Jesus Christ as Mediator and Intercessor, and make our petition in His name, and in submission to His will.

### POWER OF PRAYER FOR OTHERS.

**Abraham and Lot.** Abraham! This is a new name; who is he? The name is new, but the person is the same Abram we have been reading about. God had renewed His covenant with Abram, when he was ninety-nine years old. At that time He changed his name to Abraham, meaning "father of a multitude." Sarai's name was changed to Sarah, "princess." Lot was changing too, not in name, but in life; but this was for the worse. At first he looked towards Sodom and pitched his tent over that way. Soon he was influenced to go clear into the city, and he and his family were right among those wicked people. Abraham was sorry, but he remained true as a friend. Lot at one time was taken captive and Abraham rescued him. Ishmael had been born in Abraham's home before this, but he was not Sarah's son.

Sometimes men had more than one wife in those days. One day about this time when Abraham was sitting in his tent door, he saw three strangers before him. He received them and gave them food. Very soon he knew that they were angels, and that one of them was the Angel of the Covenant, which means Jesus Christ. They bring the glad tidings that Sarah will have a little son ere long, whose name shall be Isaac. This means "laughter," and some think he was so named because Sarah laughed when she first heard the news. Abraham was a praying Christian, and so the angels visited him.

**To Be a Praying Christian.** A pastor showed his

friend through the parsonage, and, opening a door into a little room at the head of the stairs, said, "This is our room for prayer. Any one of the family, or our visitors, can retire here for prayer. It is consecrated to that object, and used for no other. It is the most frequented room in the house." Jesus went up into a mountain to pray. Much more do we need stated times and places for prayer.—Exchange.

**Some Terrible News.** These angels had come down also to punish the wicked city of Sodom. Abraham had gone with all three, a part of the way towards Sodom, talking with the Angel of the Covenant. At last the Lord lets the two angels go on, and He waits with Abraham. The first pictures show the two angels turning away, and then going toward Sodom. One is pointing to the doomed city, and they are both greatly interested. Now while the Lord is talking with Abraham, He said to Himself, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am going to do? No, I will tell him." He knew Abraham meant to do right in every way, so God felt that Abraham should know of this great judgment. Then He told him that the wickedness of those cities was very great, and that He would destroy them.

Now we must remember that God had spared them for a long time, and that they were growing worse and worse. To pass them longer unpunished would do great harm to many other cities and people, and God does not intend to punish any righteous people who may be there. Still it often happens that some good people do suffer when the wicked are punished. But God tells the righteous many things by which they are able to help others in trouble. And the very best kind of help is in and by prayer.



Moses prays, Amalek is discomfited; Joshua prays, Achan is discovered; Gideon prays, the Midianites are overthrown; David prays, Ahithophel hangs himself; Asa prays, a great victory is gained; Jehoshaphat prays, God turns away his foes; Isaiah and Hezekiah pray, 185,000 Assyrians are destroyed; Mordecai and Esther pray, Haman is hanged and the Jews are saved; the church prays, Peter is delivered.—Ryland.

**Why Abraham Prayed.** Abraham knew that Sodom was a wicked city, and was deserving of destruction. But he was thinking of Lot and his family and wondering how they might be saved. He draws near to God, not only by stepping towards Him, but by faith and love. This is the first case of serious prayer we find in the Bible, and is very interesting on that account. Abraham appeals to God's justice and says, "Perhaps there may be fifty good people in the city. Wilt Thou not spare it for the fifty?" The Lord said, "I will spare it, if there be fifty good people." This mercy of God greatly encouraged Abraham, and he continued his intercession, dropping to forty-five, then to forty, to thirty, to twenty, and at last to ten. God agrees to his terms each time to the very last. Then Abraham ceased praying, thinking either that there will surely be ten righteous people, or feeling that it would be wrong to ask God to save the city for a smaller number. The Lord went His way, ceasing to grant any more, for Abraham had ceased to ask. But Abraham had prayed because God drew near to him and showed His love and mercy.

**The Golden Cord of Prayer.** An Eastern king devised a way to grant an entrance to all his people, even the poorest. He hung in his bed-chamber a golden bell. To the bell was attached a golden cord which was let outside the wall of the castle until it reached the ground. When a poor man in the kingdom had any wrong for which he sought redress he did not need to go to any of the officials, and perhaps bribe them, in order to reach the king's ear. He could pull the golden cord, and the bell in the royal chamber told of a needy one outside. Thus all had access to the king. It is the same with our King. No one is shut out. No one needs to approach Him with gifts or to seek out a courtier or an official. Access is free.—World.

**What Makes the Difference?** That is a very striking contrast in the last two pictures. One figure is that of a person who looks good and is ready to do justly to others. The other is that of one who is hard looking and ugly, and who is ready to kill and harm others. What makes the difference? If we were to put it in one word we might say, prayer. That will both make the character good and beautiful and the life useful and helpful. No one of us would like to fall into the hands of that butcher-looking

man. Then we should see to it that we do not become like that, to hurt and harm others. In the next story we learn of the escape of Lot. It shows that God answered Abraham's prayer in a way that he did not ask. God will often answer better than we dared to ask, blessing both those who pray and those for whom they pray. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

A most fitting place for this service of praying for others is in the home—just where these stories are read. If there is prayer there for the members of the family, there will be apt to be prayer for all others, even to the ends of the earth. The good news of the Gospel is for all, and the real Christian is anxious to spread the good news in every way he can. Prayer is a mighty power in bringing others to Christ.

When one is willing to pray the Holy Spirit will show him just what to pray for. He will also show him how he may be used of God to answer his own prayers. The writer remembers that what helped him most in seeking the Saviour was the fact that a fellow playmate, an earnest Christian said to him, "I am praying for you." Soon the Saviour was found and he in turn began to work and pray for others.

The story is told of how General Booth, head of the Salvation Army, with its branches and officers all over the world from Alaska to Australia, desired to send as his annual message, one word of command and inspiration to every leader in the army. He wanted it all in one word, because it had to be cabled at great expense to the far-off places; yet he wanted it full and complete. He hesitated a long while; but the message, when it went off at Christmas time, was all that he sought for—for it was the keyword, "Others."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How was Abram's name changed and what did each of the names mean? 2. What other Bible person had his name changed, and what did each of the names mean? 3. What famous Apostle had his name changed; how and why? 4. Mention any Bible prayers you can; as prayer for rain. 5. Who prayed, "Not my will." When and where? 6. Who prayed, "Father forgive them," etc.; when and where?

**Challenge Text.** "Wherefore He is able to — them to the uttermost, that come unto God —; seeing He ever liveth to make — for them." Heb. 7: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Judgment may be long delayed, but it is sure to come at last. 2. It is a great blessing to have praying friends, for "prayer moves the arm that moves the world." 3. It is our duty to pray for others, even our enemies. 4. The closet, the family altar and the public prayer services are the hope of the world. 5. True prayer is for the sake of Christ and in His merit and by His Spirit. 6. True prayer may plead for the "impossible," for "with God all things are possible."

DR. J. M. COON.



# LOT'S ESCAPE FROM SODOM

And when the morning arose, then the



hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy



which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city. And while he lingered, the men



upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and

upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him



and they brought him forth, and set him without the

And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said,



for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the



lest thou be consumed.



# LOT'S ESCAPE FROM SODOM.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GENESIS 19:12-26.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We rejoice that Thou dost make a way of escape from sin and wrath. May we be prompted to flee to the refuge that is offered in Christ. Quicken us by the pleadings of Thy Spirit and providences. Prevent us from being absorbed by worldly things, and allured by the temptations of Satan. May we break from the "city of destruction," and not turn back, nor even look back. For Christ's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1897. Places, Sodom, Gomorrah and Zoar, cities of the Jordan plain. Persons, Angels, Lot, Lot's wife and two daughters.

**Scripture Setting:** Destruction and Deliverance. Doom of the ungodly, 2 Pet. 2:4-12. End of a wrong life, 1 Sam. 31:1-13. In the hands of the living God, Heb. 10:26-39. Losing the soul, Mark 8:27-37. Presumptuous sins, Psa. 19:7-14. The righteous delivered, Gen. 7:1-24. Deliverance of Israel, Ex. 14:19-31. Danger of delay, Heb. 3:7-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage has the double lesson respecting the judgment and mercy of God. 1. Judgment and mercy may appear to-

gether in a given place or time; indeed, each of these great attributes is necessary to the fullest expression of the other. 2. Mercy is the superior attribute in God's dealing with man, for at times the guilty are spared for the sake of the godly. 3. The Divine judgments are delayed in order that mercy may get in its plea and work. 4. The discipline, sacrifices and losses of life may seem to be judgments, when really they are mercies. 5. When God's merciful desires and plans are exhausted, then his judgments fall. 6. Those who accept God's mercy grow more and more like Him; those who merit His judgment become less and less like Him.

—Keen.

## A WONDERFUL DELIVERANCE AND A TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT.

**Those Angels Again.** You have heard of people having "a good angel." Some think that everyone has a good angel, as a watch and guide. We know that everyone does have an inside angel, which means messenger. This inside angel is the conscience, and it is constantly saying, "Better not," or "Better do it," or "I would if I were you." You have heard the whispers of that angel many times. It is well to hear it and obey. But these angels in the first pictures are the special ones God sent to destroy Sodom. Because of Abraham's prayer they found Lot's house and knocked at the door. Lot has opened it, and is hearing what they have to tell him. Lot has been pretty good while living in such a wicked city. The Bible calls him "righteous Lot." He seems even better than he is, for all others are so very wicked. Lot kept these angels all night. They told him that the city would be destroyed by fire and urged him to warn all his friends at once and try to take them with him. He could not influence any of them. Even his sons-in-law mocked and laughed at him. The two daughters who were home and the mother thought they would go with Lot. They seem to be talking it over in that second picture. While they lingered, wanting to take some of their nicest things with them, the angels urged them all again and even grasped them by the arms and pulled them along, as in the third picture. Sometimes God asks us to be the angels to lead others to Christ.

"Come and Help Me." "Don't hesitate to speak to any man about his soul. I have been longing for 20 years for some Christian to speak to me. I believe there are thousands of men in this city who are in the same condition that I am, carrying an uneasy conscience and a great burden on their souls; not courageous enough to seek instruction, yet willing to receive it." This was the testimony of a business man when the evangelist had said that he hoped the man would not consider him intruding and impertinent.

**Hurry, Hurry.** At last they are outside the city walls. The angels left them a few minutes and they really act as if they wanted to go back. Perhaps they wished to urge some of their friends again. I believe it was all because Lot's wife was not altogether satisfied, as we learn later. Lot stands by himself and he shows that he has made up his mind not to go back. The girls are influenced by the mother and are likely to be persuaded. Just then the angels came back and cried out, "Here! hurry up; escape for thy life and look not behind. Escape to the mountain." This urgent warning decides them, and Lot and his wife start ahead and the girls follow. They lean forward in their haste to get away from the peril. Lot was fearful they could not reach the mountain in time, and he asked if they might not go to that city off at one side. The angels agreed to that and said that they would spare that city for them. It was afterward called Zoar, meaning "little." The other four cities were destroyed.

**How About Your City.** "Always speak a good word for your town," is a popular saying with

business men. Jesus is our example to warn our own towns of the danger of despising religious privileges. He lays bare the sin of insensibility to religious impressions. Our condemnation at last will be in proportion to the instruction and warnings we have had. Doubtless the moral tone of Chorazin and Bethsaida was far above that of Sodom, but their punishment would be greater because they sinned against greater light and knowledge. The guilt of New York, Chicago or London is far greater than Sodom, because they have so much greater light.

**Why She Looked Back.** How good these angels were to stay right by till Lot and his family were out of danger. Then, too, to grant the request of Lot, so they would not have so far to go. All this is to teach that God will be as merciful and gracious as He possibly can, in order that sinful man may be helped to a place of safety. Now the rain of fire is falling on the cities and on all the plain. It was a terrible sight, and wonderful as well. Perhaps there was much noise with the strange rushing and flashing of the flames, like bursting clouds of fire. As they hurried on Lot gets ahead alone, then the two girls, and Lot's wife is behind all. That is a bad place to get, especially if one is a little weak and liable to be tempted. Anyhow, almost without thinking, suddenly Lot's wife looks back. This was just what the angels told her not to do. She doubtless kept thinking of her friends and all the fine things they had in their home. Maybe she asked herself, "I wonder if I will ever see them again?" Then she looked back, and it was because she longed to be back. The look and the love are apt to go together. The next picture shows what happened to her. There she stands still looking back, and fixed in that position. The saltish vapors falling on her crusted her over with a salt covering. Lot and his daughters went on, without knowing what had happened to her, for they dared not look back.

**The Only Safe Course.** There is a sermon in this looking back which may be read between the lines. The man who keeps as far from wrong-doing as possible is safe—others run a risk, be it more or less. The man who never plays gambling games never becomes a gambler. The man who never drinks never becomes a drunkard. The man who always endeavors to state the exact truth never becomes a liar. The man who never uses another's money without the owner's consent never becomes an embezzler. The man who never goes into bad company is never corrupted by bad company.—

**Dreadful Punishment of the Wicked.** Abraham stands the next morning and looks towards those wicked cities. All is

destroyed; not only the cities, but also the trees and plants in all that country. We can see now how reasonable the plea of the angels was. To have stayed and enjoyed their home in Sodom would have been to lose all and themselves besides. Sometimes people ask if it costs anything to be righteous. Surely it does, as we might conclude when we realize the great value of holiness. It is the pearl of great price, and one is warranted in making every sacrifice to secure it. Lot brought great trouble upon himself because of that selfish grasping choice when he pitched his tent toward Sodom. As a result of that choice he is thrown with the wicked. He and his family are carried off as the spoils of war and he loses home, children, friends and life prospects. God is good to him in providentially saving his life and giving him a new chance.

This complete and terrible destruction of the cities is suggestive of the punishment of the wicked at the last. Those who persist in their selfish choices and wicked ways shall surely be destroyed. Christ based one of his most solemn warnings on this incident when he said, "Remember Lot's wife." The warning is specially to all who love the world and the things of this life; and who are ever choosing, planning for and seeking mere earthly good. And God has many ways of punishing the wicked.

**A Startling Judgment.** At one time an infidel went up on the Catskill mountains, and in the presence of his companions he defied God to show himself in battle. He swung his sword and challenged the Almighty to single combat. Then God sent a little gnat, so small that one could hardly see it, and it lodged in the man's windpipe and choked him to death.—Dr. Pierson.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What great destruction by water did God visit on the whole world? 2. How was Peter once saved by an angel? And Paul and Silas? 3. What other "look not" do you remember in the Bible? 4. What six cities were good cities to flee to, and what were they called? 5. How many were really saved out of Sodom?

**Challenge Text.** "They that will be ——— fall into ——— and a snare."—1 Tim. 6: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Bad company in order to get gain is sure to bring trouble. 2. The warnings of the godly are apt to be despised by the wicked. 3. We are known by the company we keep, and we become like them as well. 4. The godly accept God's way; the ungodly prefer their own way. 5. The Bible, the Lord's day, conscience, Christian friends, many providences, the Holy Spirit, are God's good angels to man. "Better not do it," even if you are in doubt about it; certainly not, if it is clearly wrong. 7. Christ is the refuge for all who will escape from sin and sinfulness of life.

DR. J. M. COON.



And Abraham



of the burnt offering, and



his son; and he

in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the



but where is the



for the burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went

together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham



there, and



in order,

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 22:1-14.

**Prayer:** Teach us, O God, the lesson of faith. May we surrender all to Thee. All of life and all we love. Help us to be Thy real friends, and Thy faithful and devoted followers. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"O Lord, my God! Do Thou Thy holy will.  
I will lie still.  
I will not stir, lest I forsake Thine arm,  
And break the charm  
Which hurls me clinging to my Father's breast,  
In perfect rest."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1871. Places, Beersheba and Mount Moriah. Persons, Abraham, Isaac, two servants, the angel.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Faith. Faith's captain, Heb. 2. Faith's weapons, Eph. 6:10-20. Faith's resources, 1 Cor. 1:18-31. Faith's obedience, 1 John 5. Faith's hope and boast, Ps. 44. Faith's achievements, Heb. 11:24-40. Faith and salvation, John 3:5-17. Faith's power, Matt. 9:18-31. Establish in the faith, Col. 2:1-9. Faith's final triumph, Rev. 19:11-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** God tries our faith for many reasons: 1. That He may increase it. 2.

That He may reveal it to ourselves and others. 3. That He may prepare us for some hard task. 4. That we may see God's grace and power. 5. That we may be inspired to gratitude and praise. 6. That other graces and gifts may be developed. 7. That we may put God first in our love and life.

If a ray of white light is passed through a prism, it is shown to have the seven colors—red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet; so God, by His prism of trial, shows us how pure and true Abraham's faith is by revealing its seven inner properties—obedience, trust, love, sacrifice, worship, service, praise.

### HOW GOD TAUGHT ABRAHAM A GREAT LESSON.

Abraham had grown to be wealthy. He had many things, such as cows, sheep, goats, asses, servants, and much silver and gold. But he loved most of all his son Isaac, for he was a special gift from God, as God had promised.

**God's Strange Command.** The Bible says that God tempted Abraham. This does not mean that He tempted him to sin, for God never does that. But He tested his faith, to see if it was pure and true, and also to make it stronger. And as Abraham loved Isaac more than all else, God tests him by telling him to offer up Isaac on an altar, as he would a lamb. This was a strange command, for Isaac was given as the beginning of a great nation.

But, though Abraham loved Isaac much, he loved God even more. And so he was willing to do anything God told him. He was to go to a place that God would show him. He prepares for the journey, taking with him two servants. The pictures show him as he gets ready the wood, the fire and the knife. See how willing and obedient Isaac is, as he helps his father. Abraham too is obedient, though he was sad at heart. His face shows that he is trying to think out what God means by the command. But he knows that God will not let him do wrong, and he knows too that God can even raise Isaac to life again.

**Tempted for a Purpose.** A young man came once to borrow \$10,000 from H. B. Clafin, the New York merchant.

"Come in," said Mr. Clafin, "come in and have a glass of wine."

"No," said the young man. "I don't drink."

"Have a cigar, then."

"No, I never smoke."

"Well," said the joker, "I would like to accommodate you, but don't think I can."

"Very well," said the young man as he was about to leave the room. "I thought perhaps you might. Good-day, sir."

"Hold on," said Mr. Clafin, "you don't drink?"

"No!"

"Nor smoke, nor gamble, nor anything of the kind?"

"No, sir!"

"Well," said Mr. Clafin, with tears in his eyes, "you shall have it, and three times the amount, if you wish. Your father let me have \$5,000 once and asked me the same question. No thanks; I owed it to you for your father's sake."—Selected.

**Who Is the Lamb?** They all four travel a whole day, and then another day. The third day they see the place afar off. Abraham tells the servants to stay here, while he and Isaac go up the hill to worship, when they would return to them. He believes that God would give Isaac back to him. When Isaac asks, "Where is the lamb?" Abraham's faith shines out in the answer, "My son, God will provide Himself a lamb." We shall see that God did do this in a remarkable way. Abraham's faith was something more than his own will and purpose. It was God working and thinking in him, and so keeping him strong and true. Abraham is called "the friend of God" and "the father of the faithful," and it was because God was first his Friend and also gave him power to be faithful.

**The Electric Coils.** The carbon coils are glowing with light and radiance. But the coils themselves are not light. The electricity must shine through them. So God by His love and grace and power comes into man, and makes him shine bright and strong for God. If we have faith like this, nothing is too hard for us to bear, nor too great for us to do.



At last they are at the top of the hill, Abraham builds the altar, with stones and earth, while the picture shows Isaac standing and wondering. Then, as in the next picture, Isaac brings the wood, and it is laid in order.

Now Isaac learns who the lamb is, for Abraham binds him, perhaps with the very cords which tied the wood. He is laid on the wood, as a lamb, and Abraham takes the knife to slay him. Thus far, it is as if Abraham saw a shining angel, beckoning him to come on and saying to him that all will be well at the end. And it was indeed so.

**The Voice of the Angel.** Abraham's faith has been tested, and as his hand is lifted to strike, God calls to him to stop; for He says, "Now I know that thou fearest God." How gladly Abraham obeys this command! See how surprised he is when he is told that God has furnished the lamb, and how rejoiced as he takes the ram and offers it in the place of his son Isaac. He calls the place of the offering Jehovah Jireh, which means, "The Lord will provide." It is as if Isaac is given back to him from the dead. It was a strong faith which believed that God would send him a son, when he and Sarah were so old; now it is a still stronger faith that God has spared that son to him. That bright picture of God's help and mercy must have cheered and inspired Abraham always afterward.

**A Good Motto.** It is said that in the bedroom of the great Gladstone, inscribed in the form of an arch, were these words: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee." And this thought of the overruling providence of God, more than anything else, enabled him to carry the immense burdens of state. So also this victory of Abraham's faith has helped God's children in all ages.

"Your faith and joy are an inspiration to all of us." So said one Christian to another, who had passed through a great trial in the loss of loved ones. The trial was like a bell or signal calling the world to see what the Christian could do and be for the Master.

**The Lamb of God.** After the angel told Abraham that God was pleased with his faith, he also said that God would bless him, for being so obedient; and that one day one of his descendants, through Isaac, would save the world from sin and make people fit for Heaven. He meant that Jesus Christ, who is "The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," would be a descendant of Isaac. Many hundreds of years after this,

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. He was the Son of God, and also the Lamb of God. This sacrifice of Isaac is a shadow picture of the real sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Calvary.

**A Joyous Trip Home.** When the angel left, Abraham and Isaac went down to the servants at the foot of the hill. Then all went back together to their tent homes, and they told Sarah what had happened. They were now more happy than ever, and God was greatly pleased with them.

Abraham learned some great lessons in this school of trial—that Isaac and all he owned and loved belonged to God; that they should not kill boys and men for offerings as the heathen nations did; that the commands of God are sometimes very strange and mysterious and even severe; that the only safe course is to obey the commands exactly as they are given, trusting to God to work out the right results; that "to obey is better than sacrifice," and faith is the chief thing in obedience; and that now God could fulfill His promise that salvation should come through Isaac.

**Sunburst of Faith.** Your mamma will tell you of a beautiful jewel called a "sunburst." This faith of Abraham is much like such a jewel. Shining in it and from it we can see obedience, trust, love, sacrifice, service, worship and praise. Even a child may have and wear this "sunburst" jewel of faith.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How was Abraham's faith tried when God first called him? (Ch. 12)? 2. Whose faith did Christ commend when He raised a child to life? 3. What woman's faith did He specially commend, and how? 4. What shepherd boy had faith to fight a giant? Tell the story. 5. What are the seven steps in Abraham's stairway of faith? The pictures will help to find some of them.

**Challenge Text.** Although the fig tree shall not ———, neither shall fruit be in the ——— the labor of the ——— shall fail. Yet I will ——— in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my ———. Hab. (3)?

**Practical Lessons for Mind and Heart.** 1. All of life is a testing time, but usually every life has its one great trial—the sacrifice of its Isaac. 2. To give to God is to receive a hundred-fold back, both in kind of blessings and in degree. 3. It is the last step and act that counts. What if Abraham had failed to lift the knife? 4. "All things work together for good to them that love God." 5. The very purpose of faith is to lead us and hold us when all looks dark and hard. 6. Faith is the gateway into a life of success—faith in God, in self, in the right, in honest work. 7. True faith asks only for God's command, and then immediately obeys. 8. By a heaven-born instinct, faith knows all will be well at the end. 9. Faith is mightier than persons or things or circumstances, or even one's own fears. 10. Faith grows strong on denials, repulses, defeats and opposition. Faith never fails, for its very life is the whisper of the Infinite.

DE. J. M. COON.



Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of



and  
possession  
of



and great store of



and  
the  
Philis-  
tines  
envied  
him.  
For  
all  
the



which his father's servants had



in the  
days of  
Abraham  
his father,  
the Philis-  
tines had  
stopped  
them,  
and



them with earth.

And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we. And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 26:12-25.

**Prayer:** O God, teach us to be gentle, watchful and forgiving—living peaceably with all. May our soul and life be cast in the Gospel mould. Make us grateful for blessings and thoughtful of others. For Christ's sake. Amen.

### How to Live with Others.

Bring tolerance that can kiss and disagree;  
Bring virtue, honor, truth and loyalty;  
Bring faith that sees with undissembling eyes;  
Bring all large loves and Heavenly charities.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1804. Places, Gerar, Beersheba, Rehoboth. Persons, Isaac and Abimelech, and their servants.

**Scripture Setting:** Helps to True Success. Right motives and ideals, Prov. 3:1-18. Promise of God, Gen. 18:1-10. Maintaining good works, Jas. 1:19-27. Thoughtful of others, Jas. 2:1-13. A Christian at all times, Tit. 3:1-9. Serving God heartily, 2 Chron. 34:29-33. All-round graces, Rom. 12. True and false success, Mark 10:28-45.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here are some of the great laws of true success: 1. The law of character and parents. 2. The law of fidelity and industry. 3. The law of patient continuance. 4. The law of adaptation to circumstances and to people. 5. The law of recovering and using neglected resources ("wells"). 6. Watchful of providence. 7. The law of concentration and consecration. Isaac is a splendid illustration of the art of living peaceably with others.

### A SUCCESSFUL MAN.

What large flocks and herds are seen in these pictures! They all belong to Isaac. As a lad his life was saved by the angel, and now he has grown to be a man, is married, and has been prospered in every way.

**When Prosperity Begins.** I think Isaac was a successful man because he was a good boy. You remember how obedient and helpful he was to his father. He must have been kind and thoughtful to his mother, also.

**"I Carry the Wood."** A little boy said that he loved his mother with all his strength. He was asked what he meant, and he said: "You see, we live on the fourth floor of this house, and there is no elevator, and the wood is down in the basement. Mother is busy, and is not very strong, so I carry the wood up for her. That is what I call loving mother with all my strength." I am sure Isaac was a helpful boy in the home, and so we are not surprised to find him successful as a man.

**Where Prosperity Comes From.** God was very good to Isaac, and this explains why he was prospered. God gave him a good father and mother, the great Abraham and the gentle Sarah. God directed Abraham's servant, so that he found a beautiful wife for Isaac. Ask your mother to tell you about it. When Abraham died, he gave all he had to Isaac. Besides this, when Isaac sowed seed God made it grow and bear a hundred-fold. In this way he came to be rich and great, and had many servants, who took care of his flocks and herds, as you can see by the pictures. Isaac believed in God and trusted Him; and God believed in Isaac and trusted him with many things.

Is that a swing in the next picture? No, it shows how they used to draw water from the wells. These wells were very necessary to supply water for the flocks and herds; and so they were very valuable. Isaac was a great well-digger. Though God blessed him, yet Isaac knew that he must do his part in

order to succeed in life. Traces of the well of Jacob, and some of the wells of Isaac, are still found in Palestine by travelers.

**Prosperity from God.** There is no more steady and uplifting conviction than that we are constantly in the sight of God, that our hand is in His, that He is closer than a brother and, as the poet has said, "nearer than hands and feet."

It was this vision of Immanuel, Christ with us, which nerved the martyr Stephen in his supreme trial, until, under the pain and indignity of his martyrdom, his face shone like the face of an angel.

Paul was imprisoned, whipped, stoned; "but," says Dr. Jefferson, "he never winces nor falters, but sings wherever he goes."

It was because God said to his soul, as He does to ours, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."—Exchange.

**Prosperity May Make Enemies.** You would think that everyone would love Isaac, for he was so kind, so good, and so gentle. God and all good people did love him, but there were some wicked people who envied him because he was prospered so. The king of that country asked Isaac to go to another place; and Isaac did so, to avoid trouble. Here he opened up wells that Abraham had dug, but the enemy followed him and claimed that the wells were theirs. Isaac went from place to place, until his enemies stopped following him. Then God led him to a place where he found a living well, like what we call an artesian well. To stop up a well in those days was almost like setting fire to some one's house, and it was a mean thing to do. But was not that a good way for Isaac to master his enemies? They must have felt guilty indeed when they found how noble Isaac was. They did come afterward and make a covenant with him, that they would not hurt him if he would not hurt them. They saw that God was with him, and so they feared him. Thus God can overrule even the wrath and envy of the wicked for

the good of His people. You remember that Christ was crucified because of the envy of the Jews, but God overruled it to bring salvation to all who will accept Him.

**The Better Way.** I should like to know a man who just minded his duty and troubled himself about nothing; who did his own work and did not interfere with God's. How nobly he would work—working not for a reward, but because it was the will of God! How happily he would take his food and clothing, receiving them as gifts of God! What peace would be his! What a sober gaiety! How hearty and infectious his laughter! What a friend he would be! How sweet his sympathy! And his mind would be so clear he would understand everything. His eye being single, his whole body would be full of light. No fear of his ever doing a mean thing—he would die in a ditch, rather.—George Macdonald.

**More and More Prospered.** One night God spoke to Isaac and told him not to fear; that He would take care of him and bless him. This was better than all the wells, and he would not have had this if he had fought and contended for his "rights." God wants us to be bold and brave for Him and for His truth, and He blesses us for such battles. But when it is a mere earthly and personal matter, God is pleased if we are yielding and forgiving and peace-loving, as Isaac was. It may be hard at the time, but we are always glad afterwards. One would much rather be like Isaac than like those wicked people who hated him and pestered him. It pays to love God and obey Him; for really God owns all things and can give whatever He pleases to those who love Him. And if we love God, we will not be saying "mine," "mine," all the time, but will be thinking of how we may help and bless others also.

**Always Helping.** "How did he come to be the head of the concern, anyway?" was asked about a peculiarly quiet man who forged to the front in a growing business. "Why, it was this way," was the reply. "All anybody had to do, in case of things going wrong, was to refer matters to him. He was always attentive, always cleared up the tangles, always could answer questions, always was ready to do more than he was expected to do. He wasn't ambitious; he didn't want the head place especially; but what was the use of making anybody else the head, when we had him?" That was all there was to it. His reliability made everyone depend upon him, and he became head in title because he was first the head in fact.—Selected.

Wherever Isaac lived it is said that he built an altar there. This is the same as family prayer in the Christian home, or what is called the family altar; for all the members of the family gather there to praise God for His care and to ask for daily mercies.

Some of us can remember the time when

there were family altars in many homes. In this hurrying age, with many distracting cares, there is a temptation to let the practice of family worship fall into decline. This is the work of Satan, for he does not want Christ to be honored in the heart or in the home. There are many good reasons why the altar of praise and prayer should be established. God himself instituted the home, and it is right that he should be remembered in it. He alone can protect and bless it, and He waits for us to ask His favor and mercy. He promises even to come and live with those who choose and pray to Him. In Rev. 3:20, Christ says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." The door may be that of one's heart or of one's home. To set up a family altar is to open the door of the home to Christ. Jesus once said to His disciples (John 14:23), "If a man love Me he will keep my words: and my Father will love him and We will come unto him and make our abode with him." This is most wonderful, indeed, and the family altar makes it all possible. Then who can know what dangers or enemies may be near to the home or to those we love? Our very ignorance and weakness should prompt us to seek God's grace and care.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In the parable of the sower in Matthew, how large was the increase from the seed? 2. What well did Jesus sit by, and with whom did He talk? 3. Mention six things God has given you, and that you are thankful for. 4. Whom did Isaac most resemble in Scripture? Of whom is he a type? 5. What boy was envied by his brothers, who sold him into slavery? 6. What man did God put a mark on, because he slew his brother for envy? 7. Read about the "coals-of-fire" way of treating an enemy in Rom. 12:8. What did Jesus say about treating one's enemies? See Matt. 5:38-48.

**The Challenge Text.** And he shall be like a ——— planted by the ———, that bringeth forth his ——— in his season; his ——— also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall ———. Ps. 1:(?).

**Practical Lessons for Mind and Heart.** 1. What was the loss of a well, or of ten wells, if God was his portion? 2. We should work as if all depended on ourselves, and trust and pray as if all depended on God. 3. God may or may not give us large earthly possessions, but real prosperity is the gift of His grace and love. 4. Every real success in life is apt to be assailed by both man and Satan. 5. We should re-open the old wells of truth, which have been filled up or covered up. 6. Isaac is prospered because he is a man of peace and prayer. 7. Personal industry and a spirit of sacrifice are the great laws of success. 8. There can be no true and lasting success without taking Jesus Christ as a Savior and friend.



And Rebekah took goodly



of her  
eldest  
son  
Esau,  
which  
were  
with her  
in the  
house,  
and



her younger son: And she put the



of the kids of the goats



and upon the smooth of his



And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, into the



of her  
son  
Jacob.  
And he  
came



and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son? And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me. And Isaac said unto his son, How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord thy God brought it to me.

GEN. XXVII: 15-20.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 27:22-40.

**Prayer:** O Lord, We are sinful and weak, and then more sinful. Forgive the bad bargains we make, and overrule them for good. Save us from self and sin and make us strong to do right things in a right way. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"There's so much bad in the best of us,  
And so much good in the worst of us,  
That it hardly behooves any of us  
To talk about the rest of us."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1760. Place, Beersheba. Persons, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Esau.

**Scripture Setting: Factors in Character Building.** Right foundations, Matt. 7:21-29. Right choices, Josh. 24:14-25. Early training, 2 Tim. 1:3-14. A strong purpose, Dan. 1:8-21. First things first, Matt. 6:19-34. Right materials, 1 Cor. 3:1-15. Providence overruling, Luke 15:11-24. The wise thing to do, Eccl. 12:1-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** First. As to Rebekah we see: 1. Lack of faith in God. 2. Failing in her duty as wife and mother. 3. Spoiling what

might have been a happy home. 4. Another deception and another to cover up the first. 5. Suffering for her wrongdoing. Second. As to Esau we see: 1. He did not appreciate his birthright. 2. He married heathen wives. 3. He sold his birthright for a meal of victuals. 4. He was a murderer at heart, for he purposed to kill Jacob. Third. As to Jacob we see: 1. It was prophesied that he should be first. 2. But it was wrong for him to sin in order to get the first place. 3. One lie demands another till he is completely tangled. 4. He is driven from home without money or friends.

### THREE BAD BARGAINS.

**How a Home was Spoiled.** What a pleasant home Isaac had! I do not mean the building, for he had only a tent such as we sometimes live in when we go on a vacation. But the building or tent does not make the home; it is rather the people in it. When they are all good and love each other, how happy they are. Now here was Isaac, the good son of the great and good Abraham, with beautiful Rebekah for a wife. Ask your mamma to tell you how Isaac came to find Rebekah. Then there were two boys, twins, named Esau and Jacob. Isaac loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob more, and so trouble came into the home. Then Isaac was a little lax in his authority and Rebekah was a little too ambitious, and this led to more trouble.

**Home Building.** "Love for all of us is an endless succession of forgiveness," says a writer who takes a sweet and wholesome view of family life. "We built our house with our smiles and tears, but mostly with our wits, which we sharpened on each other with great good feeling." The love that can give and take, that will not make mountains out of molehills, nor grave offenses out of passing moods, that refuses to carry today's small neglect or unreasonableness over into tomorrow's sunshine, that recognizes itself as very human and does not expect angels in human companions, is the sort of love the world needs. This blessed everyday affection, with the saving sense of humor that does not mistake comedy for tragedy and is able to clear the atmosphere with a laugh, does indeed build homes. It builds the strong, tender, happy family life that is at once the world's wealth and its hope.—Great Thoughts.

**A Man's Bad Bargain.** Jacob and Esau had grown to be men, but they still acted like boys. Esau was a hunter and Jacob was a shepherd. One day Esau came home tired and hungry and he brought no game with him. He found Jacob making some soup.

It smelled good to the hungry boy, and he asked him for some. Jacob said, "I'll give you some if you will trade me your birthright." Now a birthright was the right to have twice as much as any other child had from the parents, and the right also to be the head of the family. This belonged to Esau. Jacob was tricky and took advantage of Esau's hunger to make him sell this birthright for something to eat. Esau agreed to it, for he thought he might die and so lose both life and birthright. He liked what he could get at once, and the birthright seemed so far off. He did not stop to think what his act really meant. He was sorry enough for it, when it was too late. Many people are like Esau, for they choose some earthly pleasure even though they lose Heaven by it. A time will surely come when such people will be sorry as Esau was. When he found that Jacob had the blessing of his father, he cried out, "O, my father, bless me, even me also," but Isaac could not take the blessing from Jacob.

**Bad Bargains.** Once a Sabbath school teacher remarked that he who buys the truth makes a good bargain, and inquired if any scholar recollected an instance in Scripture of a bad bargain.

"I do," replied a boy. "Esau made a bad bargain when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage."

A second said: "Judas made a bad bargain when he sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver."

A third boy said: "Our Lord tells us that he makes a bad bargain who, to gain the whole world, loses his own soul."

I have seen a good many boys in my time who have made bad bargains. Some change the Sunday school for the street, and home for wicked company, and the Bible for books, and health for tobacco. They always get the worst of it. Boys, look out for these bad bargains.

**A Mother's Bad Bargain.** Rebekah was a



beautiful woman, but she did a great wrong both to Isaac and to Jacob. Isaac had sent Esau to kill a deer and make a dinner for him; and he promised that he would then give him the birthright blessing. Rebekah was anxious for Jacob to have this blessing, so she planned to deceive Isaac, who was old and blind. She told Jacob to run quickly and kill two kids of the flock that she might make a dinner for Isaac. Jacob was afraid his father would know him, but Rebekah urged him on and said she would take all the blame. She dressed Jacob in Esau's clothes and put the skins of the kids on his wrists and neck to be like Esau, who was a hairy man. All this was a bad bargain, and they both suffered for it afterwards. In the picture you can see how careful Rebekah is to make Jacob look like Esau. She did this to carry out her selfish plans.

The Bishop of Cambridge once gave a lesson in "Christian grammar" to a class he was teaching. He said: "We have all learned to say in school: First Person, I; Second Person, Thou; Third Person, He.

But that is wrong in Christian grammar, so wrong that to put it right one has to turn it quite upside down. The Christian's grammar is:

First Person, He; Second Person, Thou; Third Person, I.

And 'He' means God, the first person in the first place. Then 'Thou' means one's fellow man; and 'I' myself comes last."

Rebekah and Esau and Jacob all needed to learn this lesson of putting God first and self last.

**Another Bad Bargain.** Jacob sinned first when he urged Esau to sell his birthright to him. He sinned again when he yielded to his mother's plan to deceive Isaac. Notice it gets easier and easier to sin. When he brings the meal and pretends that he is Esau, Isaac asks him how he was able to come so soon. Jacob said that it was because the Lord helped him. Then Isaac felt of Jacob's hands and he said, "The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau." To be very sure about it, Isaac asked him, "Art thou Esau?" and Jacob replied, "I am." How soon the trick turned into a lie, and how many lies grow from the first one.

"Strange that young man can't make the business go!" Yes, it was strange at first thought. He seemed to be so hard working and industrious and the business itself was one the town could af-

ford to support. What ailed him, that trade dwindled and nobody appeared to like his painstaking work. At last the reason was discovered. People found out that he was a mere pretender, and that he was stealing the good will and trade of another firm, so they refused to patronize him.

**Good Use of Bad Bargains.** It was God's plan that Jacob should have the first place, for Esau was not worthy. But this was no excuse for any of the bad bargains. We should not do wrong even to help on a good work, or to secure a right end. God plans right things and He can always find right ways to do them. But if wrong ways are used as here, God can make them work out His plan. It was wrong for Rebekah and Esau and Jacob to do as they did; but God is greater than all, and He makes even their wrong acts work out His good plans.

**Best Bargains in Life.** What are the best things in life? They are those that last. The quiet happiness of years may be sacrificed for the pleasure of a moment, but it is a bad bargain. The enduring treasures are in the end the best. Those treasures that affect us directly are better than those that are only slightly connected with us. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Most of all we must remember that those things that minister to our higher nature are important. Health is better than wealth; but love is better still, for it ministers to the soul. The man who has a hundred friends is as if he had a hundred hearts, for fellowship expands the soul.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell some things which a boy or girl can't afford to do. 2. Jacob betrayed Isaac by a kiss. Who in the New Testament used the kiss for a worse betrayal? 3. How many instances here of lying and deception? 4. In what two ways was Jacob afterward deceived himself regarding his wife and children? 5. What mother in the New Testament had a wrong ambition for her two sons? What were the son's names?

**Challenge Text.** Wherefore let him that thinketh he — take heed lest he —. 1 Cor. 10: (?).

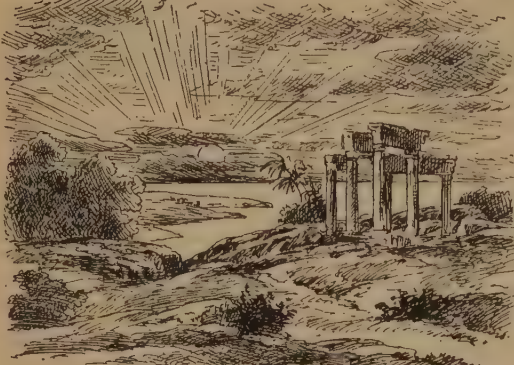
**Practical Lessons for Mind and Heart.** 1. It is never right to do evil that good may come. 2. God could have given Jacob the blessing without the wicked help of Esau and Rebekah. 3. No home is safe without love and the forgiving spirit in it. 4. It is the very worst policy to sell one's self to do evil. 5. Lost opportunity cannot be recovered, but one may thereby profit for the future. 6. The promise of present good often cheats us of the better and best of the future. 7. The home is a college for character building and the parents are the teachers. 8. To succeed by lying and trickery is the worst kind of failure. 9. The mother makes or mars the home, for she is its queen. 10. Better put the brakes on that tendency to cunning and sharp practice.

DR. J. M. COON.



## JACOB AT BETHEL

And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the



and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his



in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a



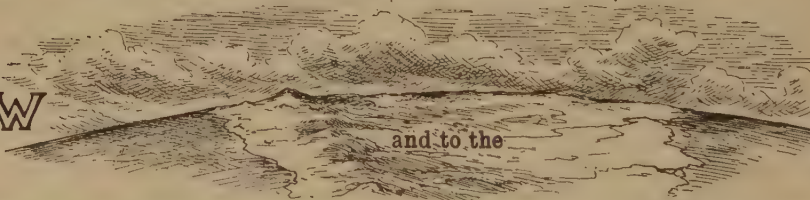
and behold the



And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread

abroad to the

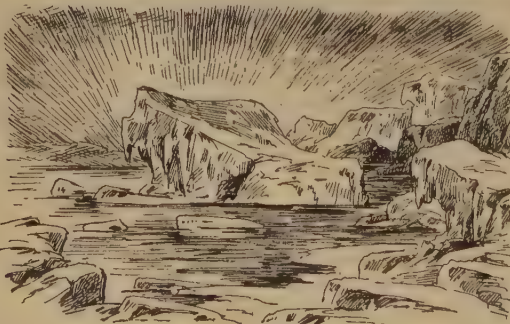
W



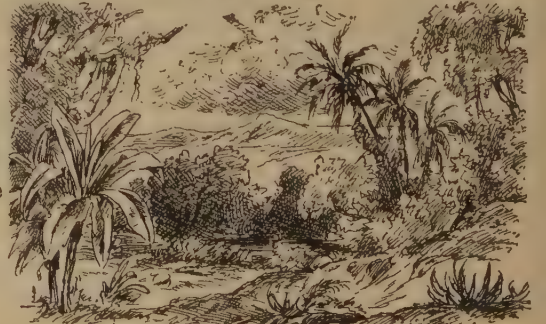
and to the

E

and to the



and to the



and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 28:1-22.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou knowest the way we take and the plans we make. Thou art ever before us in Thy gracious and helpful providences. Open our eyes that we may see the heavenly forces and glory. Speak to us by Thy dealings with us and by Thy Spirit in us. May we be prompted to a full and hearty choice of Thee as our Savior, and to surrender our lives to Thee. For Christ's sake. Amen.

“Though like a wanderer,  
The sun gone down,  
Darkness be over me,  
My rest a stone,  
Yet in my dreams I'd be  
Nearer, my God, to Thee,  
Nearer to Thee!

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1760. Place, Beer-sheba and Bethel. Persons, Jacob and the angels.

**Scripture Setting:** Gracious Visions. Vision of Daniel, Dan. 10:4-19. Vision of Isaiah, Isa. 6:1-13. Vision of Paul, 2 Cor. 12:1-10. Vision of John, Rev. 1:9-20. Vision of Job, Job 33:14-30. Vision of the prodigal, Luke 15:11-24. God a helper, Heb. 13:5-14. God a keeper, Psa. 121.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This vision picture of Jacob is full of the gracious revelations of God to man. 1. God reveals Himself in spite of the human weaknesses, wilfulness and sin. 2. God re-

veals a way of escape from life's mistakes and troubles. 3. God reveals the future as connected with the present and springing from it by His overruling providences. 4. God reveals Himself as a God of the individual, adapting His mercy and grace to every conceivable condition of life. The pronouns “thee,” “thy,” “thou,” and equivalents are found nearly a score of times. 5. God reveals Himself as the object of worship, as worthy of worship, and as helping the soul to worship and praise. 6. God reveals himself as working with and for man in the fullest co-operation and partnership.

### A DREAM PICTURE OF JESUS CHRIST.

**The Lonely Wanderer.** That is a beautiful hymn someone has written, “There Is No Place Like Home.” No matter how humble or how poorly furnished, home is the place of all places. But how would you like to be driven away from your home? That is what happened to Jacob, and even his own mother told him he had better go. He had done wrong to Esau, his brother, and Esau was real angry and threatened to kill him. Jacob was tricky, and always looking out for himself. He coaxed Esau to sell his birthright to him. This was a double share of the family estate that always went to the oldest son. Then he had also deceived Isaac, his father, and so secured the father's blessing. His mother had persuaded and helped him to practice this deception. She now sends him away to stay awhile with her brother, Laban—a journey of nearly five hundred miles. He has tramped nearly fifty miles, and is thoroughly tired and discouraged. The sun has set again, and he looks about for a place to sleep. He has nothing with him but a loose wrap, and a small bag with a bottle of olive oil in it, and a few things to eat. He throws himself down on the ground, and lays his head on one of the stones for a pillow. Will anybody, anybody think of him? I expect he said to himself, “Oh, how foolish I was!” Jacob knew that his own sin and selfishness had brought him there.

**A Man's Worst Enemy.** A man's greatest enemy is himself. All the time “self” insistently makes its selfish demands, wants this, desires that, craves the other thing, utterly blind and careless regarding the moral effect. The mortal self is unmoral when it is not immoral. Therefore Christ has taught us to deny ourselves, to say “No” decisively, finally, persistently to the demands of “self.” Now, if one is to stop thinking of self, one must fill the mind with thoughts of others. Life must have a centre—self or Christ. One may be saved from self, which is selfishness, only by a firm decision to follow in the steps of Jesus, and by seeking always to do “what He would have us do.”—R. P. Anderson.

**The Heavens Opened.** In that warm climate, the light fading away by degrees, Jacob lies and thinks. He may remember some of the great promises made to his father, Isaac, and to his grandfather, Abraham. Along this very way his grandfather had come once. It is a hilly country, and he may have heard the wild animals howling as he tries to sleep. He has snatches of sleep, and again and again he sees the rows of hills rising up to the clouds. At last he falls into a sound sleep. Then a very wonderful thing happens. He dreams of a ladder which reaches from earth to Heaven. Its foot is just where he lies, and it goes up, up, step by step, far into the clouds. Now there are angels moving on it, some going up and some coming down. How beautiful that all seems to him, and he may have wished that it was really for him. Suddenly he hears a

voice and it comes from a glorious figure at the top of the ladder. This is none other than God Himself in the person of Christ, and He is speaking to Jacob. He can hardly believe it possible, for he feels that he has done wrong and is unworthy. But what does the Christ say from the opening heavens?

**God's Way With Sinful Man.** Phil had done wrong, and his mother punished him by making him sleep three nights alone in the attic. The father kept thinking of him, and wondering about him. He did this the next night, and the third night. At last he said, "Mother, I can't stand this any longer; I'm going upstairs with Phil." And he took his pillow and went softly out of the room, and up the attic stairs, and pressed the latch very softly so as not to wake the boy if he were asleep, and tiptoed across the attic floor to the corner by the window, and there Phil lay—wide awake, with something glistening in his eyes, and what looked like stains on his cheeks. And the father got down between the sheets with the boy, and their tears got mixed upon each other's cheeks. Then they slept. You know, I think that father is the best picture of God I ever saw. God couldn't take away sin. It is here. He could not take away suffering out of kindness to man. For suffering is sin's index finger saying, "There's something wrong here." So He came down in the person of His Son Jesus Christ, and lay down alongside of man for three days and three nights. That's God. And He comes and puts His life alongside of yours and mine, and makes us hate the bad, and long to be pure.

**A Wonderful Promise.** Here is what God said to Jacob: "I am the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, your father. I will be your God, too. The land where you are lying shall belong to you and to your children after you." He also told him that his children, and his children's children, should spread over all lands, East and West, and North and South; and that they should be as the dust of the earth for number. And all the world should be blessed by them. God promised to go with him in his journeys, to come back with him here, and be with him always. All this was very, very wonderful to Jacob. We can see that it was to be fulfilled in and by Jesus Christ, who was to come from the family of Jacob. The ladder connecting earth with Heaven was a type or picture of Christ. The great multitude of Jacob's descendants included all those who accepted Christ as a Saviour. Those who loved and served Christ and called themselves Christians were to be a blessing to all the nations of all the earth. In the morning Jacob said, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it. This is the house of God and the gate of Heaven." He knew it was a dream, or vision, but he knew also that it was true, and that God had really spoken to him. He was in great

fear, because God came near to him; but he was also very glad, and greatly comforted.

**Lord, I Will Do It.** Did Jacob thank God for this wonderful promise? Yes, in a very marked way. He had a bottle of olive oil with him, that he ate with his meals. He took one of the largest stones, stood it on end, and poured some of the oil on it. This was in memory of God's gracious dealing with him, and to honor Him. He did more than this, he made a solemn pledge that if God would take care of him on this journey, and give him food to eat and clothes to wear, he would give to God a tenth of all he might have all his life. This was a great pledge for Jacob to make, and showed that he was anxious to prove his love to God. He called the place Bethel, which means "house of God." This was always a dear spot to Jacob and when he came back to Canaan he built an altar there. After this wonderful dream Jacob is prospered in his journey and comes to the land of Laban, and finds a home, and works for many years for a wife. This Bethel vision and that vow "then shall the Lord be my God," were the turning points in his life.

**The "I Will" of Salvation.** When the Master asked the sick man, "Wilt thou be made whole?" and the invalid answered, "I will," he accepted Christ's offer of health, did he not? So when Christ offers to save us if we will let Him do the work, and we reply, "I will," we have accepted Him. Accepting Christ is simply deciding to let Him heal us of the disease of sin. He is a physician; we must follow His directions; that is all. Do not think that accepting Christ is something mysterious and hard. He is asking, "Wilt thou?" Answer, "I will," and it is done.—R. P. Anderson.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who was to blame for Jacob being driven from home? Who else? Who else? 2. How is "the ladder" a picture of Christ? 3. Name three traits in Jacob's character. 4. How far was Haran from Beersheba, and why did Jacob go there? 5. In what four ways does Christ unite Heaven and earth? 6. On what occasions did voices come from Heaven to Christ?

**Challenge Text.** "Hereafter ye shall see — open and the — of God ascending and — upon the — of man." John 1:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Sin separates man from God, and also from his fellow man, and makes him a wanderer like Cain. 2. God can find and meet man in the most unlikely places. 3. A man may have only the ground for a bed, and stones for a pillow, and yet have Heaven open to him. 4. No life is satisfactory without the revelation and inspiration of Heaven. 5. The gracious and supreme inspiration of God's mercy is that it reveals itself to the needy and sinful. 6. "Ladder" is suggestive of many things man can and must do—as watch, walk, step, use, hold, struggle. 7. Whenever and howsoever God may speak it is becoming and important for man to hear.





## THE PRAYER OF JACOB

BY DORE

Jacob was the son of Isaac, who was the son of Abraham. Jacob's elder brother, Esau, had, in a foolish moment, when hungry, sold his birthright to his younger brother Jacob, all for a dish of pottage. Esau did not comprehend the value of the Lord's promise, that the offspring of Abraham and Isaac should become a mighty nation, under the special care and favor of God.

So Esau became a wanderer. He had many children and from them came a mighty race, but they could no longer be God's people. Jacob and his great family were shepherds and as he returned to his own country, he found himself in Esau's immediate neighborhood. He naturally felt that his outcast brother would be his enemy. Jacob prayed earnestly to God for protection, saying: "Deliver me from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children."

Jacob was a good deal frightened by the approach of his brother when messengers, who were sent to examine the conditions, reported that Esau had a following of four hundred armed men. Jacob divided his people into two parties, placing them so that should one be destroyed, the other could escape. Also, Jacob sent important presents of sheep and cattle, with slaves, to Esau, which gifts were accompanied by many compliments and peace-making words.

This incident furnishes the artist material for a picture. It is night, the camels and the people are resting, while Jacob kneels by the shore and opens his heart to Heaven. The camels looming in huge form against the sky indicate the wandering life, and the sleeping people suggest that Jacob could find the Almighty anywhere and pray to Him. By the way, Esau's heart was not hardened, and he became very friendly with his younger brother, Jacob, who had coaxed away his birthright.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE PRAYER OF JACOB.



## PAUL GUSTAVE DORÉ. 1833-1883.

Gustave Doré was a man who, without a lesson, without a model, unable to sketch from nature, solely by the power of an inward sight and imagination unequalled, did with ease a series of works that for variety, number, and expression of dramatic power has been approached by the productions of no other man.

Born at Strasburg in 1833, the son of a civil engineer, from the earliest years he manifested ability with the pencil. At fifteen he was taken to Paris by his father. Here they saw the announcement of "The Labors of Hercules" illustrated, in the office windows of the "Journal pour Rire." Some of the proposed illustrations were shown. The youthful Gustave knew he could do better, but spoke not.

The book was as the tale of his own life to him, he had lived so intensely in its pages. The next morning in the absence of his father, he produced half a dozen pictures. Hurrying to the office of the "Journal," he shouldered his way past office boys and attendants to the presence of the director, M. Philipon, himself. Spreading the pictures before him, the boy cried as one having authority: "Behold, monsieur, that is the way the labors of the Hercules should be illustrated."

Astonished at the masterliness of the work, another editor was called to view it. Gustave was requested to draw another sketch before them. He did so. Immediately the lad was engaged for three years at a salary of five thousand francs yearly. Upon this followed a career that for productivity and distinguished honor few men have equaled.

At eighteen, he held his first exhibition in the salon of Paris. The drawings for Dante's *Inferno* were produced in Doré's twenty-second year, and many reckon them his greatest work.

As to all artists of consummate power, the Bible soon presented itself as a theme for his mightiest work. From *Genesis* to *Revelation*, with imaginative power and realization unequalled, the artist illustrated themes and stories that for so long have made and

modelled the lives of men and women the world over. Presently various of the Bible pictures were enlarged into immense canvasses, some of them twenty feet long and twelve feet high. These, exhibited in London, and some years after in New York and Chicago, produced an impression on the religious temper of the time: a bringing home to many a personal realization of the Bible stories, such as no speaker or writer ever known had accomplished. Men and women came before the "Christ Leaving the Praetorium" and the "Ecce Homo" as before the Savior Himself—often with tears, often going upon their knees—so powerfully had the artist on his canvasses shown forth the stories of Holy Writ.

In England, Doré received the greatest honor from the good Queen Victoria, the Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward VII) and the nobility.

Doré never married. He lived in close companionship with his mother. Between the two was a deep and tender affection, in which the son shared with the mother every achievement, every triumph, every inspiration. And Madame Doré was a woman big enough to understand her son.

He received honors from both the English and French governments. In 1861 France awarded him the cross of the Legion of Honor, and in 1879 he was made a chevalier of the order. Among English speaking people the world over as well as in France and on the continent his name was well-nigh universal. Love and respect from friends innumerable were his.

But Doré sorrowed secretly over the jealous gibes and sneers of his fellow artists in France. Embittered by his success and mastery; angry that a man should be able without schooling, to do with ease what but few of them could do only with slowness and painful hesitation, they united in depreciation of his work.

His mother and friends sought vainly to rally him from despondency. In 1881 his mother died. Presently, in Paris, in 1883 her son followed her, aged fifty years.

JAMES BEALINGS.



And he rose up that night, and took his two



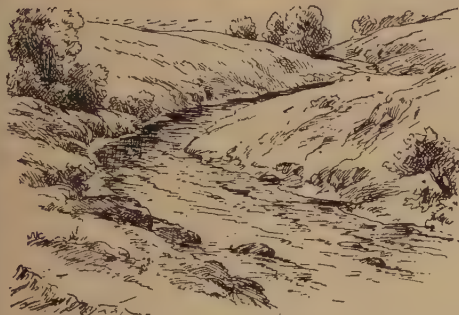
and his  
two women



and  
his



and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them, and sent them over the



and sent  
over that  
he had.  
And Jacob  
was left  
alone; and  
there



a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his



and the hollow of Jacob's thigh  
was out of joint, as he wrestled  
with him. And he said, Let me  
go, for the day

And he said, I will not let  
thee go, except thou bless me.  
And he said unto him, What  
is thy name? And he said,  
Jacob. And he said, Thy name  
shall be called no more Jacob,  
but Israel: for as a



hast thou power with God and with  
men, and hast prevailed.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 32:1-30.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Guide us through this tangled world. Help us against our besetting sins, and save us from self-seeking and self-delusion. May we learn the merciful meaning of Thy denials and refusals. May we surrender ourselves entirely to Thee. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"I know not the way I am going,  
But well do I know my Guide:  
With a childlike trust I give my hand  
To the mighty Friend at my side.  
The only thing that I say to Him,  
As He takes it, is, 'Hold it fast;  
Suffer me not to lose my way,  
And bring me home at last.'"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1739. Place, Peniel, meaning "Face of God." Persons, Jacob and his family and servants, and the angel.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Prayer. Nature of prayer, Luke 11:1-13. The Lord nigh in prayer, Ps. 145:1-21. Pray, pray, pray, Luke 18:1-8. Gideon and prayer, Judg. 6:11-24. Peter's prayer answered, Acts 9:32-43. Encouragement to prayer, Matt. 7:1-11. Urged by denial and delay, Matt. 15:22-28. Moses in prayer, Exod. 33:7-23. Daniel's prayer, Dan. 9:15-27. The Lord's prayer, Matt. 6:9-13. The Holy Spirit's help, Rom. 8:15-28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This struggle of

Jacob with the angel is an object lesson of the soul's prayer relations to God. The conditions of prevailing prayer are seen to be: 1. A sense of need and peril; 2. Willingness to do what one can do himself; 3. Trusting in, and pleading God's promise and purpose; 4. Gratitude and thanksgiving for mercies already received; 5. Specific appeal and petition; 6. Alone with God and fully surrendered to Him; 7. Persistent and determined until the answer comes.

"With thee all night I mean to stay,  
And wrestle till the break of day."

### AN ALL-NIGHT WRESTLING MATCH.

**God Prospers Jacob.** What a lot of people in the first three pictures here! They are all good looking too; I wonder if they are all good. This is Jacob's family, and they are coming back to Canaan, because God told them to. They are bringing all their sheep and cattle and servants with them also. Laban, Jacob's father-in-law, did not like it at first, and went after them to make them come back. But after they had talked together, they agreed to separate as friends, for God had said to Laban in a dream, "Don't do any harm to Jacob." They were friends after that.

**The Old Sin Again.** As Jacob comes near Canaan he learns that Esau, his brother, is coming to meet him with a band of four hundred armed men. This makes Jacob tremble, for he remembers how he cheated Esau, and deceived both him and his father. Jacob is sorry now for his sins, but he really can't blame Esau for being angry at him. When people sin they seem to forget that God knows it, and that their sin will follow them and be an enemy to them. If they would remember that God's eye was on them they would be more careful.

"Can't God Count?" Two children were carrying a basket of cakes to their grandmother. When their eyes saw the tempting cakes their mouths fairly watered. After counting them over several times they almost made up their minds to eat just one of them. Nobody would know.

Just as they were ready to take one the little girl looked up into her brother's face, and thoughtfully asked the matter-of-fact question, "Can't God count?"

This settled the matter immediately, and all the little cakes were carried to their grandmother.

**Planning and Praying.** This brook you see in the picture is called Jabbok. Jacob stops on the bank to think what he had better do. At last he divides the family into two companies, so that if one is taken, the other can flee. One of his boys he is careful to put in the second company, because he is safer there. This is Joseph, the boy he loves most. Then he makes up several droves of sheep and cattle, as presents for Esau. He sends these, one after another, with servants; and tells them each to say to Esau "This is a present from your brother, Jacob." Then he prays an earnest, humble prayer—that God would protect him and his family. This is a very different prayer from the one he offered at Bethel, when he tried to make a bargain with God. The right way is to ask God to care for us, in whatever way will please Him. God can make even our enemies friendly if we ask Him. There are many things He can do for us, if we would only ask Him. He waits for us to show that we need His help and desire it. Sometimes we are afraid of what other people will say or think. But even the worst people will come to respect those who pray.

**Don't Give Up.** Tom was a Christian boy who had gone away to college. He was accustomed to pray at night. But when he knelt at his bed to pray his companions laughed and pelted him with shoes. Unmoved, the manly little fellow finished his prayers and stepped into bed. The next night and the next he did the same thing, but by the third evening there was no ridicule, and here and there about the room other boys who had hitherto been cowardly and had said their prayers in bed knelt down as Tom did. If you are doing a right thing, go on with it in the face of opposition. Re-



member the saying that "one with God is a majority."

**The Mysterious Angel.** After Jacob had sent away the presents to Esau, he sent his family over the brook. He remained alone to pray, and it was night. Then a strange thing happened. A man took hold of him and tried to throw him. Jacob was strong, and he wrestled with him, and held his own against him. They kept it up all night, as you see in the picture. At last the stranger touched Jacob on his thigh, as you can see, and he was made lame. He could wrestle no longer, and he knew then it was an angel of God. He was too weak to stand, but he clung to the angel. The angel wanted to go, but Jacob said "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." The angel said, "What is thy name?" He answered, "Jacob." This means "supplanter," and really was a confession by Jacob that he had been a sinner. For he had sinned against Esau and his father, Isaac, as we know. The angel knew that Jacob was sorry now, and he said, "I will give you a new name—Israel." This means "a prince of God." Jacob called the place Peniel, which means "face of God." Jacob was lame ever afterwards, but he was changed from being a shrewd and tricky man, to be good, generous and noble. This was done by the power of God through His Spirit, and is really wonderful.

**Changed by the Spirit.** Do you know how the costly Bessemer steel is made? The metal is placed in the melting pot and blasts of air forced up through it by powerful machinery. Before this process it lies there only a great lump of comparatively worthless metal. But after the air has been driven through its every pore and it has been fused, it becomes a new creation and is the most valuable form of steel it ever can be. So you and I need the breath of the Spirit of God to be put into us before we will ever be really worth anything for Him.

**Brothers Meet Again.** It is more than twenty years since Jacob left home, with Esau as his enemy. Now he meets him, and finds him friendly. I think God answered Jacob's prayer. He did even better than protect him, for He changed Esau to be a

friend. Perhaps God whispered to Esau, as He did to Laban, "Don't do any harm to Jacob." They met and kissed each other, and afterwards were always friends.

Then God told Jacob to go to Bethel, where he had the ladder dream. There he built an altar and worshipped God, Who said to him again, "Your name is not Jacob now, but Israel." God promised him that he should be the father of nations. It is no wonder that he was prospered, for God told him what to do, where to go and how to act. Soon after this Benjamin was born, and Rachel dies. Isaac also dies, 180 years old, and Jacob and Esau bury him. Esau goes to the land of Edom, but Jacob stays in Canaan, going from place to place with his flocks. One of the results of his early wrong-doing was that he never saw his mother after he left home.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell about the remarkable ladder dream Jacob had when he left home. 2. Where did Jacob go, and how long did he stay there, and why did he leave? 3. Name Jacob's wives, and how long did he work for them? 4. How many children did he have now, and name some of them. 5. Which one did he love best and why? 6. Why was Jacob afraid of Esau? 7. How did God prosper Jacob and care for him?

**Challenge Text.** "Ask, and it shall be ———; seek, and ye shall ———; knock, and it shall be — — —." Matt. 7: (?)

**Practical Lessons.** 1. True strength is not in human skill and cunning, but in knowing and doing God's will. 2. The Divine favor and blessing are of more importance than all else. 3. Prayer for temporal and family blessings leads to prayer for the spiritual and world-wide interests. 4. He who feels most unworthy is really most worthy in God's sight and most able to receive from God. 5. The crisis-battles of life are at the place and time of prayer. 6. The true prayer prompts one to do his own best planning and working. 7. When the soul confesses its weakness it is then strong in and with God. By yielding to Christ we secure Christ's love and favor. 8. Prayer at its best is the earnest exercise of one's powers of heart as wrestling exercises the physical powers. 9. Jacob conquered Esau by prayer before he won by gifts and pleas. 10. True conversion is a complete surrender and to reserve anything, however small, is to cast suspicion on one's sincerity. 11. The new name means a new heart, a new life, a new hope, a new power, a new future.

Dr. J. M. COON.



And they took him, and cast him



and  
the  
pit  
was  
empty,  
there  
was no  
water  
in it.  
And  
they



bread: and they lifted up their eyes and looked, and, behold, a



of  
Ishme-  
elites  
came  
from  
Gilead  
with  
their



bearing



and



and

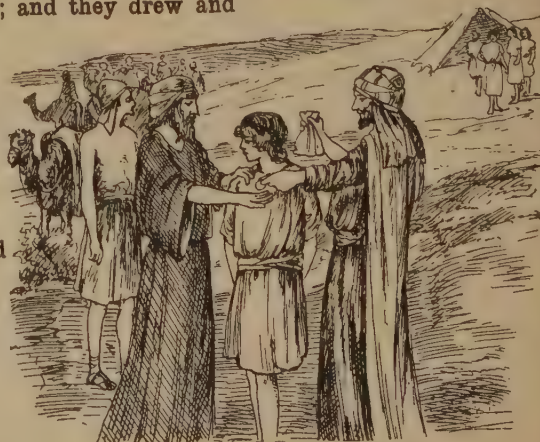


going to carry it down to Egypt. And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood? Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.

Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and



and



to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.





## JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT

BY SCHOPIN

Of Jacob's twelve sons, the two youngest were the children of one mother; whereas the older boys were not their full brothers, and, being men of mature years, had but little sympathy for these two youngest. The names of the two were Joseph and Benjamin; very sincerely loved of their aged father. They must have been very lovable lads, and of keen intellect. The older brothers were made more hostile because in Joseph's dreams he saw the older brothers his servants. So they hated Joseph. These older brothers, seeking pasturage for their flocks and herds, were abroad in the country. In the meantime, Jacob made a pet of Joseph and gave him a coat of many colors, probably a fine, oriental weave of superb pattern such as we see now in museums. Joseph was sent out by his father to visit the brothers and report to him the conditions. But the elder brothers were angry because of the favor of the father toward Joseph. When he came they stripped him of his fine coat and threw him into a dry pit, for safe keeping.

It so happened that a party of traders passed, on their way to Egypt. The brothers sold Joseph to them and they carried him off to the far-away country. In order to explain to the father his absence, they dipped his fine coat in the blood of a kid and said that a wild beast had torn him.

Our picture is by a highly trained artist, named Schopin. He was educated to paint graceful figures not always too accurately. We see Joseph in underclothing only, the traveling merchants having him in charge, and one of the brothers paying money to another group. Besides this important group, there are women sitting about full of curiosity at this event, and in the background are the usual camels and tent and all the picturesque trappings incident to such an oriental scene.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





SCHUBIN

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BRETHERN.

## HENRI F. SCHOPIN. 1804-1880.

"Ah, my son, it was so the trumpets sounded: ta-ran-ta-ra. And the drums rolled and rattled like to the thunder upon a summer evening; and the shouting of the people was as the roaring of the wind in a great tempest. Round about him rode the great cuirassiers of the guard upon their beautiful black horses—so splendid did they look. And in the midst he rode, that quiet, little proud man, so pale, with such quiet eyes, under brows that overhung them as does an eagle's when he looks at you—the great Napoleon—the little corporal himself. He that day was proclaimed emperor of the French, and that day were you born."

Round-eyed, wondering, the little French lad listened to his father's account of the great event.

Who knows the length of childhood's thought!

Some time after, little Henri's mother, coming to his father, quietly working over the clockface he was engraving, waited till the father had turned a difficult curve and with triumphant aplomb struck the last twisted chip of metal from the point of his graver, and said: "It is the little Henri. He does this; and they are pictures of soldiers."

Father Schopin put down his engraving tool, and with professional appreciation, scanned the scrawlings. "All children draw soldiers," said he. "It is the most natural thing they do, with them passing every day."

"But these are not the same as other children's soldiers," insisted the mother.

"True," reflected the father, as he noted the certainty with which the plumed warriors sat their prancing steeds, "but let us not look for too much. It is better that he be a good ornament of clock faces and content, than an indifferent painter and unhappy. Anyway, it is as the good God wills, and it keeps him from mischief, wife." And the engraver turned to his work, whistling thoughtfully.

Little Henri went to school, and between his lessons drew yet more soldiers, and with them all other things he might see in the streets of Paris. A few years more passed, and then Henri, a growing lad, was surprised by his father, in deep absorption over a sheet of paper. The father took the sheet. "And what is this, my son?"

"That is my birthday," shyly responded the lad.

Upon the sheet, drawn in charcoal, amid

processionally grouped horsemen panoplied in cuirass and crested helmet, was a modest figure of an unmistakable identity that dominated the entire group. The power and movement of the assemblage was notable even to a non-critical eye.

From the drawing to the boy the father looked with a grave pride. "Of a truth, my son, this is thy birthday. Thou shalt be an artist."

Some time after, Jean Gros, the great military and historical painter, who had devotedly followed the only Napoleon through his Italian campaigns, and painted many famous pictures of them, was waited upon at his studio in Paris by the clockface engraver.

"It is my son, m'sieu," politely explained the engraver, presenting the boy, who bowed as French children do on presentation, his eager eyes meanwhile roving round the studio walls. "It is my desire that he should learn to be an artist—a painter. May I ask you to accept him as a student?"

Balancing his palette and brushes upon his left hand, the painter made a deprecatory gesture. "Much better make an engraver or a stone mason of him," he said, kindly. "He may not be heard of, but he will not be envied, and will have a better chance to be content in life."

"M'sieu, it is impossible," stated the father. "Look at this," and he handed M. Gros the boy's composition of Napoleon amid the cuirassiers of the guard.

"Ah, ah," meditated M. Gros. "Why did you not produce this first, good sir? We would not have wasted time."

Henri became a student under Gros, and took all that his master had to give him. In 1830 he gained the Grand Prix de Rome, of the Academy of Fine Arts in Paris. This is a prize given yearly to the most successful competitor in the several departments of painting, sculpture, engraving, architecture, and music. The successful contestants become the pensioners of the French government for four years. They are sent to reside at Rome in the Villa Medici, the headquarters of the French Academy of Art founded in Rome by Louis XIV. in 1666. In the same year that he gained the Roman prize, Schopin began to exhibit at the yearly salon of the Academie des Beaux Arts, and from then onward to his death in 1880, a period of fifty years, was a constant and noted exhibitor.

His most notable pictures are: "Last Moments of the Cenci" (Donai Museum), "Battle of Hohenlinden" (Metz Museum), "Jacob and Laban" (Toulouse Museum), "Portrait of Cambaceres," "Portrait of Marshal Vidal," "The Taking of Antioch" (all in the Museum at Versailles), "The Queen of Sheba at the Court of Solomon," "Jacob Going to Recover His Son in Egypt," "Joseph Sold into Egypt," and a line of pictures illustrating the legend at St. Saturninus for the chapel of the saint at Fontainebleau.

JAMES BEALINGS.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 37:1-36.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Give needed gifts and graces to parents and children in the home. Keep us from the little sins which may grow other sins and curses. Hold us back from all passion and hate which may bring grief to ourselves and others. Help us to endure trial, resist temptation, forgive enemies. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"We go our ways in life too much alone,  
We hold ourselves too far from all our kind;  
Too often we are dead to sigh and moan,  
Too often to the weak and helpless blind;  
Our selfish hearts are for our feet the guide—  
They lead us by upon 'the other side.'"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1729. Places, Hebron, where Jacob lived, and Dothan, seventy miles away, where Joseph was sold. **Persons,** Jacob, Joseph, the ten brothers, Ishmaelites.

**Scripture Setting:** **A Study of Sin.** The sin of Cain, Gen. 4:1-15. The sin of Aaron, Num. 12:1-15. The sin of Saul, 1 Sam. 18:1-16. The sin of Haman, Esth. 5:1-14. The sin of the Jews, John 15:17-27. The sin of Judas, Luke 22:1-6. The enormity of sin, Isa. 59:1-15. The curse of sin, Jer. 17:1-11. **Prayer for sin,** Ps. 69:1-15. **Prayer for the sinner,** Ps. 51.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Scripture gives

us a vivid picture of the fearful workings of sin in the heart and life. 1. Sin's home and castle: the human heart. 2. Sin's channels and agents: a parent's thoughtless love, a boy's innocent boast, evil companions. 3. Sin's antecedents and connections: the deceiver is now deceived. 4. Sin's selfish and unnatural action: selling a brother into slavery. 5. Sin's large and ugly brood: envy, jealousy, deceit, hypocrisy, conspiracy, avarice, murder (in thought). 6. Sin's terrible consequences: heart grief, terror of conscience, sufferings of Joseph. 7. Sin's failure to thwart God: is rather made to work out his purpose.

### A GOOD BOY SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS.

**Love and Hate.** Jacob, who was renamed Israel, was living in Canaan. He had twelve children, and two of them he loved more than the others. This was because they were the children of Rachel, the wife he loved best, and who was now dead.

Of these two boys, Joseph was his special favorite. Benjamin, the other one, was almost a baby. Joseph was seventeen years old, and was with his father most of the time. Sometimes he went with the older boys, and he told his father some of the wicked things they did. His brothers hated him for this. About this time Jacob made Joseph a beautiful coat of many different colors, like princes often wore. In the first pictures you can see some of the children. At first they all look good, but after awhile the faces of some of them began to change, because they had been doing wrong. When sin gets into the heart it soon begins to show itself in the eye and face. In the group of ten you can see a difference in the faces. Jacob and Joseph look happy as the new coat is put on him. It did look a little partial for the father to dress up Joseph so, and he was sorry for it afterwards. It was right for Jacob to love Joseph, but wrong for him to show it in that way. So this made the older boys hate him. Then Joseph had some strange dreams. He told these to his brothers and they hated him still more. You can read about these dreams in the Bible. His father wondered about them and thought they might come true some time.

**The Face Talks.** "I didn't say a single word," said Annie Barton to her mother, who was reproving her for her unamiable temper. "I know you didn't, Annie; but your face talked." What volumes our

faces tell! Some speak of love and kindness, some of anger and hatred, others of pride and rebellion, and others still of selfishness and vanity. How does your face talk?

**Cast Into a Pit.** Sometimes these older boys would get far away from home, taking the flocks where the grass was good. One day Jacob told Joseph to go and find them and bring him word again. Joseph obeyed, and went away wearing his beautiful coat. Neither one thought it would be so many years before they saw each other again. When Joseph had walked nearly fifty miles without finding them, a man told him that he would find them at Dothan, about fifteen miles further. See how good and glad he looks, as he sees his brothers off yonder. Are they glad to see him? No; they say at once, "See, that dreamer comes." "Let's kill him and then we will see what becomes of his dreams." So they strip his coat off as you see, and lower him by ropes into a pit; one of the wells which had no water in it. This they did because Reuben said it would be better than to kill him. Reuben hoped to come later and get him out and take him home. Poor Joseph! He pleads for his life, for his father's sake too; but those wicked men are too strong for him. They did not think then that God was stronger than they were, and He was watching over Joseph. But they let their grudge against Joseph grow and grow till it became a hate that would kill him. One comes to be very much as he thinks.

**Keep Out the Bad.** That bad thought has no more right in your mind than a pig in your playroom, or a snake in your bedroom. You may think you can not stop it, but you can; as it is only a

bad habit you have fallen into, and you must break it, or it will break you. You must get the mastery of your own mind, and the control of your own thoughts. It will be the hardest battle you will ever have to fight, but it will be the most glorious victory you will ever win.

**Price of a Boy.** What is a boy worth? We know what Jacob would say about Joseph. Soon we will learn, too, what God thought. But just now we see what these men thought their brother was worth. It seems that they sat down to dinner just as if nothing had happened. They may have been eating some of the very things which Joseph had brought. Anyway, while eating they look up and see a lot of men and camels. They are merchants and they are taking spices and other things down to Egypt to sell. See if you can name those different things in the pictures. Now, Judah speaks out and says, "Let's sell Joseph to these merchants. We won't make anything by letting him die." This pleased them all. So they drew Joseph up from the pit. He seems glad to get up again where the sunlight is. He soon finds what they want to do with him. The bargain is made and Joseph is sold for twenty pieces of silver. This is about \$12.50 of our money. What a price for a bright good boy! This is better than to die in a pit; and God is still watching over him. It is always better to do right, and have God with you, even if it seems hard at the time.

Reuben was not with them when they sold Joseph. He was grieved when he learned what had happened, but it could not be helped then. The only way to avoid the consequence of our wrong-doing is to keep as far away from sin as possible.

**The Edge of the Precipice.** A gentleman wished to engage a coachman. In answer to his advertisement, two men presented themselves. "Are you a skilful driver?" he asked one of them. "Without boasting, I think I may say I am," replied the man. "How near do you think you could drive a team to the edge of a precipice, and not run off?" After a little hesitation, he answered: "Well, I think I may say within two feet. I have done it before now." To this last question the other man said: "I never try experiments of that kind, sir. I always keep just as far from precipices as possible, and then I know I am safe." "You are just the man I have been looking for," said the proprietor; "I shall feel perfectly safe in trusting my wife and daughters to the care of a coachman who always keeps just as far from danger as possible."

**Lies To Cover Lies.** Now they are wondering what they will say to their father. One said, "Let's pretend that we did not see Joseph at all." To this they all agreed, even

Reuben not objecting. Then they kill a kid and dip the coat in the blood and bring it to Jacob and say, "We found this coat; see if you know whose it is." Jacob burst into tears and said, "It is my son's coat; a wild beast has eaten him." Ah! Jacob killed a kid one time to deceive his father. Now his boys do the same thing to deceive him. See how sin finds one out.

At such times those people put on a coarse kind of cloth, called "sackcloth"; and in this way Jacob mourned for Joseph. His sons pretended to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted, and said, "I will go down into the grave mourning." Benjamin was a great comfort to him, and he tried to be in the place of Joseph to his father. His name means, "son of the right hand," and I think he tried to be true to his name.

The ten brothers kept the dreadful secret to themselves. God knew it also, and He knew what He would do at last. How much of sin and grief are told in those last pictures of killing the kid, staining the coat, lying to Jacob and pretending they are sorry. But of it all nothing was hidden from God.

**What to Do With Sin.** Are covered sins safely hidden? Are they out of sight forever? Oh, no; be sure your sin will find you out. The word is not "Be sure your sin will be found out." It may not be found out in this world, but it will "find you out." It will plague you, spoil your happiness, make your life wretched. What shall we do about these wrong things we have done? Take them to Christ, and ask Him to forgive us and cleanse us. "The blood of Christ cleanseth us from all sin."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell Joseph's dream about the sheaves; about the sun, moon and stars? 2. Try to count up how many lies these men told in all. 3. Who could not be deceived by their lies? 4. What is the conscience, and could they hide their sin from that? 5. Who in the New Testament was betrayed and sold? By whom and for how much? 6. Who were the Ishmaelites? 7. How was Joseph a type of Christ? 8. What parable shows a similar treatment of Christ? See Matt. 21:36-41.

**Challenge Text.** "Be sure your ——— will find ——— out." Num. 32:(?)

**Practical Lessons.** 1. Wicked people will hate those who expose or oppose them. 2. The child of today may be the ruler of tomorrow. 3. Sin is often its own detective, though it may seem to be hidden for years. 4. Sin finds its way into the best families and commits the worst crimes. 5. The hardening effect of sin on the heart and conscience. 6. God makes strange acts, and even wicked people help forward His purposes. 7. The real wild beast in the story is the murderous hate of these men. 8. Jacob, who deceived many, is now himself deceived. 9. That which causes present grief may afterwards bring joy and blessing.

DR. J. M. COON.



# JOSEPH IN PRISON

And Joseph was brought down to and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the



which had brought him down thither. And Joseph's master took him, and put him



a place where the king's



and he was there in the prison. But the Lord was with

and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the



that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did, there, he was the doer of it. The



looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 39:1 to 40:15.

**Prayer:** O Lord, May we ever live as in Thy sight and be faithful under all circumstances and conditions. Even in times of darkness and trial—the prison experiences of life—may we watch for opportunities to glorify Thee and help our fellows. May we be kept pure and true and be guided day by day. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Oh, one might reach heroic heights  
By one strong burst of power;  
He might emblaze the whitest lights  
Of Heaven for an hour;  
But harder is the daily drag,  
To smile at trials which fret and fag  
And not to murmur nor to lag.  
The test of greatness is the way  
One meets the eternal every day."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1729-1718. Place, Heliopolis, one of the capitals of Egypt. Persons, Joseph, Potiphar, prisoners, prison-keeper.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of a Model Young Man. The perfect pattern, Lu. 2:41-52. Divine fellowship, Acts 7:9-16. Beauty and strength, Gen. 49:22-26. High ideals and aims, Heb. 12:1-14. Faithful to duty, Matt. 25:14-30. A bright example, 1 Tim. 4:8-16. Call to young men, 1 John 2:12-21. Soul greater than prison, Phil. 1:12-26. Always a Christian, Tit. 3:1-9. A true workman, 2 Tim. 2:15-26.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** After Christ there is no more attractive and commanding character than that of Joseph. In his prison setting we see him as he really is. As we study his character, we see it to be: 1. Pure and beautiful. 2. Tried and proved. 3. Manly and vigorous—no "wild oats" in him. 4. Prayerful and spiritual, and therefore favored of God. 5. Patient and submissive—where many fail entirely. 6. Winning against odds—promoted even in prison. 7. Sympathetic, helpful and hopeful—making even his prison life count for himself and others.

### A YOUNG MAN CONQUERING DIFFICULTIES.

**Sold But Not Sold.** Joseph is sold into slavery, and is brought to Egypt. How different everything seems to him here. He is interested, but he can't help thinking of his father and his old home. Still he does not whine, nor pine, nor fret. If he thought of his older brothers at all, he tried to forgive them. God was keeping watch over him. He is now a young man, full grown, and with a frank, manly face. Do you know what kept him looking so good and true? It is because he did not allow his heart and conscience to be sold. These are the real boy and man. No one can sell those except one's own self; and Joseph would not sell them at any price.

**A Bright Life.** Life is like a crown. It is better to weave in a bright and golden filling. And we can do it if we will. What sort of a filling are you and I weaving into the web? Dark threads or bright? Many of us grumble and fuss more over trifles than others do over puzzling knots. Each weaver has snarls to unravel, and the patterns are often intricate and uncertain, but courage, hope and persistence accomplish much, and their possessor is not apt to be of the kind that "blames Heaven for tangled ends."

Now Joseph is bought by a man named Potiphar. He was the chief police officer of Egypt, and he was said to be like "two eyes and two ears for the king." He seems to be a kind and true man, and so he is attracted by Joseph and buys him for his own servant. Joseph's fine looks and manly way are helping him already; they always do. Joseph did his very best for his new master, and soon he rose to hold the first place among the servants. It pays to keep the frowns and scowls off the face. I knew a boy

who secured a good position just because he had a smiling face. Then he kept it because he was obedient, honest and faithful. And usually the good looking face means that one has good qualities within. Anyhow, the face says, "Try me and see if I will do." I am sure Joseph was that kind of a young man.

**In Prison Because Good.** For ten years Joseph was an honored and trusted servant. Then something happened and he was cast into prison. Was it any sin of his? No, it was rather because he did not sin. Potiphar's wife was a wicked woman, and she tried to get Joseph to be wicked also with her. This he would not do, and he bravely told her so. She was angry at him, and reported to her husband that Joseph had treated her badly. Potiphar believed the false story of his wife and had Joseph put in prison, without giving him a trial at all. In one picture you can see him being pushed into the prison. Another picture shows how some are even chained together by the feet. Joseph is put in a cell by himself, and chained by the hand and foot. We know he must have prayed, but he also stoutly resisted the temptation to do wrong.

**On God's Side of the Fence.** "When a boy," said a prominent member of a church, "I was much helped by Bishop Hamline, who visited me at a house where I was. Taking me aside, the bishop said: 'When in trouble, my boy, kneel down and ask God's help; but never climb over the fence into the devil's ground, and then kneel down and ask help. Pray from God's side of the fence.' Of that I have thought every day of my life since."

**The Unseen Helper.** As Joseph sits and thinks about what has happened, how glad



he is that he did not commit sin. Some are in prison because they do wrong; but Joseph was there because he did what is right. Even his face shows that his heart was right, and his conscience does not condemn him. We said that he was alone, and it is true there was no other prisoner with him. But he did have someone with him. Can you guess who it was? Yes, "the Lord was with Joseph, and showed him mercy." If he had done wrong he would be in prison justly, and the Lord could not be with him. The prison was dark looking, with barred windows and strong bolted doors, but inside it was made light by the glory of God and by Joseph's peace of conscience.

**How and Why He Won.** We saw how Joseph was promoted when he was a servant. Here in prison he is also advanced until he is put in charge of the other prisoners. Why was this? I think there were several reasons. In the first place, he shows a good spirit, submissive and patient. The keeper would notice that at once, so different from prisoners generally. Then Joseph always looked around to see if he could help anyone. This too would please the keeper, for he would know he would not help the prisoners to escape. By this time we may be sure that Joseph has told the keeper about the God he believes in. This would impress him most of all, and make him have great confidence in Joseph. One way he helped the other prisoners was by encouraging them. No doubt, also, he told them of his God who was able to make all things work for good. Among the prisoners were two who had been officers of the king—the chief butler, who took the king his wine, and the chief baker, who cooked his meals. These two prisoners had strange dreams and Joseph told them what they meant. He also told them that God gave him this power to interpret dreams. You can read about them in Gen., Ch. 40. The dreams turned out as Joseph told them; the chief butler was restored to office and the chief baker was hanged. The pictures show these men at their work, and the large picture is of the birthday feast of the king.

At such a time he would often pardon some of the prisoners and kill others. This feast was for all the servants of the king, and was made a joyous occasion. Joseph had asked the chief butler to remember him and speak a good word for him to Pharaoh. He told him something of his early life, and that he had not done any wrong. While Joseph trusted that God would care for him, yet he knew that God would expect him to help himself in every way he could. God has given us these powers for that purpose. This kindness of Joseph was the means of freeing him from prison after a while. The chief butler forgot to tell the king at once, but later he remembered his promise, as we shall see in the next story. So Joseph stays in prison for about two more years, making three years in all. And he was always busy—thinking, praying, helping.

**The Next Duty.** Work is a cure for worry. In the most unfavorable conditions there is always "a next duty." This is our "good angel." Hail it and it will bring blessing. Every trial or heavy load has the secret of strength in it. Bear it, and do the next duty. Do that, anyway. Compel yourself to do it, if necessary. Do not wait for a better time or mood.—Ex.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other young man in a strange land was cast into the lion's den for his religion? 2. What three friends like him were cast into the fiery furnace? Who else was with them called "the form of the fourth"? 3. What two dreams did Joseph interpret while in prison? See Gen. 40. 4. Can you tell about John the Baptist in prison? And about Paul and Silas? 5. What author is called "The Great Dreamer"? What did he write in prison? 6. What do you like best about Joseph?

**Challenge Text.** "All things work together for — to them that —." Rom. 8: (?)

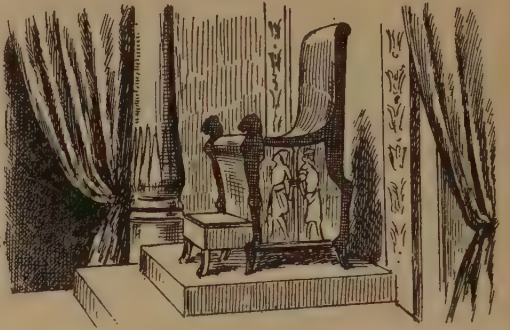
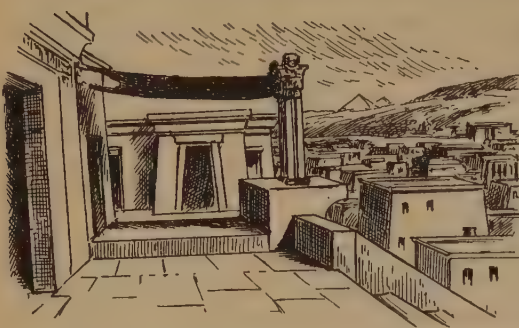
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Fidelity in little things and hard places will often open the door to a better position. 2. The severest tests of character are in times of opposition and persecution. 3. The best rewards are not in external things, but in heart and conscience. 4. Character is a young man's best capital; kindness and fidelity come next. 5. We should be content with what we have, but aspiring to something better. 6. True success is from God, and sometimes is greatest when least seen or known. 7. God has countless ways of working out His purposes. 8. There is always a bright side, and it is best to get in the habit of looking for it. 9. At all hazards, keep a clear conscience—one that you can talk with and sleep with.

DR. J. M. COON.

## JOSEPH EXALTED

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: Thou shalt be over my

and  
according  
unto thy  
word  
shall  
all my  
people  
be ruled:  
only  
in the



will I be greater than thou. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of

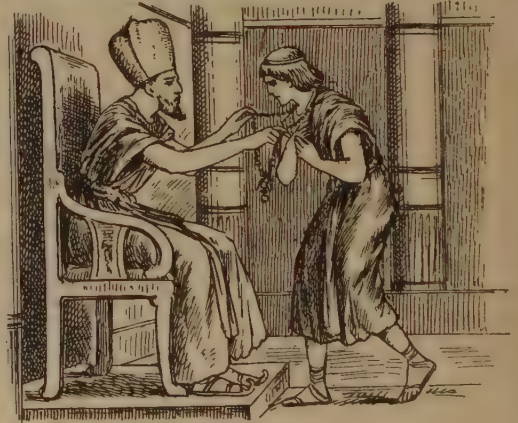


And  
Pharaoh  
took off  
his ring  
from his  
hand, and

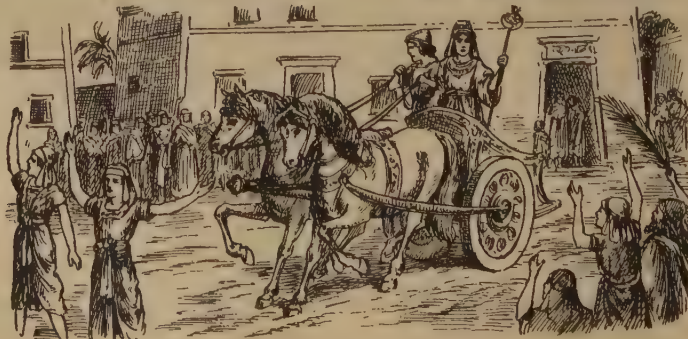


and

in  
vestures  
of fine  
linen,  
and put  
a gold  
chain



And he  
made him  
to ride in  
the second



which he had; and  
they cried before  
him, Bow the knee:  
and he made him  
ruler over all  
the land of Egypt.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 41:37-57.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Thou art wonderful in Thy character and providences. Thou hast led, sustained and protected us in trials, and hast made them be our helpers and teachers. We thank Thee for this. We thank Thee, too, for prosperity and blessing. Keep us from all self-indulgence and sinful ease. May our ideals and standards be high and true. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Life is not as idle ore,  
But iron dug from central gloom,  
And heated hot with burning fears,  
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,  
And batter'd with the shocks of doom,  
To shape and use."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1716. Place, Heliopolis, one of the capitals of Egypt. Persons, Joseph, Pharaoh the king, servants.

**Scripture Setting.** A Study of How to Get On. David exalted, 1 Sam. 16:1-23. Daniel exalted, Dan. 1:1-21. The humble exalted, 1 Pet. 5:1-11. Christ exalted, Acts 2:22-36. Exaltation is from God, Ps. 75:1-10. The godly exalted, Deut. 11:10-25. Key to exaltation, Prov. 3:1-18. Certain conditions, Josh. 1:1-9. The all-providence road, Rom. 8:18-28. The promotion pattern, Phil. 2:3-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The exaltation of Joseph suggests some of the keys to success, or

how to get on in the world. 1. The key of occasion—the need of Pharaoh and his kingdom. 2. The key of ability—able to rise to the occasion. 3. The key of character—the altitudinal force in life which takes hold on God. 4. The key of circumstances—civil position, social rank, commanding authority. 5. The key of self-poise and self-mastery—character after it is tried and proved. 6. The key of opportunity—the occasion leading up and out to yet larger fields of usefulness. 7. The key of fidelity—making good in every position and condition. 8. The key of providence—God leading, girding, beckoning, overruling, strengthening.

### FROM A PRISON TO A THRONE.

**A Key That Unlocked a Prison.** Joseph had been in prison three years; and now we learn how he got his freedom. God has many keys by which He opens doors of all kinds. Once He made an angel His key to unlock a prison and let Peter out; so also in the case of Paul and Silas. You can read about it in Acts, chapters 12 and 16. God often uses a mother or a friend to open doors for boys and girls, so that they may be free to do better work and live better lives. The key here, that unlocked the prison door for Joseph, was made of several parts. There was the dream of Pharaoh the king; there was the kindness of Joseph when he interpreted the butler's dream; then there was the memory of this butler enabling him to tell about Joseph. I think this part of the key was a little rusty, for it did not work for two years. Then God dropped a bit of oil on it, and made it work. Pharaoh's dream was double; read it for yourself, Gen., Ch. 41. One was about seven fat cows and seven lean cows. The other was about seven full good ears of corn and seven thin ears.

Pharaoh had many wise men, but none of them could tell what these dreams meant. When the chief butler told what Joseph did, the king sent for him right away. It is wonderful how quickly people get to know about you if you can do things a little better than anyone else, or can do things that other people cannot do at all. So this prison door opened quick because Pharaoh needed just what Joseph could tell, and because God saw the time had come for Joseph to be let out of prison.

**What the World Wants.** A young man once came to Joseph Pulitzer, of the New York World, applying for a position. "What can you do?" said Mr. Pulitzer. "I do not know," answered the young man. "I am a graduate of Harvard; I have nothing but ideas." "Ideas! Ideas!" exclaimed Mr. Pulitzer, dropping his pen and throwing up his hands. "That is just what I am looking for. I will give you a salary of \$5,000 a year if you will give me one idea by which I can increase the circulation of the World a hundred thousand copies."

**The Greatest School of All.** Every boy and girl goes to school. Some take a college course afterward; and all should do so who possibly can. But Joseph had been in a different kind of school—the school of trial and difficulty. He had a thirteen years' course in this school, ten years as a slave and three years in prison. Perhaps this last was a sort of high school course. Anyhow he graduated into some high qualities that fitted him for a great and useful life. Here are some of these qualities: fidelity, integrity, self-reliance, God-reliance, helpfulness, tact, patience, sympathy, master of circumstances (better than master of arts), and leader and ruler of men. There are not many boys that graduate with as good a list as that. God was his teacher all the time. Now Joseph is ready for the throne and the kingdom. We can see now how he was trained in this hard school of life. He was such a good young man that we might wonder why he was made to suffer so, but God was fitting him for a great life work. Even of Christ it is said that "he was made perfect through suffering."

**Scrap Iron or Carriage Springs.** One time a wicked man said to a converted blacksmith: "Why

is it you have so much trouble? I thought a Christian did not have any trials or troubles." The blacksmith replied: "Do you see this piece of iron? It is for the springs of a carriage. I have been 'tempering' it for some time. To do this I heat it red-hot, and then plunge it into a tub of ice-cold water. This I do many times. If I find it taking 'temper,' I heat and hammer it unmercifully. In getting the right piece of iron I found several that were too brittle. So I threw them in the scrap-pile. Those scraps are worth about a cent a pound; this carriage spring is very valuable. God saves us for a purpose, and fits us for service, as I do this piece of iron. He puts the temper of Christ in us by testing us with trial. Anyone would rather be the perfected iron for a carriage spring than the worthless iron for the scrap-pile."

**Ring and Chain and Robe.** Pharaoh was greatly pleased at what Joseph told him, and he at once decided to make Joseph head of all the land. He had power to do anything he wished, but he wished to do only what was right. This was a great change, from the prison to the palace, from the lonely life to the care of all the people, and from the poor clothing and food of a prisoner to the royal robes and the king's chariot. It was almost impossible for Joseph himself to believe it, but of one thing we may be sure, while all else was changing, his own principles and character were the same. He had done his duty in Potiphar's house and in the prison; so now he was able and ready to do his duty in the palace of the king. The seven fat cows meant seven years of plenty, when there would be large crops; so Joseph had great store houses built where he could store away the corn for the seven years of famine that were to come. The king also gave Joseph a new name for that country, and gave him the daughter of a priest for a wife. In these seven years of plenty two sons were born to him, Manasseh and Ephraim. Every boy and girl can live and act in such a way as to be of service in the world and so deserve the ring and chain and robe.

#### The Coming Boy or Girl.

"There's a niche for you in the world, my boy,  
A corner for you to fill;  
And it waits today  
Along life's way  
For the boy with a frank 'I will.'  
So, lad, be true;  
The world wants you  
In the corner that you may fill.

"There's a niche in the world for you, my girl,  
A corner for you to fill;  
And a work to do

Which no one but you  
In God's great plan can fill.  
So, dears, be true;  
The world wants you,  
And your place is waiting still."

**The King Greater Than the King.** All the pictures illustrating this story show that some one of power and influence is meant. There is a picture of a throne, of a royal person bestowing favors, of a chariot, etc. Yes, Pharaoh is a great king; but there is One who is not seen, who is greater. That is the God of Joseph, who is King of kings and Lord of lords. We can see the shadow pictures of this greater King and His throne all the time. He it is who saved Joseph's life and brought him to Egypt; who gave him power to interpret dreams; who at last brought him out of prison and gave him favor with Pharaoh and ability to serve the people.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What were the dreams Joseph had about himself, and how did they come true? 2. How many dreams did Joseph interpret, and for whom? 3. Tell about the New Testament parable when the father put a "ring" and a "robe" on his son. 4. If you were hiring a man for work, what five qualities would you want him to have? 5. Tell some ways in which Joseph was like Christ. 6. Tell some ways in which Christ was greater than Joseph. 7. Read about the dreams of the chief butler and the chief baker (see Gen., 40), and tell them in your own words. 8. Tell how Peter (Acts 12) and Paul and Silas (Acts 16) were let out of prison.

**Challenge Text.** "The father said to his servants, bring forth the \_\_\_\_\_ and put it on him; and put a \_\_\_\_\_ in his hand, and \_\_\_\_\_ on his feet." Lu. 15:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Every good act is a seed that grows a harvest of good. 2. Joseph was tested, and therefore promoted. He was promoted, and again tested. 3. Joseph was a success as a boy at home, as a youth injured and imprisoned, and as a man of authority and influence. 4. Be ready, for you know not how soon the world will need you and call you. 5. He who gets ready for work finds that God has gotten work ready for him. 6. That promotion, or honor, was only the chance and challenge for you to do better work; now make good! 7. The world will always want the worker who can do it a little better. 8. Character is the altitudinal force of life; our conditions and circumstances are the longitudinal forces. 9. God is the God of kings, of men, of nations, of harvests; and therefore godliness is profitable. 10. God often uses strange methods and forces to accomplish His purposes. 11. Adversity often prepares for prosperity, and so prosperity may be the preparation for adversity. 12. Young man, what have you got in your hand or in your mind? What can you do?

DR. J. M. COON.



Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while



And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard. And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my



yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence. And



said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into



Now there fore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye



hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the



been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 45:1-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Fill us with Thy Spirit, so that we may always do the things that please Thee. Give us a spirit of forgiveness against any who may have wronged us. May we see Thy hand and plan in even the pains and losses of life. So lead us that we may be helpful to all. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Oh, comfort one another!  
For the way is growing dreary,  
The feet are often weary,  
And the heart is very sad.  
There is heavy burden-bearing,  
When it seems that none are caring,  
And we half forget that ever we were glad."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1707. Place, Heliopolis, one of the capitals of Egypt. Persons, Joseph, his eleven brothers, and the servants of Pharaoh.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Forgiveness. Love the great gift, 1 Cor. 13. The law of Christ, Matt. 5:38-48. Motive for forgiveness, 1 Pet. 2:13-25. Power of forgiveness, Rom. 12:10-21. Need of forgiveness, Matt. 18:15-25. Example of Christ, 1 Pet. 4:12-19. Forbearing and forgiving, Col. 3:9-17. Thoughtful of others, Eph. 4:20-32. Father forgives a son, Luke 15:11-24. The Christian should forgive, Gal. 6:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The forgiving spirit is one of the most vital of the Christian graces, and yet one of the rarest. This beautiful story shows

us many features and phases of this necessary grace. 1. It concerns chiefly those who have been at variances—all others should retire. 2. It is the special duty of the one injured or of the more favored. Others may forgive; he must forgive. 3. It demands a frank and full statement of facts—dodging and concealing nothing. 4. And yet it must be tender, generous, self-sacrificing, tactful—ever seeing the other's point of view. 5. It does all for the glory of God, and for His cause—the human advantages following are but incidental. 6. It is the climax and crown of the Christian character. This is the greatest act of Joseph's great life. 7. It is sincere, permanent and final—forgetting, as well as forgiving. As one has said, we should forgive tenderly, privately, readily, generously, in order to full reconciliation and to comfort and help.

### HOW A WHOLE FAMILY WAS SAVED.

**The Old Home Ties.** Joseph had been in Egypt over twenty years. He must have thought of his old home, his father and little Benjamin many, many times. He has been almost too busy to send back and inquire about them, or even to let them know that he is alive. Then I think he felt that it would expose the sin of his brothers if he made himself known. But God opened the way for him in all these things.

You remember that there had been seven years of plenty, and that Joseph had stored up corn in many cities. Two years of famine had passed, and there were five more to come. This famine was in Canaan also, where Jacob and his sons lived. They heard about the stores of corn in Egypt, and Jacob sent his ten sons down there to buy corn. He did not send Benjamin, for he was afraid he might get lost or killed. He never forgot how he lost Joseph, and he still grieved for him. While God was training Joseph in the school of trial, he was training Jacob and the ten boys also in the old country home.

**God's Gracious Teachers.** "He's the kind of God that can change a heart like mine from all the evil there is, and make it so I can think good thoughts and be kind, and enjoy His hills and hear the birds sing again as I used to when I was a little girl," says a character in a story—one who had been a great sinner. "There were years and years when I didn't hear them little creatures singin' all around me, because my deeds were so evil. I don't reckon you know it, but sin affects you that way—takes away your hearin' for sweet sounds and your sight for what is lovely. But God kept on lettin'

His birds sing and His sun rise; He didn't put any sign on me, as folks did. He fixed things so they'd work out good for all, for He knows we'd want to come back some time, same's I've done. I don't know whether you've ever found it out, but sinners get awful tired of sinnin'."—Selected.

**Too Wonderful To Be True.** Just as soon as Joseph saw those ten men coming for corn he knew them. They did not know him, for he was changed by having grown to be a man, by his new dress, by his new name, by his lovely manner. He said to himself, "I will test them and see if they are better men than they used to be." Then he wanted to learn about his father. He said to them, "Ye are spies, coming to spy out the land." They had to explain about the family and where they came from. When they told him of Benjamin, he said he would prove them by keeping them prisoners till one of them went and brought Benjamin. Afterwards he said he would keep only one of them, and let the rest go back with corn for the families. He bound Simeon before their eyes and the others went back home. Before they left Joseph heard them talking about the way they had sold him into slavery. He saw they were sorry, and Joseph himself had to turn away and weep. You can read in the Bible (Gen., Chapters 43 and 44) how Joseph at last succeeded in getting Benjamin down, and about the silver cup, and the money in the sacks, the feast in the palace, and all the rest, with the earnest pleading of Judah that he might be made a slave instead of Benjamin. All this was



more than Joseph could stand. He made all others leave the room, and he said to his brothers, "I am Joseph; does my father yet live?" This was like a blow to his brothers, and they fell back in fear. But he said so tenderly, "Come near to me," that they were comforted. Then he told them how God had sent him to Egypt to save the lives of all of them. The large picture shows how surprised they all are. How beautiful and good Joseph looks as he talks to them of the way God had led him. He did not mean that they did no wrong, but only that God had brought good out of their wrong doing. Then he kissed them all, beginning with Benjamin. He might have punished them all, but he was too good and great for that.

**Grant's Noble Act.** When General Grant was asked, "Did you take Lee's sword at Appomattox?" he replied: "No, I did not; Lee came there wearing the magnificent sword which the state of Virginia had given him, but I did not want him to surrender it to me. I sat down at once and busied myself writing terms of the surrender. When I had finished I handed them to General Lee. He read them, and remarked, 'They are certainly very generous indeed.' He then told me the cavalrymen owned their own horses, and, if they were deprived of them, they could not put in their crops. Then I gave the order, 'Take the horses home with you, for you'll need them in the spring plowing.' This is the simple story of Lee's surrender. Caesar would have had that sword; Napoleon would have demanded it; Wellington would not have been satisfied without it; but U. S. Grant was too great to take it.

**"Do Not Quarrel by the Way."** Joseph now sends his brothers back with food, and with wagons for his father and his goods. He intends to keep them all there with him for the five years more of famine. How glad they were to know that Joseph is not really dead, and that everything has turned out as it has! They are thinking, too, how happy their father will be when he learns that Joseph is living. Joseph gave his brothers one piece of advice which he thought they might need. That was for them to take care and not quarrel by the way. We nearly all of us need that advice, for it is the easiest thing in the world for a grudge or hard feeling to start; and then it grows and grows just like a weed.

Joseph knew, also, that we can avoid many annoying things if we try. God has made us able to get along with other people if we only will, and an old proverb says, "To be forewarned is to be fore-armed."

**Mother Knows You Can.** Paul said one day to his mother, "I can't help it." She was rebuking

him for his quick temper and his harsh words to his sister. He seemed to think that was excuse enough, even though his name was Paul. But his mother said: "You can help it. God has given you power to help it. He has given you a will to hold your tongue in check when it would say bad or harsh words. He will give His Spirit of love and forgiveness, so that you can overlook even the harsh words of others. You can help it."

Do you know, these men could hardly make their father believe that Joseph was still living. It was all too good and too wonderful to be true. God had just taken one thing after another and put them together in such a way that it all worked out—why, better than any fairy could have done it with a wand that changed people and things. In the next story we will find out how Jacob was made to believe at last and how rejoiced he was.

**How God Weaves.** "All things work together for good." This word "together" is the emphatic word. At the weaver's hand are many shuttles with differently colored threads. He now thrusts in a white, a blue, a black thread. You cannot judge the purpose by the thrust of one shuttle; you must wait until he has emptied all. Nor can we judge God or His purpose by any one event, nor by any one day. We are yet on the loom. Give God time to put this and that together.—Hallock.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why was the capital city called Heliopolis? 2. How old was Joseph when he began his work for Pharaoh? Who began his greater public ministry at that age? 3. What dream of Joseph was fulfilled by his brothers bowing down to him? 4. On what two occasions did Christ weep—once at a grave and once as he looked at a city? 5. Joseph said, "Come near to me"; what invitation of Christ is like that? 6. What were Christ's first words spoken as he was crucified? Can you name any of the other six messages from the cross? 7. How many times did Peter think we should forgive? How many times did Christ say, and what did he mean? 8. What does the Lord's prayer teach about forgiveness?

**Challenge Text.** Forbearing one another, and — one another, if any man have a — against any; even as — forgave —, so also do ye. Col. 3 (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. A short sin may have a long punishment, as in the case of Joseph's brethren. 2. True forgiveness is without any string to it, like "but I never can forget." 3. It is easier to forgive a wrong if you can see God's hand overruling it for good. 4. Sins have a strange way of springing up and meeting the sinner, when least expected. 5. Though God overrules the sin, the sinner is not truly excused. 6. We should get the habit of putting the best possible construction on the sins and mistakes of others. 7. Mercy is quick-sighted to see the troubles of others and quick-witted to relieve them. 8. God honors those who honor Him. 9. Position should seek the man, rather than man the position. 10. If we do not forgive we cannot expect to be forgiven, and we are not able even to accept forgiveness.

DR. J. M. COON.

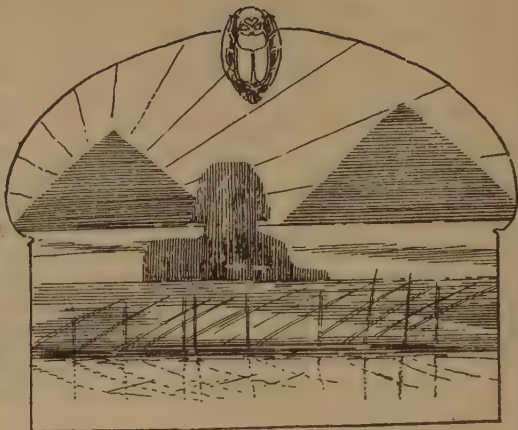


# JACOB AND PHARAOH

And Pharaoh spake unto



saying,  
Thy  
father  
and thy  
brethren  
are come  
unto  
thee:  
The  
land  
of



is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my



And  
Joseph  
brought  
in Jacob  
his father,  
and  
set him



and Jacob blessed Pharaoh. And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And



said  
unto



The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years: few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 47:1-12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we remember that this life and earth are not all; but that there is a higher life and a truer home. Help us that we may choose Christ as Saviour and King, and give ourselves fully to His service. May we be less and less bound by the relations of earth, and more and more "set our affections on things above." For Christ's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1706. Place, Heliopolis, capital of Egypt. Persons, Joseph, Jacob, Pharaoh.

**Scripture Setting:** Journey of Life. Years of man's life, Psa. 90:1-17. A picture of old age, Eccl. 12:1-14. David guided, Psa. 25:8-12. Paul guided, Rom. 1:7-13. Redeeming the time, Eph. 5:15-21. God's guiding hand, Luke 12:1-7. Seeking God's glory, 1 Cor. 10:23-34. Heeding good counsel, Prov. 3:5-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The reply of the aged Jacob seems to be the key phrase of the passage. It suggests the journey of life for a study. 1. Our

"Speak, history! who are life's victors? Unroll thy long annals, and say  
Are they those whom the world called the victors, who won the success of a day?  
The martyrs, or Nero? The Spartans, who fell at Thermopylae's tryst,  
Or the Persians and Xerxes? His judges or Socrates? Pilate or Christ?"

### ITS RELATIONS.

instincts and desires attract us to each other, and bind us in groups, families, and communities. 2. Remarkable providences divide friends and relatives, and again unite them. 3. Honest toil is a Divine provision, and it is both a duty and a privilege. 4. The law of rivalry and the instinct of perfection are given that each may do and be his best. 5. Promotion in life and work is the beckoning hand of Providence to the worthy and faithful. 6. This life however long, is but a moment as compared with the future and is given that we may prepare for that future.

## TWO KINGS AND TWO KINGDOMS.

**The Joseph Kind of Boy and Man.** What a difference there is between people! Here are two boys, or young men—one is polite, manly, kind, always helpful; the other is crabbed, selfish and never seeing others except to find fault. Or, it may be two girls or young women, who are such opposites to each other. Joseph was a man who could claim all those fine qualities named above, and as many more. His character is as beautiful as his picture. It must be so, for the king to trust him as he does. Pharaoh tells him to take "the best of the land" for his father and brothers, and also to pick out some good men and "make them rulers over my cattle." Thus Joseph is made the connecting link between two kings and two kingdoms. God had fitted him for this great service, but he was willing to become fitted. We can scarcely tell how much it meant for Joseph to be the mutual friend he was. As a true and loving son he brings his father to Pharaoh; and as a trusted and faithful servant, Pharaoh honors him and grants every request. Then he has told his brothers how to answer Pharaoh's questions. When they say they are shepherds, it is a confession of inferiority in the sight of the Egyptians. This secures the land adapted to their business, and also prevents the Egyptians from being jealous of them. I think any boy would like to be a Joseph kind of boy, and so grow up to be a Joseph kind of man.

**Plan To Do It.** When you rise in the morning, say that you will make the day blessed to a fellow-creature. It is easily done. A left-off garment to the man who needs it; a kind word to the sorrowful;

a little help to brother or sister or mother; an encouraging expression to the sad—trifles in themselves as light as air—will do it at least for the twenty-four hours. And if you are young, depend upon it, it will tell upon you when you are old. Now look at the result. If you send one person away happy through the day, that will be three hundred and sixty-five in the course of a year.—Exchange.

**A Worldly King and Kingdom.** This is what Pharaoh and his kingdom were. Both king and people boasted of what they had and what they could do. God had favored Egypt in many ways. Often when other nations had famines Egypt would have plenty. But the Egyptians were not grateful to God for His goodness. They worshipped animals and reptiles instead of the true God. They lived in themselves and for themselves, instead of in and for God. Joseph saw this and knew it, so he was true to the God of his fathers. When Jacob came to Egypt he felt that it was only for a time. He said that they were only "sojourners" in that land; that is, visitors or strangers. He knew that the land of Canaan was their real earthly home, and that sometime they would go back to it. They were to be in Egypt, but not of it. It is a good thing that good people do go into worldly kingdoms in many ways. In this way the true God can be made known and the true religion. Joseph was like a real missionary in Egypt, and now Jacob and his family will bring much of the true religion to this heathen country.

**Danger of Prosperity.** It is dangerous for a man to have the fatal gift of turning everything he touches into gold. King Midas asked of Bacchus

that whatever he touched should turn to gold. He broke a twig from a tree, and it became gold. His staff became a golden rod. He touched ears of corn, and they were transformed. When he reached home, he hungered. Food was placed before him, but when he took it in his hand it also turned to gold, and he would have starved in the midst of plenty, if the god had not shown him how to get rid of the gift. Possessions may easily shut out both God and Heaven.—R. P. Anderson.

**Another King and Kingdom.** Where is he and what is it? Well, you can see it in that fourth picture. Real kings do not always sit on thrones and wear crowns. Christ was a real king, but He "had not where to lay His head." Paul was a real king, but he was often in chains and in prison. There have been many real kingly men and women in the world, although the world did not see them as such; and they did not have the signs of worldly royalty. So Jacob is this other king, and truth, honesty and love to God and man are the other kingdom. As Jacob bows then before Pharaoh, he himself feels that he is a king. He lifts his hands and blesses Pharaoh, no doubt praying that the God of Heaven would favor him. Jacob, you remember, was to have the name of Israel, which means "prince of God." That surely is a kingly title of the very best kind. Then it was said that he should prevail both with God and men, and that is kingly quality which earthly kings cannot always claim. Jacob belongs to the Abraham class of kings, and of Abraham it was said that he should "be a blessing to all the nations of the earth." That is both a kind of kingliness and a degree of kingliness that Pharaoh never had, nor any other worldly king. Then that word "pilgrimage" looks to another life and a better country than any of earth.

**"Guaranteed Under the Food Act."** If a reputable firm can guarantee its food to be pure and worthy, has not Almighty God produced a food for our souls which He calls His Word and which He can absolutely guarantee under the pure food act of high Heaven? Or has He left in a miserable state of uncertainty (as some critics of His Word would have us believe) what we have hitherto believed to be His Word, and we now have to take it without His Divine guarantee and support? Has He left us lacking in the very most necessitous condition of our lives? Has He given us pure food for our bodies and not for our souls? I, for one, believe He has guaranteed His Word and thus made it possible for us to love and serve Him, and enter into His kingdom.—Exchange.

**Which Is Your King and Kingdom?** Those two last pictures set the two before us, as

if to say, "Choose which you will have." Will you belong to the Jacob kind of king and kingdom, or the Pharaoh kind? The Jacob kind has Jesus Christ as its head and pattern. The Pharaoh kind has Satan as its head and pattern. It ought not to take long for anyone to decide that question. But many people keep hesitating. One reason is that they forget that they must choose one or the other. If one does not choose Christ he does choose Satan. There seem to be many kinds of people in the world, and many of them with good traits. But there are really only two classes at the last—the good with Christ as King, and the bad with Satan as king. Our stories are constantly showing us these two classes and asking us to choose in which class we will put ourselves. Yes, they even keep warning us to keep out of the Satan class and they keep beckoning us to come into the Christ class. Now look at Pharaoh again, and decide which king and kingdom shall be yours.

**Some Good "I Wills."** I will respect weakness and defer to it on the street car, in the department store, and in the home, whether it be displayed by man or woman.

I will not fail to express sympathy with another's sorrow, or to give hearty utterance to my appreciation of good works by another, whether the party be friendly to me or not.

I will look on the bright side of the circumstances of my daily life, and I will seek to carry a cheerful face and speak hopefully to all whom I meet.

I will neither eat nor drink what I know will detract from my ability to do my best work.

I will speak and act truthfully, living with sincerity toward God and man.

I will strive to be always prepared for the very best that can happen to me. I will seek to be ready to seize the highest opportunity, to do the noblest work, to rise to the loftiest place which God and my abilities permit.—New York Christian Advocate.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What dream of Joseph was fulfilled now? 2. Mention some of the great events recorded thus far in Genesis. 3. How was Pharaoh superior to Jacob? 4. How was Jacob superior to Pharaoh?

**Challenge Text.** "Come thou with us and we will do thee ———, for the Lord hath ——— good concerning ———. Num. 10: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. One should not be ashamed of his family, if respectable; nor of his business, if honorable. 2. Persons of industry and energy are always in demand. 3. Plan as if you will live for years, but trust as if you will die today. 4. The "evil days" of life are due to man's sinful nature and acts. 5. Exaltation in rank should be accompanied with humility in spirit.

DR. J. M. COON.



## THE LAST DAYS OF JACOB

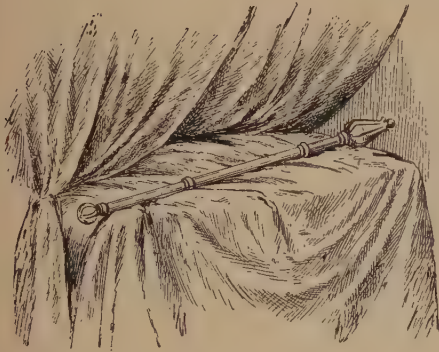
And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days. Judah is a



from the prey,  
my son, thou  
art gone up: he  
stooped down,  
he couched as  
a lion, and as an



who shall rouse him up? The



shall not  
depart  
from  
Judah,  
nor a



from between his feet, until Shiloh came; and unto him  
shall the gathering of the people be. Binding his



and his  
ass' colt  
unto the  
choice  
vine; he



in wine, and his clothes  
in the blood of



His eyes shall be red with wine,  
and his teeth white with milk.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 48:8-22 TO 49:1-27.

**Prayer:** How good of Thee, O God, to go with us all the way in life's pilgrimage! We are never alone. There are no solitudes, for Thou art in the shadows, in the silences and in the full-orbed day. In Thy presence we live, and move, and have our being. Thou art our Ruler, Law-giver, Prophet, Priest and Savior. Guide, bless and keep us even to the end. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Disappointment—His appointment—  
Change one letter, then I see  
That the thwarting of my purpose  
Is God's better plan for me.  
His appointment must be blessing,  
Though it may come in disguise;  
For the end, from the beginning,  
Open to His wisdom lies."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1689. Place, Heliopolis and Goshen, in Egypt. Persons, Jacob, Joseph and his two sons. All the sons at his dying bedside.

**Scripture Setting: The Pilgrimage of Life.** A right start, Eccl. 11:7; 12:3. A right motive, 2 Cor. 5:14-19. A right grip, Job 2:1-13. A right trust, Matt. 6:19-34. A right progress, Rom. 1:16-23. A right spirit, Psalms 40:10-17. A right aim, 2 Tim. 4:1-8. A right pattern, Heb. 12:1-11. A right walk, Eph. 4:1-16. Right guide and helper, Rom. 8:14-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We think of Jacob as the pilgrim believer, for his life had many journeys

in it, and itself was like a journey. Under the thought of the pilgrimage of life we may group some helpful facts and experiences: 1. It means change and removal, for we have here "no continuing city." 2. It is attended with toils and trials—the common lot of mortals. 3. It is a period and state of association with others, furnishing opportunities to do good and to receive good. 4. It has its gracious, Divine surprises, lifting and helping one to the highest and best. 5. It may have its quiet and blessed evening time, to prepare for the last journey to "the home over there." 6. It should have its "visions splendid" both of earthly possibility and of Heavenly glory. Every life should have its Bethel dream, its Peniel victory, its Beulah glory.

### SHADOW PICTURES OF JESUS CHRIST.

By shadow pictures I mean that which was foretold about Christ by holy men. The Holy Spirit helped them to say many things that Christ should be and do. I am sure Jacob was thus inspired to say what he did about his sons, and specially about Judah. But first we need to know some things before Jacob gives us these pictures of Christ.

**Growing Old Beautifully.** Perhaps you have seen some old people, who were cross and crabbed, and did not care for children. But Jacob was not one of that kind for we see how glad he was to welcome the children of Joseph and hold them in his arms. I think that nearly all old people get to like children. If you have a grandfather or grandmother you know what I mean. Well, Jacob had much sorrow, and had mourned about Joseph; but these last seventeen years had been happy ones, and it made him act and look happy. Not only did he have Joseph back, but Pharaoh was good to him also, and let him and his children and flocks live in one of the best parts of the land. He had much to be thankful for, and all this kept him from being cross and gloomy. And we should notice this, too, that he not only felt thankful, but said so. We say "thank you" when anyone does us a favor; and so we should thank God for all the blessings He gives us. Every moment we live is a gift from God.

**Seeing By The Spirit.** Jacob was quite blind now, for he was nearly 150 years old. He felt that he was about to die, and he made

Joseph promise that he would bring him to Canaan where his father and grandfather were buried. Joseph brought his two sons for Jacob to bless, placing them so that Manasseh would have the first place, as he was older, but Jacob gave the chief blessing to Ephraim. When Joseph would correct him, Jacob replied, "I know what I am doing, and this is the right way." God was guiding him now. I wonder if he remembered when he deceived Isaac, his blind father. That was not right but God made it to work out the best. Soon after this, all the sons are present to receive the father's last words. By the Holy Spirit he saw into the future and told briefly what each one should be and do. They all stood around his dying bed listening and weeping. They felt that God was speaking to them through their father. These twelve sons became the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel, and they are often spoken of in the Bible. You can read what Jacob said about each one of the sons in Genesis, Ch. 49. Do not fail to see the beautiful words about Joseph. Thus they worked for the future, and each one became what he deserved to be. So it is with us, for the future of this life, and for the Heaven to which we all want to go. Our life in the future will be much as our life is here.

**Laying Up Treasures.** A rich lady dreamed that she went to Heaven, and there saw a mansion being built. "Whom is that for?" she asked of the guide. "For your gardener." "But he lives in the tiniest cottage on earth, with barely room enough for his family. He might live better if he did not give



away so much to the miserable poor folks." Further on she saw a tiny cottage being built. "And whom is that for?" she asked. "That is for you." "But I have lived in a mansion on earth. I would not know how to live in a cottage." The words she heard in reply were full of meaning: "The Master Builder is doing His best with the material that is being sent up." Then she awoke, resolving to lay up treasure in Heaven. What are we sending up? What kind of material are we building into our every-day life?—Selected.

**The Glorious Saviour.** The greatest blessing of all is given to Judah, because from him Christ should come in more direct line. For this reason all our pictures are about what Jacob said to Judah. These pictures are object lessons of Christ, and each one tells us some special thing about Him. The lion and the young lion show us that the Saviour is strong and mighty. He must be so, in order to destroy Satan and sin. Satan is a "roaring lion seeking whom he may devour"; but Jesus Christ is the "Lion of the tribe of Judah," and is master of Satan. These two lion kings met in battle, and the Christ lion conquered the Satan lion. You can read about it in Matt., Chap. 4.

The scepter stands for rule and government, and so is the picture of Christ. He is the true King of all the earth, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." And it is promised that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

The priest standing with a roll in his hand, pointing upward, pictures Christ as bringing the law of God to man. He is himself called the "Word," and he said "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Many prophets had been sent to make known some truths, but Jesus Christ is the last true prophet of God to make known all truth.

Greatest of all the symbols are those in the last pictures; for they show Christ as the sacrifice for sin. He is both the priest and the victim. He is the "Good Shepherd," and also the "Lamb of God." Because He gave His life on Calvary He can give life to all who believe on Him, and trust Him for salvation. As a suffering Saviour and dying for us, He becomes a forgiving and cleansing Saviour, and able to save all who come to Him.

All of these wonderful pictures of Jesus Christ are given as Jacob blesses Judah. In them and by them Shiloh comes who stands for Christ Himself. Judah also gave his name to the promised land for Canaan became Judea. Altogether there are five hun-

dred and twenty-five names and titles in the Bible to describe Christ. These named here are some of the greatest ones. This great and glorious Saviour is able to save all who come into His love and life.

**Christ Gives Life.** A missionary tells a story of a young officer who was dying of yellow fever. As the physicians stood helplessly by, one asked him: "Is there anything you would like?" "Yes," he said; "put me in the other bed, that I may die in the sun." They did so, and the sun saved his life. Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in His beams; and if we put ourselves into His care, by faith in Him, we secure eternal life and shall never die.

After this, Jacob died and his body was buried in the ground. His soul went to be with the God who gave it, and with the Angel who wrestled with him. That Angel was Jesus Christ. He found there also Abraham, Isaac and others who had gone on to Heaven before him. It was a great honor for him to be welcomed and helped by the king of Egypt. But this was now a greater honor to be welcomed by the King of Heaven and earth. All who love God are so welcomed even the children; for Christ said, "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

**"Lift Me Higher!"** A child lay dying, and said plaintively: "Lift me higher! Lift me higher!" The father took the little one in his arms, and lifted her up as high as he could raise her, as she continued to plead, with failing strength, "Lift me higher!" Soon she was gone, lifted out of her earthly father's trembling arms into the bosom of her Heavenly Father. On the child's grave they cut her name and the words: "Lifted higher!" God wants us all to come up to Him, to get closer to Him, to be lifted higher into life's better things.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many of the sons of Jacob can you name? 2. Tell the story of Jacob's ladder dream. 3. The story of wrestling with the angel. 4. What was the name of the cave where Jacob was buried? Who first bought it, and who else was buried there? 5. Tell some of the journeys of Jacob. 6. What were the last words of Paul? Of Christ on the Cross? 7. Do you remember the dying words of anyone?

**Challenge Text.** "So teach us to number our ——— that we may apply our ——— unto wisdom." Ps. 90:(?)

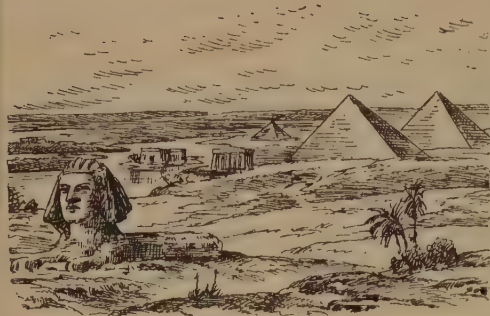
**Practical Lessons.** 1. One of the greatest blessings is to be willing and able to bless others. 2. God is so good and just that we are safe in thanking Him in advance for all of life. 3. If our days are evil, it is altogether because we make them so. 4. Every life is a pilgrimage through earthly conditions to the great future beyond. 5. Whatever our station in life, all should be honest, faithful, obedient and true. 6. These qualities are possible at their best, only by the help of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. 7. Life is made true and hopeful by the visions the soul has. 8. The God who starts life and stops it is constant in His unseen and mighty ministry for it. 9. Do not judge life by parts and stages, but wait to see the finished journey.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE LAST DAYS OF JOSEPH

And Joseph dwelt in



he, and his father's house: and Joseph lived an hundred and ten years. And Joseph saw Ephraim's



of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up



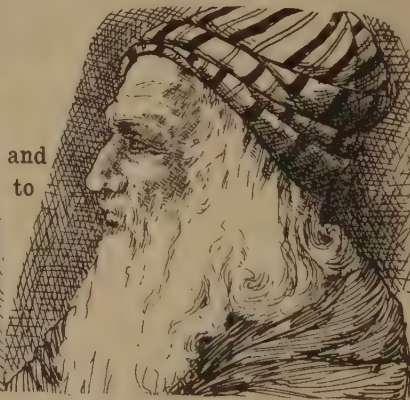
And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to



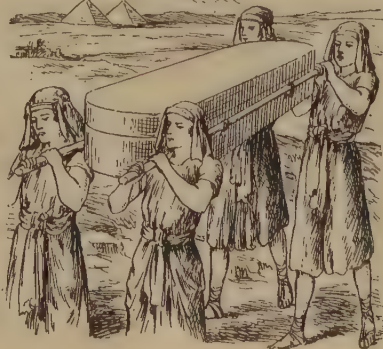
to



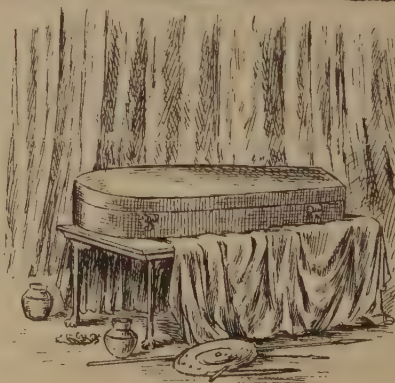
and to



And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall



up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a



in Egypt.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS GEN. 50:14-26.

**Prayer:** O Lord, We thank Thee for the beautiful and true lives of many people. They are bright examples to us that we, too, may be and do our best. Above all, may we take Jesus Christ as our perfect pattern, who also has redeemed us by His death. Help us, oh, help us by Thy Spirit and Word. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Somebody did a golden deed;  
Somebody proved a friend in need;  
Somebody sang a beautiful song;  
Somebody smiled the whole day long;  
Somebody thought, 'Tis sweet to live';  
Somebody said, 'I'm glad to give';  
Somebody fought a valiant fight;  
Somebody lived to shield the right.  
Was that somebody you?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1636. Place, Heliopolis, capital of Lower Egypt. Persons, Joseph, his children and brothers.

**Scripture Setting:** How to Be and Do One's Best. By having God in the heart, John 14:17-23. By living in Him, Acts 17:22-31. By taking Christ as our pattern, Phil. 2:1-8. By being bold and true, Josh. 1:1-9. By standing with and for God, Rom. 8:31-39. By bearing burdens, Gal. 6:1-6. By having on the armor, Eph. 6:11-20. By battling in and for Christ, 2 Tim. 2:1-10. By helping others, Isa. 35:3-10. By a good and true character, 2 Pet. 1:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** How the character of Joseph shines out at all times! Different and difficult experiences seem but to furnish a life setting

for this jewel of character. Whenever you see him, there is the flash and radiance of some new virtue or grace. He is the model son, brother, companion, citizen, ruler, helper, friend, Christian. 1. As a son, Joseph is loving, obedient, helpful and protective, delighting to honor his father and tenderly considerate of him. 2. As a brother, he is patient, forgiving, thoughtful, caring for and training his brothers. 3. As a ruler and servant, he is faithful, wise, tactful and commended. 4. As a Christian, he is trustful, humble, watchful of providences, serving God at all times, having an abiding and abounding faith. Verily, an exquisite character-painting hung in the portrait gallery of the world!

### HOW TO BE AND DO ONE'S BEST.

We are not told much about Joseph, after Jacob's death. He lived fifty-four years longer, and we can know how he lived, judging from his past. When a man shoots at a mark, if he gets his aim right for the length of the gun, he knows how the bullet will go. So with a life; if it is held steady and true for the first part, it will go straight to the right mark. But the pictures with this story tell us some very beautiful things about Joseph.

**Living Peaceably with Everybody.** Joseph had been doing this all his life, and now it was easy to continue it. After the seventy days of mourning for Jacob, and after the burial in Canaan, Joseph's brothers were afraid that he would punish them for their sin. So they plead with him to forgive them. But Joseph told them he had already forgiven them and that he would continue to take care of them. Their great sin kept coming up and accusing them; and this shows that it does not pay to do wrong to God or man. But what a wonderful man Joseph was to live peaceably with all! This was true in many trying places—with Potiphar, as a servant; with the prisoners, as a fellow prisoner; with Pharaoh and all his great men; with his brothers continually; with old and young, with the bad as well as with the good. It was because he started right and had God with him all the time. If a boy or girl learns how to live right in the home, then it will be easy to live peace-

ably with all others. The home is a kind of little world itself, where God and our parents teach us how to live in the big world afterwards.

**Seven Good Rules for the Home.** 1. Mind your tongue! Don't let it speak hasty, cruel, unkind or wicked words. 2. Mind your eyes! Don't permit them to look on wicked books, pictures or objects. 3. Mind your ears! Don't suffer them to listen to wicked speeches, songs or words. 4. Mind your lips! Don't let tobacco foul them. Don't let strong drink pass them. Don't let the food of the glutton enter between them. 5. Mind your hands! Don't let them steal, or fight, or write any evil words. 6. Mind your feet! Don't let them walk in the steps of the wicked. 7. Mind your heart! Don't let the love of sin dwell in it. Don't give it to Satan, but ask Jesus to make it His throne.

**Loving and Teaching the Children.** That is a beautiful picture of Joseph with the two children on his knees. The children show that they like him too. This was because they felt him to be good and true. **To do one's best it is necessary to be at one's best.** The life will be according to the heart. Children can tell when people love them. Joseph knew what it was to have a good home, and he knew, too, what it was to lose the home, when he was only a boy. These two things made him more interested in all other boys and girls. Besides you never can tell what a boy or girl may come to be. Who could have guessed what Joseph would some day be and do?

**Help the Boy to Do His Best.** Humble John Trebonius, grand old schoolmaster that he was, used to

take off his hat deferentially to his boys when he appeared before them, for he would say to himself, "How do I know but that among them there may be one who shall some day be a mighty man?" Even then there sat at his feet a poor boy whose name was Martin, and whose other name was Luther, who by and by with trumpet tongue was to waken the world to a new departure.

**True to the God of His Fathers.** What fine old men are those? Joseph's father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Can you tell their names? How Joseph loved them! The more so because they were not only great men, but good men. It is a great blessing to have good parents and grandparents. And the boys and girls of such parents should be still better for they have such a good start. It is a great advantage to be well born. Joseph proved that he was worthy of such forefathers. He is about the only person in Scripture of whom there is no bad record. He was sinful by nature, as all are, but he let God begin guiding him early; and he followed the God of his fathers. Joseph is a bright model for any boy to copy after. Joseph and Daniel were a good deal alike, and they were treated much the same in the world. We should pattern after all good men and women, especially our parents. But there is only one perfect pattern, and a good parent or friend is just to help one to become more like Jesus Christ. He came down to earth to show us how to live the best life—how to be and do our best.

**Better Men and Women.** Out in Oregon lives a man who is a famous fruit-grower and the publisher of a paper entitled "Better Fruit." He knows the orchard business from beginning to end, having been in it from boyhood. He takes the tree that bears only hard, sour, scraggy fruit and by engrafting it with other branches causes it to bear such luscious apples as the Jonathan, Ben Davis, etc. Not only that—he teaches others all he knows about the business. His one work in life is to produce better fruit. So Jesus came to earth to engraft His nature on the tree of humanity, and thus to grow better men and women, better boys and girls.

**Facing the Future in Faith.** Joseph had been doing this, too, all his life. He trusted God, and waited His time and way for everything, but now he is coming to the great future beyond this life. He said to his brethren, "I die and God will surely visit you." God had fulfilled His promises to him

so many times in the past, that he has strong faith for his brethren in the future. What is that the four men are carrying? It is the coffin containing Joseph's body. They do not go to Canaan to bury it now. But he made them promise that they would take his body with them when God was ready for all the people to leave Egypt and go back to Canaan. This they did, and we will learn about that in the story of Moses. Do you know how they kept the bodies so long in those days? It was by embalming them with fragrant spices that kept them from decaying. The body was wrapped with strips of cloth and then put in a box, also prepared so that it would not decay. When it was all done it was called a "mummy," and it would keep for hundreds of years. I saw the "mummy" of Pharaoh in the British museum. This was over 3,000 years old. Some think that we may yet find the "mummy" bodies of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the cave of Machpelah. This burying place has been carefully guarded always. The souls of all who love God go immediately at death to be with Him. Then at last He brings each body to its own soul, for He has watched over the bodies till He is ready to raise them again.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What were some early dreams of Joseph, and how did they come true? 2. What three dreams did Joseph interpret in Egypt? 3. What trait of character do you like best in Joseph? 4. What other good traits can you name? 5. What kind of Scripture vengeance did Joseph take on his brothers? 6. Tell what you can about a "mummy." 7. Look at those four men carrying the coffin, and then tell about four men who carried a sick man to Christ once. 8. In what ways was Joseph like Christ?

**Challenge Text.** Let no man despise thy ———; but be thou an ——— of the believers in" (what six ways?). 1 Tim. 4:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. One can do his best only when he will be his best. 2. One can be his best only in taking Jesus Christ as Savior and helper. 3. God alone can take judicial vengeance; the Christian's revenge is by forgiveness. 4. "I forgive, but I cannot forget," is Satan's trick to keep us from forgiving at all. 5. Joseph's body was saved for hundreds of years, but his character grows brighter and grander forever. 6. Every life has its mountain peaks of vision and its valleys of service and suffering. 7. God can make a school house out of a prison or a palace. 8. We should take God into account, and into partnership in all of our life relations. 9. "God chooses fit men; God fits chosen men."

Dr. J. M. COON.



Now there arose up a new



over  
Egypt,  
which  
knew  
not  
Joseph.  
And he  
said  
unto his  
people  
Behold, the



of the children of Israel  
are more and mightier  
than we: Come on, let us  
deal wisely with them;  
lest they multiply, and  
it come to pass,  
that, when there  
falleth out any



they join also unto our  
enemies, and fight  
against us, and so get  
them up out of the  
land. Therefore they  
did set over them



to  
afflict  
them  
with  
their  
burdens.  
And  
they



for Pharaoh treasure  
cities, Pithom and Raamses.  
But the more they afflicted  
them, the more they  
multiplied and grew.  
And they were grieved  
because of the children  
of Israel. And the



made the children of  
Israel to serve with  
rigour: And they  
made their lives bitter  
with hard bondage, in  
mortar, and in brick, and in  
all manner of service in  
the field: all their service,  
wherein they made them  
serve, was with rigour.



**THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 1:1-14.**

**Prayer:** O Lord, Our life may be in affliction and bitter bondage; its way may be compassed by weakness and trials; but may we not forget Thee—Thou that setteth the stars in the heavens. Thou seest us and knowest our need. Teach us how to be patient, cheerful, trustful in the dark and hard places. For Christ's sake. Amen.

There is an eye that never sleeps beneath the wing of night;  
There is an ear that never shuts when sink the beams of light;  
There is an arm that never tires when human strength gives way;  
There is a love that never fails when earthly loves decay.

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, from the death of Joseph, 1635 B. C., to the birth of Moses, 1571 B. C. **Place,** Goshen, in Egypt. **Persons,** Pharaoh, taskmasters, people.

**Scripture Setting:** God's People Afflicted. Goodness and mercy of God, Isa. 54:4-17. Safety of the godly, Ps. 91. Refuge in God, Heb. 6:9-20. God over-ruling man, Job. 12:12-19. An ignorant king, Acts 7:11-19. Divine presence promised, Isa. 43:1-13. Gracious mercies, Hab. 3:1-19. All things work for good, Rom. 8:28-39. Divine care of the nation, Isa. 5:1-7. God never forgets, Deut. 4:31-40.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The great truths of the passage may apply to the nation or to the indi-

vidual. It is a story and study of affliction. 1. Occasion of affliction—often, as here, the effort to secure temporal good. 2. Causes of affliction—because misunderstood and prospered. 3. Motive in causing affliction—desire to get some advantage. 4. Providence in affliction—preparing man, or nation, for the Divine plan and purpose. 5. Deeper purpose in affliction; for example, (a) kept from worldly alliances; (b) fixed and settled in God's grace; (c) kept from the idolatry of the world; (d) prepared to receive the special messages of God; (e) furnishing an opportunity to exhibit the true religion to the world; (f) warning them from Egypt and awakening desires for Canaan.

**HOW GOD'S PEOPLE WERE AFFLICTED.**

We must think now of Jacob's descendants as the people of God, in a special way. God is beginning to build a nation that is to help Him rebuild a world. Then from this time on, we must think of this people as the children of Israel. You remember that Israel was the new name God gave to Jacob by the angel.

**A Bad and Cruel King.** He is called Pharaoh, but it is not the Pharaoh that Joseph served. Pharaoh was a general name given to all their kings. It was like our word king, or czar, or governor. This particular Pharaoh was called Rameses the second. This is the one whose "mummy" body was found not many years ago. The markings on the case, and the written documents inside, showed who it was.

When Jacob and his family came to Egypt, God had prepared that particular Pharaoh to welcome them, and he had done much for them as you remember. God can make even bad kings do His will, though they may not know it. Of one such king it is said, in Scripture, "I girded thee, though thou hast not known me." This was Cyrus, and one of our stories will tell of him. Altogether the Israelites were in Egypt 215 years, and they had been there now over 100 years. Egypt was a great and mighty nation, and so this bad king could do just about what he pleased. The gods they worshiped were false gods, made of wood and stone, or chosen from the animals, like the calf. Such gods could not have any power over the king or his people. But God used this wicked king for a purpose.

**Reason of the Egyptian Bondage.** God brought them into Egypt, that they might grow into a great nation, undisturbed by the Canaanites, whose land they were to possess; this they could not have done had they remained in Canaan. But they were not to stay in Egypt (Gen. 1:24), though if their stay had continued prosperous and pleasant, they probably would have been unwilling to leave. Their sufferings were for their good in many ways. A piece of pig-iron is easily prepared; it is melted from the ore, and cast into a block; but it is so brittle that you cannot use it where there will be any strain on it. If you wish to make it bear strains, you must re-melt, forge, refine, and weld it.

**A Prospered People.** Do you remember any of the wonderful promises God made to Abraham? His descendants were to grow to be like stars for multitude and like the sand on the sea shore. If you try to count the stars or the grains of sand it will help you to understand the promise. Well, the promise is beginning to be fulfilled. The seventy families that came down to Egypt have grown to be a nation. They were nearly as large as our nation was when it declared its independence. They had 600,000 fighting men alone. Can you think of some reason why they prospered so? There was the promise of God; but they must have obeyed Him, so that His promise could be fulfilled. They went to the place given them, the land of Goshen; they had a good climate and soil and had a healthful occupation; they did not have those bad sins which other nations had; they came from good stock, long lived and vigorous; they had the true God to love and worship. All these things gave them prosperity. A person, or a nation will be prospered and successful outwardly



according to the goodness each has inwardly. In that group of Israelites the faces all look good. It may be because they were honest and true in purpose and spirit. Anyway, we know they obeyed the laws of the land and were friendly to Pharaoh.

**The Soul Paints the Face.** How does the doctor bring health to the cheek? You look on the reviving child and say: "See how his cheek begins to bloom again. What has the doctor done? Has he painted that cheek with a tender vermilion? Is this enamel?" "No; the doctor has not touched the cheek." "Then how has he made it bloom?" "By touching the life-springs, by touching the blood, by touching the heart, by touching the inner reality of things; touching that, this bloom has come." Just so it is the inner goodness of the heart which makes the face and life beautiful.

**Unjust and Bitter Bondage.** Pharaoh felt that he must check the growth of the people, and crush their spirit and ambition. So what does he do? He circulates an evil report that they may turn to be enemies and so bring war. That is a dreadful picture of war, with the chariot and spear and dying men. He seemed to hang that up for his people to look at to turn them against the Israelites. This king was as shrewd as he was cruel, and so he persuaded his people to hate the Israelites. He said to his lords and nobles, "Let us deal wisely." Really, it was very foolish, for it was fighting against God. The king gave command that two great cities should be built, where arms and supplies could be kept till needed. These were built in Goshen, and the Israelites were compelled to build them. This itself was hard, for they were used to caring for flocks and herds in the fields. Then there was no stone there, and they had to make brick to build the cities with. This was even a harder kind of work, such as the lowest slaves do. Besides all, he set cruel men over them, to whip them and force them to do more. Those two pictures show how cruel and heartless these taskmasters were. All this time the Israelites must have been wondering why God allowed them to suffer. I think, too, some of them kept praying that God would deliver them. Do you think God had forgotten them? Oh, no; He was just waiting for the right time to come to their help.

**God Greater Than Man.** Yes, we all know it, but man keeps forgetting it. This king forgot it, if he ever knew it. Even if he believed in a false god, he should know that any god is greater than man—that is, any god he would feel like worshiping. But of course, the only real and true God is very

much greater than man, and greater than all men. We know this was true in this case, for it is said that "the more they afflicted them the more they multiplied." This was just because God was with them and for them. The king formed a purpose and made a plan; but the greater King had a purpose and a plan. So these two kings fought for the mastery. God was mightier and won the victory, as he always does. God can use all kinds of places and trials as schools, both for nations and persons.

**"God Keeps School There, Too."** "It is a rough place where he is located now," said a lady, speaking anxiously of her son, a young man whose business had taken him away from home to one of the mining towns of the West. "I should not feel so anxious about him if he were among different surroundings, but a place like that is a school for everything evil."

"Yes," admitted her friend, "but you must not forget that God keeps school there, also."

Those Egyptians in the last picture are not bad looking, but it is not enough to look as if one were good; he must also be good. They probably were better than the king and his wicked counsellors, but we know that they were not as good as they ought to be. When the king found that the Israelites grew in numbers and in power in spite of his opposition, he decided on another plan even more terrible and sinful. If you do not know what it was you will learn about it in the next story.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell the story of the way the Israelites came to go to Egypt. 2. What family of three, father, mother and baby, went down to Egypt once, and why? 3. Name as many of the sons of Jacob as you can. 4. What great river made Egypt so fertile? 5. How old were Jacob and Joseph at death? 6. Tell some reasons why the Israelites grew in numbers so fast. 7. In the house of the Interpreter (Pilgrim's Progress), which scene makes you think of "the more they were afflicted, the more they grew"? 8. "Name four hard taskmasters of Satan over men."

**Challenge Text.** "When we cried unto the ——— of our fathers, the Lord heard ——— and looked on ———." Deut. 26:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The people of God are a people peculiar, protected, prospered, persecuted, and providentially led. 2. Worldliness, false ambition, godless pleasure, lust, intemperance, selfishness, are some of the modern taskmasters. 3. God may allow affliction, but always to work out His glory and man's good. 4. Man's "Let us act wisely" is often supremest folly. 5. Whatever the affliction and persecution, we should trust God; that is what faith is for. 6. Times of affliction, with man, or church, or nation, are apt to be times of real prosperity. 7. Woe and also failure come to the man who fights against God. 8. The world often forgets, but the Lord remembers His people forever. 9. Satan's yoke of bondage is hard and galling; Christ's yoke of service is easy and joyous.

DR. J. M. COON.

And when she could no longer hide him, she took for him an



and  
daubed  
it  
with  
slime  
and  
with  
pitch,  
and



and she laid it



by the river's  
brink. And his  
sister stood afar  
off, to wit what  
would be done to  
him.

And the daughter  
of Pharaoh came  
down to



and her

and when she saw the ark



among the flags, she sent her





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 2:1-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We praise Thee for Thy providence and care. Thou orderest all the events of our lives and controll'est men and kings. Thou makest even Thine enemies to do Thy will and pleasure. Give unto us faith in Thy power and mercy, and enable us to glorify Thee in all things. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Build a little fence of trust  
Around to-day;  
Fill the space with loving deeds  
And therein stay;  
Look not through the sheltering bars,  
Upon to-morrow;  
God will help thee bear whatever comes,  
Of joy or sorrow."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1571-1531. Place, Probably Zoan, near Memphis (Noph).

**Scripture Setting:** Trained for the Lord. The child Samuel, 1 Sam. 3:1-21. The overruling God, Psa. 33:10-22. The child Jesus, Matt. 2:1-12. The Lord as keeper, Psa. 121. Moses the prophet, Acts 3:14-26. The deliverer, Isa. 49:7-12. A child trained, 2 Tim. 3:10-11. The protecting God, Psa. 27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is an illustration of how God finds and prepares a leader for His people. 1. The pious home is a factor. After all, blood counts when it is good blood. 2. The

mother's faith is a factor; the faith that went with him from the home and into the unknown. 3. The controlling touch of God is a factor, directing mind and step and heart of that princess. 4. The godly home is a factor, to which he is providentially returned. 5. The court of culture is a factor, by which he comes into all the learning of Egypt. 6. Personal association with his people is a factor, keeping alive his interest and sympathy. 7. Even early mistakes and blunders were factors, sending him off to that desert college where he was taught of God for his great life work.

### GOD FINDING AND TRAINING A LEADER.

**A Babe in a Queer Boat.** If you had lived in Egypt about the time of this story, you boys and your friends would probably have gone swimming in the river Nile. Quite likely you would have found the body of a baby on the shore, nearly every time you went to the river. This was because the wicked king had ordered his people to throw all boy babies of the Israelites into the river. He tried to kill them off as fast as they were born. There was a family that had a boy about three years old and a girl about ten. These were born before this cruel law of the king. A new baby brother came into that home, and then the parents knew that he might be seized and cast into the river, as many others had been. They did not dare to let the baby be seen, nor even to cry aloud. The baby's sister was told not to tell anyone about it. And they watched the little three-year-old to keep him from prattling about it. In this way the mother kept the babe hidden for three months. When she saw that she could not keep it safely much longer she said to herself one day, "I know what I'll do, I'll make a little boat and put him in it, and trust to God to take care of him." So she made a basket boat out of the rushes that grew in the river. They were tough and light, and would float. Then she covered it with pitch, to keep the water out. She put the baby in it, and hid it among the flags. The first pictures show all this.

**How Moses Paid His Mother.** "Mother," said a little boy, "when you get old and want some one to read to you, I'll pay you off." The child's mother read to him a great deal, especially on the Lord's day. His own efforts were so slow, he

seemed to appreciate how good his mother was to him, and that some time in the future he might return her kindness. "I'll pay you off, mother," he cried with childish satisfaction. Little one, do you know the only way in which you can ever pay off mother? By loving Jesus and doing His will and preparing for Heaven, just as little Moses did.—Exchange.

**A Surprising Discovery.** Do you think of anything else that mother did? She was a good woman, loving her home and her children; but she also loved God, and her husband did too. I am sure they both prayed when they left that queer little boat with the baby treasure in it. This was all they could do, and I expect God told them to do this much. Now we shall see that God works for his people, making "all things work together for good." The mother had placed her daughter over yonder to watch what might happen to the babe. This daughter's name was Miriam, and her little brother was Aaron. The princess was walking apart from her lady attendants and suddenly she spied the odd looking boat. She sent her handmaid to get it and bring it to her. When opened, she found the beautiful babe, and it won the heart of the princess. It won her not only by its beauty, but by its helplessness. Then when the babe cried, its victory was complete. In love and pity she took it, although she saw it was a Hebrew child. See how the pictures show this finding of the babe.

**God Controls All Things.** In our restlessness over those we love, we rightly strive to environ them with the best and purest influences; but when this is impossible, when the case is beyond our control, we are too faithless of God's power in

the midst of evil. We fancy that all is going wrong, and forget that He is not dependent upon helps of our choosing.

"God's in His Heaven;  
All's right with the world."

—Selected.

**A Quick Witted Girl.** How did Miriam get there so soon, for she stood "afar off," watching? She probably came near when she saw them take up the baby. She must have seen also how kind the princess was. Now she asks, "Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women?" When the princess said, "Go," Miriam went and called the baby's own mother. She took the baby to her own home, to take care of it for the princess. So she has her baby, and yet she knows that the princess claims it for her own. When older, she must bring it to the palace of the princess. But they are all happy that its life is saved, and prayer is turned to praise. Just think how God made "all things work together"—the little boat, the princess, Miriam, even the beauty and tears of the babe, the bringing of the mother as a nurse, and letting her take the babe to her own home; and thus working together the mother's prayer is answered and the child saved.

**God Working for Us.** God is ever on the side of the children. He planned a way of safety for the babe which would never have occurred to human sagacity; not by miraculous agencies, but by the simple, natural instrumentalities of His providence. God delights to use the weak and foolish things of this world (1 Cor. 1:27). He used a baby's beauty (v. 2), a woman's faith (v. 3), a tiny ark (v. 3), a sister's love (v. 4), a woman's heart (v. 5), a baby's tears (v. 6), the cruel king's own daughter (v. 9). "Nurse it for me," the princess said, and those words girt the babe about with safety. "Every soldier in the land grasped his weapon now for his defense. All the wealth of Egypt ministered to his wants. All the might of Pharaoh availed for his protection. The poor child of the Hebrews was the son of Pharaoh's daughter." God's love is over all. God's love is with all.—A. C. M. in Practical Commentary.

**The Boy in the Palace.** You have already guessed who this babe was, for you know he was the brother of Miriam and Aaron. He may have had a Hebrew name, but the princess called him Moses, for she said, "I drew him out of the water." She promised to pay the mother for caring for the child, but she was paid better wages than the

princess could pay, in having the dear baby safe in her own home to train him in the Hebrew religion. When he was old enough to go to school, his mother brought him to the princess. After that Moses lived in the palace, and was given the best education that was possible anywhere. There was a famous university at Heliopolis, where the palace was, and no doubt Moses went to that. In the New Testament we are told that he was "learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." Moses never forgot that he was an Israelite and he may have thought often that he would like to deliver his people from their cruel bondage. But the time for that work had not come yet. Moses needed a different kind of training for the great work which God had for him to do. His love for his own people was so strong that, when he became his own master he left the palace and went to live among the Israelites. He was anxious to help them, and he tried to do it in a wrong way, as we shall learn. But all the time he was preparing for his great life work.

**God's Schools Are Everywhere.** God's schools are everywhere. He will not forget those committed to His care, and there is no seeming ill to ourselves or those dear to us that he may not use for education in that which is highest and noblest.—J. E. Miller.

No circumstances are so unpromising, no surroundings so rough or difficult that through them God cannot teach wonderful lessons to the souls He is training.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why was Moses hidden in the river? 2. What cruel king ordered all baby boys killed, and why? 3. What were the names of Moses' parents and of what tribe were they? 4. Who named the babe Moses, and why? 5. Give the names of Moses' brother and sister? 6. This babe in a basket makes you think of what babe in a manger? 7. What other king ordered all baby boys killed, and where?

**Challenge Text.** "By faith Moses, when he was come to —, refused to be called the — of Pharaoh's daughter." Heb. 11: (9)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God watches, cares for and loves even the babies. 2. A little girl may be an important link in the chain of God's providences. 3. No teacher is equal to a good mother for a child. 4. God has many ways of saving those He purposes to protect. 5. "Little did that princess think that she was on an errand for the Almighty that day." 6. When all is dark and uncertain then is the greater reason for prayer. 7. A difficult thing is more easily accomplished if God is active in it.

DR. J. M. COCKE.

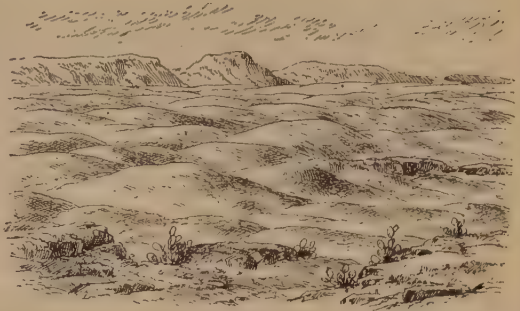


# THE CALL OF MOSES

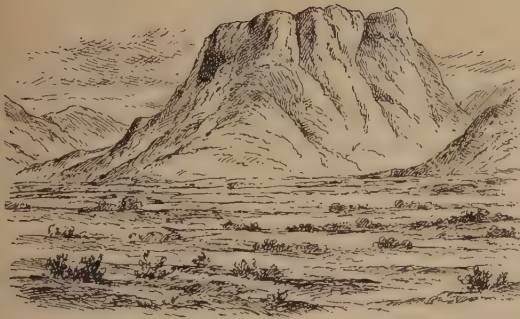
Now Moses kept the



of Jethro  
his father  
in law, the  
priest of  
Midian:  
and he led  
the flock  
to the  
backside  
of the



and came to the



of God,  
even to  
Horeb.  
And the  
angel of  
the Lord  
appeared  
unto him  
in a flame



and he looked, and, behold,  
the bush burned with fire, and  
the bush was not consumed.

And Moses said, I will now  
turn aside, and see this great  
sight, why the



is not burnt. And when the Lord  
saw that he turned aside to see,  
God called unto him out of the  
midst of the bush, and said,  
Moses, Moses. And he said, Here  
am I. And he said, Draw not  
nigh hither: put off thy

from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is  
holy ground.

Moreover  
he said, I  
am the God  
of thy  
father, the  
God of  
Abraham,  
the God of  
Isaac, and  
the God of  
Jacob. And



for he was afraid to look upon God.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 3.

**Prayer:** O Lord Jesus, Make us quick to hear Thy call to service. May we believe that Thy call means also Thy grace and strength. May we remember all who are in need, or in sin, commending them to Thy care and love. May we be ready to work with Thee, and for Thee, for the betterment of all. When Thou callest, may we say: Here am I. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Where are my great men coming from—  
The men to rule the state—  
When, this old century left behind,  
We've passed the twentieth gate?  
My brave, broad-hearted citizens—  
The strong, the good, the true—  
You're drifting now—rouse up, my boys;  
They all must come from you.  
Don't let past glories be forgot,  
Or patriotism die;  
Let every boy upon my roll  
Shout: "Ready; here am I!" —Selected.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1492. Place, the Horeb range of mountains in Midian. Persons, Moses and the Angel of God, Who is Jesus Christ.

**Scripture Setting:** God calling His Workers. Abraham called, Gen. 12:1-9. Joshua called, Num. 27:12-23. David called, 1 Sam. 16:1-13. Samuel called, 1 Sam. 3:1-10. Elisha called, 1 Ki. 19:1-26. Paul called, Acts 9:1-18. God gives power, Isa. 63:1-19. Wait on the Lord, Ps. 27:1-14. God's thought of His people, Ps. 77:1-20. The presence of God, Ex. 33:7-23.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** We see, in this call of Moses, how God finds and equips His workers. The equipment is of many kinds. 1. A training in per-

sonal character—made faithful, humble, religious, God-fearing. 2. A training by remarkable visions and experiences—the transfiguration times of life. 3. A training by direct Divine call—the still, small voice to heart and conscience. 4. A training by the revealed purpose of God—through His manifest and beckoning providences. 5. A training by the presence of an immediate duty—call and challenge to do one's best. 6. A training by the fact of the Divine presence and help—overcoming one's weakness and fear. 7. A training by a new view of God—the great "I Am," mightier than the mightiest of earth.

### GOD FINDING AND TRAINING A LEADER.

God is doing many wonderful things in the world. Sometimes He acts by His Spirit, or by an angel. But almost always He uses some person. The Bible tells us how God used even boys and girls to do some needed service for Him. Really, He wants all to be His friends and workers. Is it not a great honor that we are asked to work with Him and for Him? We should listen carefully to learn if He has called us to do any work. Sometimes He just whispers in the heart. Now we can learn how He called Moses.

**Breaking From the Royal Family.** Moses had grown up in the palace, and had everything he desired. He was taught, also, in all the learning of the Egyptians. That meant a great deal, for Egypt was famous for its scholars and schools. The princess, who had taken Moses as her own boy, told the wise men to teach him. He was quick and willing, and he learned a great many things. But he was not altogether satisfied. By his early training, in his real mother's home, he knew about the true God, and that the Israelites were God's chosen people. When he saw how those poor people were afflicted he said to himself, "I ought to help them, and I will help them." That was a good resolution to make, and he meant that he chose to go with his own people. Moses was about forty years old now. He was very anxious to help his people in some way. One day he saw one of those cruel task-

masters beating an Israelite. He looked to see that no one was watching, and then he killed the taskmaster. He hid the body in the sand. But Pharaoh learned about it, and said that he would kill Moses for that. So Moses had to run away to another country. Moses really wanted to help his people, but he did not go about it in the right way. It is important that we do right things, and also that we do them in a right way. And it is just impossible to do wicked acts without being found out. And even if Moses had hidden the sin from Pharaoh, he could not hide it from God, nor even from his own conscience.

**A Right Way to Work for God.** J. Wilbur Chapman tells us that one Monday morning he was sad and out of heart; it seemed as if his work was a failure. He took a newspaper in which an address said that everything in life depended upon whether a man worked for God or whether he let God work through him. "I saw," says he, "in a minute that I had been working for God until I had worn the very flesh off my bones and was worried to death. And I knelt down and said, 'My God, I will no longer work for Thee; but here is my manhood—pour Thyself through me to men.' That altered my life."

**A College in the Desert.** Moses fled to the land of Midian, in Arabia. Midian was a son of Abraham, so that Moses was still among his own kindred. His first act then was to help others, and this time he did the right thing in a right way. While waiting by a well some girls came to water their



father's sheep. Some rough men came and tried to drive the girls away. Moses took the girls' part and then helped them to water the sheep. The father of these girls was named Jethro, and he was a priest. He asked Moses to live with him and help him with his flocks. He also gave Moses one of his daughters as his wife. It was a great change for Moses, from the royal palace to a desert place. But God made it a great school for him. He learned many things here which he could not learn in the busy royal city. Among his teachers here were God Himself, and nature, and his own conscience, and the memory of the things his mother had told him. He learned to know himself, and how weak and sinful he was. Instead of being quick-tempered, he became the meekest of men. He became humble and grew to trust God more and more. And all the time he was doing good work for his father-in-law. In this school he learned to be industrious and faithful. These flocks in the picture and the bleak desert you see were part of the school where Moses was trained. But the best of all was that God was teaching him and God knew what he needed; and Moses was willing to be led.

**My Father Knows the Way.** A blind boy stood on the corner of a city street. "Shall I help you across, my little friend?" a gentleman asked. "Oh, no, thank you; I am waiting for my father." "Can you trust your father?" "Oh, yes; when he has my hand I feel perfectly safe." "Why do you feel safe?" "Oh, because my father knows the way. He can see, but I am blind."

**A New Lesson By a Strange Teacher.** God had other things for Moses to learn and to do. So one day he appeared to him in a strange way, and told him these things. It had been about two hundred years since God had spoken to any man. Moses had been in this desert school for forty years. I think he must have wondered, again and again, how his poor people were faring. Perhaps he had heard that one Pharaoh had died and that another was ruling. Some One else, too, was thinking of those afflicted people and planning to help them. You can easily guess who it was. God always hears the cry of the afflicted. When He was ready, and when Moses was made ready, God came to call him for his special work. That high mountain is near where Moses was with the flocks one day. He was alone, and he saw

a bush burning in a strong flame, and yet it did not burn up. There were many such bushes there, but only this one was burning. He was curious to learn why, and was just going up to see when God called him: "Moses, Moses." He answered: "Here am I." Then God told him about His plan to deliver the Israelites from Pharaoh. But first He said to him, "Do not come near, but take off your shoes; for this is holy ground." This was to teach him reverence in the presence of God.

Then God told Moses that he was the one to go to Pharaoh and ask him to let the Israelites go free. This was a surprising thing to Moses, for he did not know that God had been training him for this very work. It was natural for Moses to shrink from such a task; and if he had really refused it would have been sinful. But God meets all his objections. And in the next story we will tell something of how He persuades Moses. Moses feels his littleness, but sees God's greatness and power.

**The Secret of Power.** A person was told of a Christian woman who had great power and influence. She said at once: "I must go and see that woman and learn the secret of her strong and useful life." She went to her, and said: "Are you a woman of great faith?" "No," was the reply; "I am a woman of little faith in a great God. I try to see the hand of God in the present, and trust Him for the future." This was the secret of her great peace and power and influence.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What great king was a shepherd (1 Sam. 16)? 2. What greater king (John 10) likened Himself to a shepherd? 3. Tell about the last time God talked with man before this (Gen. 46:2). 4. How did Christ use a boy once to feed a multitude? 5. How did God use a girl to cure a king of leprosy? 6. How does the Holy Spirit speak to man? 7. What other instances can you give of God appearing in or by fire? 8. Tell how the boy Samuel was called in the temple (1 Sam. 3).

**Challenge Text.** "I am the ———; My ———, hear My voice and come unto Me." John 10:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. "Here am I," is the greatest gift one can make to God. 2. God is hearing the cry of nations, and is coming to deliver them from sin and Satan. 3. God's delays are usually because His people are not ready. 4. God reveals Himself to those who are industrious and faithful. 5. Retirement and meditation develop the strong and wise leader. 6. Calvary is pre-eminently the "burning bush" of God's providence and grace. 7. True greatness is often accompanied with humility and distrust of self. 8. To have God on our side is of more value than all the learning of Egypt, or of the world.

Dr. J. M. COON.

## MOSES AND AARON

And



And the Lord said unto him, What is that in thine hand? And he said, A rod.  
And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he

answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee.



and it  
became



and



from  
before  
it.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And he put forth his hand, and



and it  
became



That they may believe that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath appeared unto thee.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 4:1-9, 27-31.

**Prayer:** O Lord Jesus, Help us to see Thee as the great "I Am"—ever living and ever present to help Thy people. May we therefore be assured to go forward in every path of duty. May Thy "Certainly I will be with thee," inspire us against all difficulties. May the cry of the afflicted and pitiful, in all the earth, be used by Thee to call us and fit us for service. For Christ's sake. Amen.

**A Cheering Word.**  
 "Is the work difficult?  
 Jesus directs thee.  
 Is the path dangerous?  
 Jesus protects thee.  
 Fear not and falter not;  
 Let this word cheer thee:  
 All through the coming year,  
 He will be near thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, the Horeb range of mountains. Persons, God, talking with Moses.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Wonderful Power. His wonderful works, Ps. 40:1-11. His wonderful redemption, Luke 1:67-79. He promises wisdom, Prov. 2:1-8. He makes us fruitful, 2 Pet. 1:1-8. He stills life's storms, Ps. 107:23-31. His guiding hand, Luke 12:1-7. He transforms character, 2 Cor. 3:10-18. His wonderful grace and glory, John 1:1-18. He gives courage for work, Ps. 144:1-15. He gives grace and power, 1 Cor. 15:1-10. His wonderful eye and hand, Ps. 139:1-12. His wonderful Heaven, Rev. 5:6-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This is a striking pic-

ture of the wonderful way God is in His world, working out His purposes. In this sending of Moses, we note: 1. His wonderful long suffering, both in sparing the Egyptians and training the Israelites. 2. His wonderful mercy, prompting His people to cry unto Him. 3. His wonderful love in hearing them cry unto Him and planning their deliverance. 4. His wonderful foresight, preparing a capable leader. 5. His wonderful signs, by which He calls and encourages Moses. 6. His wonderful patience and tact in graciously reasoning and arguing with Moses. 7. His wonderful wisdom in joining Moses and Aaron in the work, and infusing His spirit and zeal into them both.

### GOD'S WONDERFUL POWER.

Moses had learned many things. In the Egyptian schools he had studied a great many general branches; and in the desert life he studied about God and himself and his duty to those who suffered.

**Two Wonderful Tests.** But Moses needed to know more about God before he could start in his work. He was afraid the Israelites would not believe him, and would not believe that God had sent him; and he told God this. So God said to him: "What is that in your hand?" Moses answers: "The rod with which I guide the sheep." God said, "Throw it on the ground." Moses did so, and it became a serpent. He fled from it, but God said to him, "Take it by the tail." He did so and it became a rod again. Then God said to him, "Put your hand in your bosom, and take it out again." Moses did so, and lo! it was white and scaly like the hand of a leper. Moses was in great terror, for leprosy was a disease dreaded by all. But God said, "Put your hand into your bosom once more." He did so, and his hand was restored like the other. God told Moses to use the rod and serpent sign, and if that did not satisfy them to use the sign of the changed hand. If they do not believe these two signs, then take water from the river and it shall become blood. The rod and serpent sign is fully illustrated in the pictures. In these signs God was showing Moses that He was to be ever with him and to help him.

**God's Eye and Hand.** Watch the eyes of an oil painting and see how they follow you to any part

of the room. No matter how many persons there are in the room, the eye of the portrait is looking directly at each of them. So the eye of God sees everyone in all the world. The eye of the painting only seems to follow you, but the eye of God really sees you; and then, too, God is ready with His hand to guide and help those who are trying to do His will. He says to such: "Certainly I will be with thee."

**A Wonderful Promise.** Still Moses hesitated. Now he objected because he said he could not speak well enough. But God replied, "Did I not make the mouth? Go, and I will teach you what to say." This was in itself a great promise. Moses pleaded once more to be excused from so great a task, and asked the Lord to choose some other man. The Lord said, "You have a brother, Aaron, who can speak well; let him help by doing the talking and you show the signs." And thus you see God furnishes Moses with another mouth so that the message might be delivered.

Moses could not object any longer, but he yielded to God's call. All this was while he was near the bush that burned. It can be seen on fire in the pictures. When the Lord was done talking with him, Moses went from Mount Sinai with his flocks. He got permission from Jethro to go and see his people, and taking his wife and sons, he started for Egypt. On the way he met his brother coming to see him. This was as the Lord had promised. They talked about the matter and each agreed to do his part. After this Moses' wife and sons returned to live with her father, and Moses and Aaron went

forward in faith, confident that God would do as He promised. They knew, too, that with God's help, they would succeed.

**One with God Is a Majority.** "Some years ago, in Scotland, a Scotch lord gave to his old servant Donald a little farm. He called him in one day, and said: "Donald, I am going to give you that farm, that you may work it for yourself and spend the rest of your days there upon your own property." Donald, with all the caninness that characterizes the typical Scotchman, looked up into the face of his master, and said to him: "It's nae gude to gie me the farm; I have nae capital to stock it." His lordship looked at him, and said: "Oh, Donald, I think I can manage to stock it also." And Donald said: "Oh, well, if it is you and me for it, I think we will manage."

**A Wonderful Partnership.** This is nothing less than God joining with man for the accomplishment of a certain work. The wonder is both, in that God condescends to come into such a relation and that Moses can be made fit for such a partnership. But God plans the means as well as the end; and so Moses is gradually prepared for this high honor and this great work. No man ever had greater trials and none profited more by them. He was ambitious to do the very work which he finally did, but it was after God's wonderful training. His backwardness afterwards to undertake his mission was no less remarkable than his previous forwardness. The years of the life of Moses are, curiously, divided into three forties—the first forty he spent as a prince in Pharaoh's court; the second as a shepherd in Midian; the third as a lawgiver in Israel. How changeable is the life of men, especially that of growing, good men! Moses had finished his second forty when he received his commission to bring Israel out of Egypt. Sometimes it is long before God calls His servants out to that work which of old He designed them for, and has been graciously preparing them for. Moses was born to be Israel's deliverer, and yet he did not receive his commission until he was eighty years of age. But then he moved steadily forward in the plan and strength of God, feeling as Paul said later, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

**The School of Obscurity.** Don't be afraid of obscurity. God likes obscure people. He very often drags them out of obscurity into the light of day. Don't be alarmed. No good man can be buried alive. He will shine in his own chosen center, however small that may be. When man is most alone, God is with him. Out by Horeb, Moses was honored with this vision. It was while out on the plains, keeping their flocks, that the shepherds received tidings of the birth of Jesus. Moses saw more of God in the desert than ever he had seen in Pharaoh's court.

**Wonderful Mercy.** This story is all wonderful. Beginning with the wonderful name, we close it with the wonderful way Moses and Aaron were received by the Israelites. They were two men, known to only a few of the people, and coming on a great errand; but the people are ready to hear and obey. It is all the more wonderful for one of the men had fled from Egypt because he had killed a man. True there was a new king on the throne, but, no doubt, Moses was troubled in spirit, though God had told him that the people who sought his life were dead. And I wonder if God had not told the Israelites to welcome this message of deliverance? Only so can we understand it all. God was working with the Israelites even while He was persuading Moses. He can work as He pleases among men and people and kings. Some will submit and help on His plans. Some will oppose Him, as Pharaoh did, but even they are overruled to work out His own purposes. We who wish to work with and for God should be anxious only to know His will, His way and His time for doing things.

**The Clock of God.** His time is like the time of the tide: All the art and power of man can neither hasten nor retard its moment; it must be waited for; nothing can be done without it, and when it comes nothing can resist it. The only reason why the Lord seems to delay what He afterwards grants is that the best hour is not yet come.—John Newton.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What did God mean by saying that His name was "I Am"? 2. What other names are given to God in the Bible? 3. What great work does God call the Christian Church to do today? 4. What was the last great command of Christ, beginning "Go ye"—? 5. What great event afterwards happened on this Mt. Sinai? 6. Which one of God's names means "God with us"? 7. Who said, "Lord, what will Thou have me to do," and where was he? 8. Name six great persons who have lived in the world up to Moses' time.

**Challenge Text.** "I will give you a ——— and ——— which all your adversaries shall not be able to ———." Luke 21:19

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The person who feels his unfitness is often the most worthy. 2. God sees below the surface, and so chooses a Jacob, a Moses, a David, a Peter, a Saul. 3. What one is, counts more with God than what he does or is doing. 4. A great task is often God's way of challenging man to be and do his best. 5. The ideals and visions we have are really a gift and a work that is peculiarly our own. 7. Man's business is to obey; God is pledged to make the obedience work out His purpose. 8. "Lo! I am with you alway," is to inspire us to obey God's "Go ye into all the world and preach My Gospel." 9. The more we obey, the more God reveals His power and His glory. 10. The power of associated toil (Moses and Aaron)—"One can chase a thousand, but two can put ten thousand to flight." 11. God uses that which each one has—the rod of Moses, the sling of David, the needle of Dorcas, the lunch of the small boy, the tongue of Aaron.



# MOSES AND THE MAGICIANS

And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded: and Aaron



before  
Pharaoh,  
and  
before his  
servants,  
and it  
became



Then Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man



and  
they  
became



but  
Aaron's  
rod



And he  
hardened  
Pharaoh's  
heart, that,  
he hearkened  
not unto  
them; as the  
Lord had said.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 7:8-22.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we not be deceived by the spirits of evil that seem to be true and speak truth. May we try all things by the Divine tests, and, above all, be true to Thy word. May we be kept from self-delusions, false motives and aims, and from the cunning wiles of the devil. Vindicate Thyself through us. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"In God's own might  
We gird us for the coming fight,  
And, strong in Him whose cause is ours  
In conflict with unholy powers,  
We grasp the weapons He has given—  
The Light, and Truth and Love of Heaven."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, Heliopolis, one of the capitals of Egypt. Persons, Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh, magicians.

**Scripture Setting:** **Battle Between the False and the True.** False and true foundations, Matt. 7:21-29. False and true guides, 1 John 4:1-6. False and true trust, Eph. 2:8-22. False and true entrances, John 10:1-9. False and true hearing, Matt. 13:3-23. False and true relations to Christ, John 15:1-11. False and true material, 1 Cor. 3:1-15. False and true gods, Deut. 13:1-11. False and true self, Rom. 7:5-25. False and true Christs, Acts 14:11-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is an acted parable of the eternal conflict between the false and the true, the right and the wrong. The devil is cunning and wages the war to the utmost limit. But God and truth are positive and unyielding. They will not enter into any alliance or compromise. The war is inevitable, and to a finish. Some modern ways in which the battle is waged: 1. As to earthly and temporal things. The devil says they are mine; God says they are mine. 2. As to the Bible. The devil says it is one of many bibles;

God says it is the only Bible. 3. As to Jesus Christ. The devil says He is a good man, who died for His convictions; God says He is God, Who died for the sin of man. 4. As to salvation. The devil says it is a good thing tomorrow; God says the only time is today—now. 5. As to prayer. The devil says it is only a good spiritual exercise; God says it moves the Arm which moves the world. 6. As to giving the Gospel to the world. The devil says God will see to that in His own good time; God says "Go ye" and do it in this generation. 7. As to personal duty to others. The devil says, "You have all you can really do well"; God says, "You are your brother's keeper". 8. As to the new birth. The devil says, "Be good and do good"; God says, "Ye must be born again". 9. As to religions. The devil says Christianity is one of many religions; God says it is the one only true religion. Thus the devil admits just as much truth as he dare, and yet leave one in real error as to the vital things. The fact is when a thing is essentially false and wrong, the more good it has the worse it is. It is vital that we get on the God side of all questions.

### A BATTLE BETWEEN THE FALSE AND THE TRUE.

**A Foolish and Angry King.** You remember Moses and Aaron were to see the Israelites and tell them what God had commanded. They did so, and were surprised to find the people so ready to believe them. Moses especially had said that his people would not hear him. But God had gone before and made them ready. We can almost hear some of them say, "Why this is just what we have hoped and prayed for." They not only believed, but they bowed and worshiped, showing that they were thankful. The two men were greatly encouraged, and so they went to see Pharaoh. Aaron did the talking, and said, "The Lord God of Israel says to you to let My people go that they may serve Me." Pharaoh thought that their God was like the gods of the Egyptians, as animals, serpents, or the river. He was very angry and defiant, and said, "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" He also said, "You are idle, and are keeping the people from their work." That showed how selfish he was. He wanted to get as much out of them as possible. He was like some people living now, who plan only for the things of this life, and never plan for God and His worship. Only he was even worse, for he cruelly ordered the Israelites to find for themselves

the straw used in making the brick. This took much time, and yet the taskmasters required them to make as many brick as before. The Israelites complained to Moses, and he asked God what to do. Moses himself was in great distress. They were all too hasty in judging and forgot God's promise and power. But Moses did just the right thing. He went to God and told him all about it.

**Look Up, But Don't Give Up.** It is easy to give up. It is more and more difficult, as the days come and go, to hold on. Such a soul can find consolation and refreshment nowhere else but in God. The royal singer points out the way of deliverance when he cries out: Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. Verily, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, is the refuge of His children.—Epworth Herald.

**The Rod and Serpent Sign.** Then God told Moses and Aaron to go to Pharaoh with their rod, and do as He had commanded. They did so, and when they threw the rod down before Pharaoh it became a serpent. Pharaoh said, "My wise men can do that." He called them, and it looked as if their rods became serpents. Either the old serpent, Satan, gave them power to do this, or



they did it by a trick of magic. In the pictures the rods all seem to turn into serpents. The magicians are glad, and so is the king; but Moses is not troubled, for he knows that something else is going to happen. This is shown in the last picture, and was very wonderful. Aaron's rod as a serpent actually swallowed up all the other rods! This ought to have proved to the king that the God of the Israelites was the greater God. But he would not believe it. The serpent was turned into a rod again, and Moses and Aaron went away. Pharaoh was proud, as well as wicked, and he set himself to oppose Moses and Aaron. He may not have known fully that he was opposing God, but he was. The more he opposed them, the harder his heart became. All sin works that way, until at last the heart is entirely hard, and cares not for anything or anybody. That is a terrible state for one to be in. It is called also a seared conscience, for the conscience then quits whispering to one what to do, or what not to do. Conscience means "God within," and it is the guide He has put in each person, to help him do right. It is a sad day for anyone when he loses conscience and gets a hard heart, as Pharaoh had.

**Who Hardens the Heart?** See how Pharaoh hardened his own heart more and more; he would not obey the Lord, and the Lord let him do as he pleased. Like the blows given to a piece of iron which harden it, so each blow of judgment which struck Pharaoh hardened him the more. So, also, if you heat a piece of iron, when it grows cold, it is harder than ever; Pharaoh's heart was heated, almost melted, over and over, then grew colder and harder than ever.

The same sun has a different effect on different things; it will melt wax, and harden clay, and so the very lesson from the word of God which melts some hearts only hardens others.—Mrs. M. G. Kennedy.

**Nine Dreadful Plagues.** Pharaoh used to go down to the river Nile and bathe. He also worshiped that river as one of his gods. God told Moses what to do next. He had hardly begun yet; and plague after plague was to come, each one worse than the last. So Moses and Aaron met Pharaoh at the river and Aaron struck the waters with the rod, and at once they turned to blood. This lasted for seven days, and there was much suffering. All the fish died, and there was a foul smell everywhere. Only in the land of Goshen the water was pure. God was careful to protect His people. After this plague Moses warned Pharaoh that another was coming if he did not let the people go. Pharaoh steadfastly refused, and so plague

followed plague, nine in all. You can read about them in the Bible. Here is the black list: (2) Plague of frogs, Ex. 8:1-15; (3) of lice, vs. 16-18; (4) of flies, vs. 20-32; (5) of murrain, ch. 9:1-7; (6) of boils, vs. 8-12; (7) of hail, vs. 22-25; (8) of locusts, ch. 10:3-6; (9) of darkness, vs. 21-23. Is not this a fearful picture of misery? It was just like the great whip of God smiting the king and his people for their wickedness. Again and again Pharaoh pretended to repent, and Moses prayed for the plague to cease. Each time he was more hardened in heart. At last he said to Moses, "Get out of my sight," and Moses replied, "Be it as you say. I will see your face no more." Moses knew of the most terrible plague of all to come, the tenth and last. Of that we learn in the next story.

**Are You Like Pharaoh?** I am sure some of you have been thinking, "What a wicked man Pharaoh was to refuse to obey God so many times!" Yes, he was very wicked, and every time he refused to obey he grew more wicked. When do you think it is best to obey God? The very first time He speaks. How much trouble this would save!

Who will try this week to obey mamma the very first time she speaks? If you want to do something naughty, and God's voice whispers in your heart, "Don't do that, Charlie," how soon will you obey? Right away, I hope; the very first time.—Miss J. B. Merrill.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What is a miracle? 2. What miracle did Christ work at a wedding? 3. What other miracles did Christ perform? 4. What other miracles did Moses work by this rod? 5. Was it the rod, or Moses, or God, that really worked the miracle? 6. Name as many of the ten plagues as you can. 7. The Egyptians worshipped things; do you know any way we may worship things, rather than God? 8. What did Pharaoh mean when he said to Moses, "I have sinned." 9. How is one really sorry for sin?

**Challenge Text.** "For there shall arise false —, and false —, and shall show great signs and —; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the —." Matt. 24: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The shifts, excuses, and lies of unbelief. 2. Christianity is a religion of peace, but it has many terrible battles to secure it. 3. These magicians have many modern successors—now scientists, now historians, now a school of philosophy, now the blatant infidels, now the religious Pharisees. 4. The devil is never scrupulous as to the means he uses to secure his end. 5. When the human and Divine conflict the only safe course is to choose the Divine. 6. The supernatural is the key to ultimate victory in religious things; and God wins there. 7. The devil is a master in hypocrisy, deceit and jugglery. 8. God's promise is the one weapon by which we defeat the devil. 9. As Moses was victor over these emissaries of Satan, so Jesus Christ was victor over Satan himself. 10. God vindicates His worker, and rebukes and silences His opponents. 11. God equips His people with His energetic and victorious truth, and inspires them to battle against all error.

Dr. J. M. Coon.

# THE PASSOVER

Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your



shall be without blemish, a male of the first year; ye shall take it out from the



And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall



in the evening And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side



of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night,



and with bitter

and unleavened



they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.



# THE PASSOVER.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EXODUS 12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we see Thee to be our Redeemer and Saviour, protecting us from death and the grave. Thou hast died in order that all may be sheltered by the blood. May soul and life have the saving marks on them. Prompt us to a careful obedience to all Thy commands that we may enter into all the promised blessings. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"In the beauty of the lilies  
Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in his bosom  
That transfigured you and me.  
As He died to make men holy,  
Let us die to make men free,  
For God is marching on."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, The land of Goshen. Persons, Moses, Elders of Israel, Pharaoh.

**Scripture Setting:** The Lamb of God. Ezra's passover, Ezra 6:16-22. Josiah's passover, 2 Chron. 35:1-19. Christ our passover, 1 Cor. 5:1-8. The last passover, Matt. 26:17-30. The lamb of God, John 1:29-37. Redeemed by blood, 1 Pet. 1:13-21. "Till He come," 1 Cor. 11:23-34. The throne and the Lamb, Rev. 5:6-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The parallelism between the passover and Christ's sacrificial death is marked and striking in many ways. 1. The passover was altogether a revelation from God to and through Moses; so Jesus Christ is the "Lamb of

God," revealed in due time. 2. The passover is emphatically a protection by the blood. So Jesus Christ saves by His blood. 3. The passover represented the power of God both in smiting the Egyptians and in saving the Israelites; so Jesus Christ is the power of God against Satan and for the believer. 4. The passover benefits came only to those who carefully obeyed the Divine instructions; so Christ comes only to those who accept Him personally by a heart faith. 5. The passover was to be observed perpetually, and was the greatest of all Jewish feasts; so Christ is honored and remembered in the Lord's supper which is a memorial "till He come."

## A PARABLE PICTURE OF SALVATION BY CHRIST.

**A Selected and Slain Lamb.** Did you go to the funeral of that little girl in the house near you? It was specially sad because she was the oldest of the three children. She died one night very suddenly and all were greatly surprised. But if the oldest child, in nearly every home in the whole city had died in one night, the surprise would have been greater; and still greater if in the whole country. This is what happened in the land of Egypt long, long ago. It was the last plague punishment against king Pharaoh because he would not let the children of Israel go free. The first born of all cattle died also at the same time. The homes of the Israelites escaped and it was in a very strange way. By Moses the Lord told them to select a lamb or a kid and kill it, and mark the two side posts of the door, and the casing above, with the blood. This lamb was to be a perfect one, and carefully kept till the time appointed; and the whole assembly of the people were to be represented in the killing of it, to show that the lamb was in their place. All this was as God commanded Moses, and it was a picture of Jesus Christ, who is the Lamb of God, and who was to come and die in the place of sinful men. In this way it was possible for all to be saved from eternal death. The first three pictures show the lamb chosen and slain, and the marking of the door posts.

**The Power of Sin.** Sin is like a rising tide. Think of some men amusing themselves on an island which is flooded at high tide. In their play they do not notice that the water is already encircling them, that the island is growing smaller and smaller,

and that in a short time they will be submerged. Thus sin creeps around a man and rises until it submerges him; and then his only hope is in one who will come and save him. Christ lifts us out of our sins. No man is saved who still wallows in evil. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus," said the angel, "because He shall save His people out of their sins."—R. P. Anderson.

**Getting Ready For a Long Journey.** After the animal was slain, and the blood sprinkled, the body was roasted for the family to eat. The whole family, in each case, were to be gathered in their own home. This was the last meal they were to eat in Egypt. They were to eat it hurriedly, and to eat it standing, after they were all dressed to start on a journey. As Abraham was called out to go to a land that would be shown him, so the Israelites were to go as God directed Moses. At this meal they were to eat only unleaven bread, which showed that it was made in haste, before the yeast had time to work in the dough. It was also to be eaten with bitter herbs. This meant that the meal should be taken in solemn earnestness. No one was to go out of his house that night lest he should be destroyed by the death angel. All these instructions were carefully given, and it was very important that they be heeded. They were deserving of careful obedience, for all was Divinely revealed for their safety.

**Jesus Christ a Wonderful Saviour.** He is marvelous, wonderful; He is in Himself a miracle. The miracles He wrought are nothing to the miracle He was if at that era and in that condition of the world He invented Christianity. Whately says, "To disbelieve is to believe." I can not be so credulous

as to believe that any mere man invented Christianity. Until you show me some loving heart that has felt more profoundly, some strong brain that even with the aid of His example has thought further, and added something important to religion, I must still use my common sense and say, no man did all this.—Wendell Phillips.

**A Great Cry in the Night.** While the children of Israel were obeying the commands of Moses, the Egyptians were living as usual. They seemed to have no thought of danger, though warned by Moses. They went to bed as on other nights. Suddenly an agonizing cry is heard, "My boy is dead!" Then another and another, until all the air was filled with the dreadful cry in the night. The doors were bolted, and the windows barred and fastened; but the angel of death could not be kept out. Even the son of Pharaoh was killed, as well as the first born of other families. The cattle, too, were lying dead on all sides. There never was such a time of distress in that land or any other. There was not a house anywhere where there was not the death of the firstborn. The whole land was like one great funeral occasion. It all teaches that, while salvation is possible by the blood of Christ, there is no other way of being saved.

**"Are You Sure?"** There is a legend that on the night of the exodus a young Jewish maiden, the firstborn of the family, was so troubled on her sick bed that she could not sleep. "Father," she said, "are you sure the blood is on the door-post?" He replied that he had ordered it done. But she was not satisfied till she was carried out to look for herself; when, lo! the blood was not there. Immediately it was placed there, and she was safe and at rest.—Foster's Encyclopedia.

**The Blood Sign That Saves.** That picture of the death of children and animals was everywhere in Egypt, except in one part. The last picture shows the angel of death with his dreadful sword in hand, passing over certain homes. It is those which had the three blood marks. The people within those homes were safe, sheltered, and protected by the blood. The lamb represented Christ, whose blood saves man from the

wrath of God. The passover lamb was slain for the people; so Jesus Christ died for all. Those who take shelter behind His blood shall be saved. When a holy God comes to judge the world, the sinner will be safe if he has taken Christ as his Savior, and has the blood mark on his heart. This sign of the blood was very prominent in all the religious service of the Israelites, as we shall see. It was the blood of the lamb that made Abel's sacrifice acceptable to God. It was the blood of the lamb that took the place of the blood of Isaac, when Abraham was about to kill him. Thus this passover lamb speaks of Christ as the great passover. Because we are sheltered by His blood the death angel passes over us, and we are given eternal life. The Israelites were told to celebrate this great event by a passover feast once a year for all time.

**How Christ Saves.** Christ saves us from sin, which is separation from God, by bringing us into union with God through His death on the cross. No one can enter into an understanding of that event, which so wonderfully showed the love of God for men, without entering into the spirit of the at-one-ment, the atonement. On Calvary we see Christ dying for the sins of His creatures. "This is God's love for men," says the cross. "This is God's attitude of forgiveness toward sin." What can any thoughtful, loving soul do but accept it with tears of rejoicing and with everlasting gratitude?—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what two ways specially is Christ like a lamb? 2. Who said, "Behold the Lamb of God," and when? 3. Why is this feast called the "passover"? 4. Why was not the blood sprinkled on the door step? Heb. 10:29.

**Challenge Text.** "For even Christ our \_\_\_\_\_ is sacrificed \_\_\_\_\_" 1 Cor. 5: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. We are saved through faith and obedience, but by the blood. 2. God's mercies and blessings should be gratefully remembered. 3. Deliverance from peril is for a Divine purpose and challenges to service. 4. The mark of the blood means the salvation of the soul; its absence means the soul's death. 5. Salvation being by the blood of Christ it is abiding and abundant. 6. The believer is a soul winner in proportion as he possesses the sacrificial spirit. 7. Man cannot save anyone, but he can bring to Christ, "who is able" to save to the uttermost.

DR. J. M. COON.





## JOHN MARTIN. 1789-1854.

In the years from 1789 to 1828, there was, in England, at the very height of his power, a great Northumbrian, who, though he is unknown as a painter, yet influenced tremendously the world of art. This was Thomas Bewick, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, famed alike as a naturalist and limner and above all as a wood engraver. Thomas Bewick, in point of fact, is recognized among artists as the father of modern wood engraving.

At Haydon Bridge, near Hexham, twenty miles from Newcastle, and upon Tyneside, a lad was growing: John Martin. The boy was much attracted by the little woodcut head and tail pieces to his books, which portrayed with truth of observation and a grim humor, familiar things in the country life of North England. These, together with his drawings of British birds, were beginning to make Bewick famous. Martin fell to copying them, and, presently, inventing his own subjects. The sober Tynesiders of Haydon Bridge looked in wonder upon the lad's ability in picturing the drunken carter asleep beneath a hedge; the village toper in maudlin dignity before a group of boyish tormentors; the local squire and master of the hunt, in scarlet coat and top boots, upon his favorite weight carrier, sailing gallantly over a stiffish "bullfinch," as a stubborn and high hedge is known in the parlance of the hunting field. It was agreed that such a talent should be trained. Accordingly, the lad was prenticed to a herald painter in Newcastle.

The business of his master was the painting of coats of arms upon the panels of carriages, and occasionally a tavern sign, or a shop board for some worthy tradesman. Not infrequently the lad and his master went into the country, to some great house or old hall, there to achieve some proud blazon above a chimney piece, or on the wainscot of some family banquet hall; perchance beneath a portrait by Lely, or Kneller, or the famed Sir Joshua himself.

As might have been expected, the wonder of history grew in the lad, together with his love of country side and the greater aspects of nature.

Presently, changing his employer, he served for a time a china decorator, and from him learned much of dainty color, delicate manipulation; and, more important, the art of water color.

In 1806, he came to London. Here his accomplishment as a china painter and heraldic draughtsman stood him in good stead. By them he lived while he studied and painted his first picture for the Royal Academy, "Zadok in Search of the Waters of Oblivion," which was exhibited in 1812. In annual succession followed "Adam's First Sight of Eve," and "Clytie." In 1816, "Joshua Commanding the Sun to Stand Still" gained for him a premium of \$500 from the British Institute, and an appointment as historical landscape painter to the court.

About this time, Martin produced a series of designs for Paradise Lost, of great grandeur of conception and beauty of drawing. In 1819 was completed "The Fall of Babylon," and two years later appeared his best known work "Belshazzar's Feast." "The Destruction of Pompeii," painted in 1822, is in the National Gallery, London. Between 1823 and 1832 were produced "The Seventh Plague," "The Creation," the "Fall of Nineveh," "The Destruction of Pharaoh's Host," the "Death of Moses," "The Last Man," "The Eve of the Deluge," "The Celestial City," and "Pandemonium" (these two last being painted in 1841), and the "Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah." In the intervals of producing these monumental compositions, Martin had great delight in painting landscape in water colors, in the valley of the Thames. Some of the sweetest known interpretations of the Thames valley in the vicinity of London are from Martin's brush. He died in the Isle of Man in 1854.

JAMES BEALINGS.

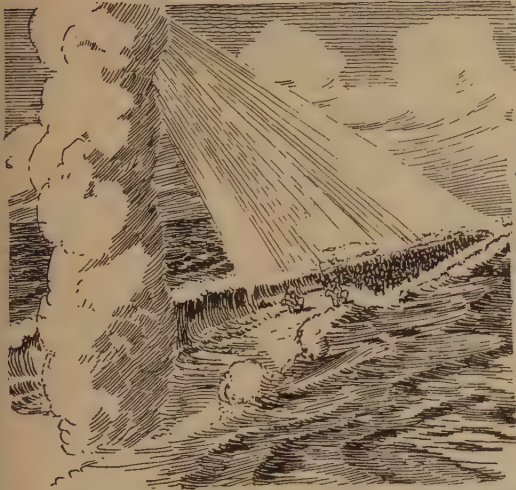


And  
the



to the midst  
of the sea,  
even all  
Pharaoh's  
horses, his  
chariots,  
and his  
horsemen.  
And it came  
to pass,

that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians

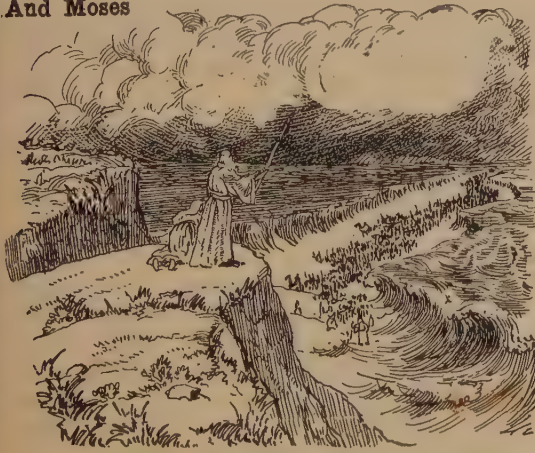


of fire  
and of  
the cloud,  
and  
troubled  
the host  
of the  
Egyptians.  
And

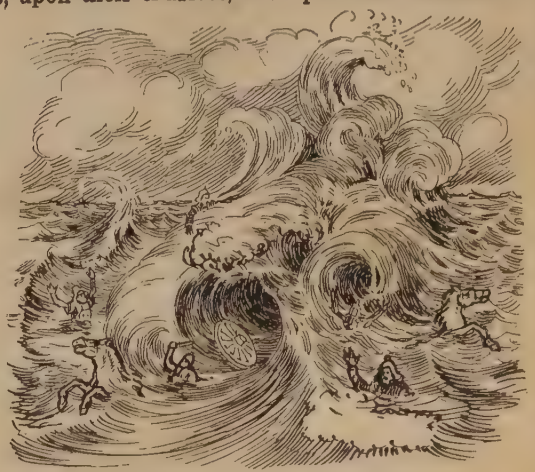


that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians. And the Lord said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

And Moses



and  
the



to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

EXOD. XIV: 23-27.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 14:13-31.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art a God who doest wonders. Thou leddest Israel through the Sea, and didst guide them like a flock in the wilderness. We, too, need Thy shepherding and protection. Go with us as the pillar of cloud and fire. Set all the stations of our journey. Thou hast power over men and things, and Thou controllest all for the good of Thy people. Help us to rejoice in the display of Thy grace and goodness. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Israel is saved! Stretch out the rod!"  
Moses obeys the voice of God;  
And wind and wave, with thund'ring roar,  
Convulse the sea from shore to shore;  
The water's mighty masses flow  
Back to their channel on the foe,  
With sudden, dreadful overthrow.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATION.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, northern end of the Red Sea. Persons, Moses, children of Israel, army of Pharaoh.

**Scripture Setting:** God Delivering His People. God never forgets, Deut. 4:31-40. He supplies all need, Phil. 4:10-19. His angel mercies, Ps. 34:1-16. A way through the river, Josh. 3:7-17. Using the rod of faith, Heb. 11:22-29. He prepares the way, Isa. 30:15-21. Song of praise, Exod. 15:1-21. The Psalmist's song, Ps. 105:23-28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This remarkable deliverance shows how God works both for and by His people. He is always the efficient and suffi-

cient force; but they are constantly the co-operating instruments. The following facts are especially noteworthy: 1. The faith of Moses, giving him perfect self-poise, and imparting itself to the people. 2. Prayer in the crisis necessary always—absolutely so here. 3. Obedience to Divine command; more a condition than a force, but it is vital as such. 4. Judgment upon the enemy; both smiting the enemy and inspiring God's people. 5. Direct revelation from God; helping the godly and hindering the ungodly. 6. The Divine character, which is favor and blessing to the righteous and a "consuming fire" to the wicked.

### HOW THE SEA OPENED AND CLOSED.

This is a wonderful story, one of the most wonderful in the Bible. It shows how easily God can control both men and things; and how He can save His people and destroy His enemies.

**A Marvelous Heavenly Guide.** What a crowd of people are in line there! If you should try to count them it would take a very long time. There were about as many as live in a big city like Chicago. These are the children of Israel, leaving Egypt for Canaan.

You remember that Pharaoh at last almost drove them out of his land. He was very angry when the angel of God killed the oldest child in every one of his homes. But how did all this large company get started right? Moses had told them many things and this helped some. But that would not have been enough. You know how hard it is to get even a few hundred people into line to march. At the Sunday school picnic, or parade, there is apt to be confusion, with the best of plans. Well, God helped His people, and in a very wondrous way. He lifted up a great signal like a cloud. Everyone could see it, and everyone was to follow it. Then when it came night the cloud was bright as if on fire, and so it both guided them and lighted the way. Thus they traveled for three days, going when the strange guide moved and stopping when it stopped. What are those large bundles the people are carrying? God told them that when they left the land they were to ask

the Egyptians to give them jewelry and other things. This was only right, for they had worked so long without pay at all. The Egyptians were so glad to have them go, that they freely gave them these things. All these things were needed too, in the long journey. It was thus easy for God to provide for His people. It was wonderful too. It is right to provide for the future ourselves in every right way that we can. But after that we can trust to God and we should not worry, and need not.

**The Lord Will Provide.** We are all prone to mistrust God, and to see great troubles rising up before us. Time after time have we come to the place, and either, like the women at Christ's tomb, found the trouble removed or have found that God has given us grace to overcome it. One trouble is scarcely passed until we are looking into the future for new ones, forgetting that we have a promise, good for all the days to come: "My grace is sufficient for thee."—G. B. F. Hallock, D. D.

**The Guide Becomes a Guard.** Do you notice that the cloud is now behind the Israelites? That is because the Egyptians are pursuing them to bring them back to slavery. On the third day, Israel saw that Pharaoh was coming with a great army. They were in much fear and complained to Moses. He told them not to be afraid for God would save them. Moses did not know just how, but he knew that God was able to protect them, and he knew also that He would do so. Just then they saw the cloud slowly move back and plant itself right in the way



of the Egyptians. When God says He will guide and keep any one, we may be sure He will do it. Now another strange thing happened. This cloud was dark on the side towards the Egyptians and bright on the side towards the Israelites. See the large picture. That did not happen so; God made it be that way, to guide and guard His people. Pharaoh thought he had caught the Israelites in a trap; and it did look so, for the mountains were on either side and the sea before them. The Egyptians did not understand about the dark cloud, but they said they would wait until morning and then they would easily capture the Israelites. If we love the Lord we may be sure that He will care for us in some way.

### Wait and See.

Be not swift to be afraid;  
Many a ghostly thing is laid  
In the light from out the shade;  
Wait and see.

Better than your wildest dreams  
Is God's light that for you gleams  
When the morning cloudy seems;  
Wait and see.

—Marianne Farningham.

**Caught in His Own Trap.** Pharaoh forgot that he was fighting against God. While he thought he had the Israelites fast by the mountains and the sea, God was opening a way for His people. All that night they walked through the sea, as on dry ground. You see Moses leading the way, and the great multitude following. It was wonderful, the way the waters stood up like a wall, as if God's great hand was holding them. That was not necessary, for God has only to speak the word and the waters obey Him. Waters and winds and birds obey God better than man does. And yet man, who can think and love, ought to obey far better than nature.

**The Bible Is Man's Guide.** God's word is like the pillar of cloud and fire and it is the only safe guide. If we obey it, we live; if we disobey it, we die.

"Hearken," "observe," "do," and "blessing shall come upon us." Deut. 28:1-2. But "if we will not hearken—to observe—to do—curses shall come upon us." Deut. 28:15. "To do is to be blessed; not to do is to be destroyed." A collision of a freight and passenger train occurred in which twenty-three lives were lost. The engineer of the freight train had his orders, obedience to which would have carried both trains through safely. He disobeyed orders and disgrace and death followed. So Pharaoh disobeyed and was destroyed.

When Pharaoh saw the sea had opened he followed with his army. See how fast they

drive with their chariots. They hope to overtake Israel even in the sea. But now another strange thing happened. Early in the morning God just looked through the dark cloud, and the look terrified the Egyptians and made the wheels of their chariots fly off. Then Pharaoh and his army wanted to turn back and go home. They tried to do so, but it was too late. God told Moses to wave the rod again, and the sea closed up with great rushing waves. So the great army of Pharaoh was destroyed. Not a chariot or a man escaped. The sea which Pharaoh thought had blocked the way of the Israelites really was the trap in which he was caught. No one was to blame but himself. He said, "I have sinned," but his actions showed that he was not really sorry.

**God Says, "Whoa."** A Sunday school scholar was asked what God said to the sinner, and he replied, "God said 'Whoa.'" Truly God's woe means "Whoa." It was time for Pharaoh to halt before the Divine judgment came. Every one of the ten plagues was like a call of God to stop. He did not, but became more determined in sin. He found that "the wages of sin is death."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What river was miraculously crossed and by whom? 2. Tell the story of Jesus walking on the sea. 3. How is the pillar of cloud like Christ or the Holy Spirit? 4. What happened when the Lord "looked on the Egyptians"? 5. What followed when Christ "looked on Peter"? also when Christ "looked around about" in the temple? 6. What was the "morning watch" and what were the other divisions of the day? 7. What last command of Christ is like God's "Go forward"? 8. Can the Church obey this as well as Israel obeyed that?

**Challenge Text.** "Thy word is a \_\_\_\_\_ unto my \_\_\_\_\_, and a \_\_\_\_\_ unto my \_\_\_\_\_." Ps. 119 (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God is a sure guide and protector, before, behind, and on either side. 2. God is light and love to those who obey Him, and all such understand Him. 3. God is hidden and mysterious as the darkness to those who oppose Him. 4. When God says, "Go forward," it is safe to obey, and dangerous to disobey. So of His great commission, "Go ye into all the world." The church that disobeys it dies. 5. All the power of God may go in His mere look or word. 6. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity"; and so, often the greater the difficulty the easier the achievement. The women found that the stone was rolled away, "for it was great." 7. God is always the power; but man's faith, obedience, and prayer are the usual channels through which His power acts. 8. The religion of Christ is wholly supernatural movement for man's deliverance from sin. 9. If the unbeliever is lost he alone is responsible, for salvation is free to all. 10. God often leads in strange ways, but they are always the best ways; and man sees it to be so. 11. Not one, not one of the righteous is ever lost; not one, not one of the wicked can ever escape. 12. Conversion is like the crossing of the Red Sea; and then begins the journey to the Heavenly Canaan.

DR. J. M. COON.



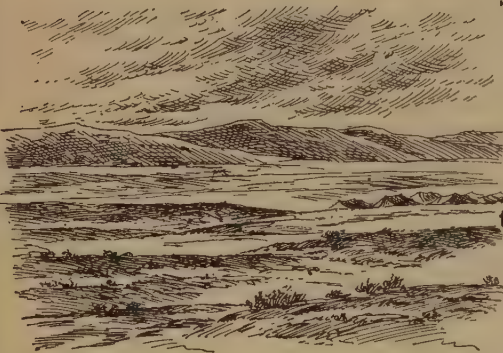
And it came to pass, that at even the



came  
up,  
and  
covered  
the



and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the



there lay a  
small round  
thing, as  
small as  
the hoar  
frost on  
the ground.  
And when  
the children  
of Israel  
saw it,  
they said  
one to



another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And

said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat. This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded,

of it every man according to his eating, an omer  
for every man, according to the number of your

persons;  
take ye  
every  
man  
for  
them  
which  
are in  
his





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 16:1-35.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast made all things, and for Thy use and glory. Thou are providing for Thy people wherever they may be. Thou speakest and it is done, or Thou whisperest to the laws of nature and they become Thy willing and effective servants. Help us to see Thee in nature and in life and to trust Thee ever. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,  
And back of the flour is the mill;  
And back of the mill is the sheaf,  
And the shower,  
And the sun,  
And the Father's will."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, Wilderness of Sin. Persons, Moses, Aaron, and children of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** Food from Heaven. Manna promised, Ex. 16:1-12. Manna remembered, Psa. 78:12-29. The true manna, John 6:26-44. Life-giving manna, John 6:45-65. Elijah fed, 1 Kings 17:1-16. Loaves multiplied, Mark 6:30-44. Bread from Heaven, Psa. 105:26-42. The hidden manna, Rev. 2:1-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This great miracle teaches a double truth—that God supplies the temporal needs of His people, and that Christ is pictured as the bread of the soul. This thought is developed here by the analogy: 1. The manna

comes to a sinful and rebellious people; so Christ came to a wicked world. 2. The manna is of Heavenly origin; so Christ is the supernatural gift of God to a hungry world. 3. The manna was abundant and immediately at hand; so Christ comes to all men and to the whole man. 4. The manna must be gathered daily by each household and eaten; so Christ must be appropriated personally by faith. 5. The manna is full of mystery, prompting wonders and questioning; so Christ is the "mystery of godliness." 6. The manna sustained and satisfied, as the food of the body; so Christ is the sufficient and satisfactory food of the soul.

## HOW GOD FED A NATION IN A WILDERNESS.

**A Land Without Food.** One of the most wonderful miracles of Christ was the feeding of 5,000 men, besides women and children. There was nothing but a boy's lunch box to begin with, but Christ made it grow to be enough for all. But this story tells how God fed a whole nation for forty years, without anything to start with. There must have been over 2,000,000 people going from place to place. This wilderness land was very different from the fertile Egypt where the Israelites had lived so long. They were greatly rejoiced that they were free from the cruel king and the hard task-masters. They had been singing Miriam's song over the destruction of the Egyptian army. They had used up the food which they brought with them from Egypt. Now they are journeying in a land that produces only some grasses and herbs for their cattle. And there is very little good water. The people complained to Moses. He is good enough to change their complaint into a prayer to God. The prayer is answered, and God sends a great flock of quails that covered the whole camp. They were so plentiful that they caught them easily and all were satisfied with the meal God had provided them.

**Free, but at Great Cost.** A collier came to me and said: "I would like to be a Christian, but I cannot receive what you said tonight." I asked him why not. He replied: "I would give anything to believe that God would forgive my sins, but I cannot believe that he will forgive me if I just turn to him. It is too cheap." I said: "My dear friend, have you been working today?" He

looked at me, slightly astonished, and said: "Yes, I was down in the pit, as usual." "How did you get out of the pit?" I asked. "The way I usually do. I got into the cage, and was pulled to the top." "How much did you pay to come out of the pit?" He said, "Pay? Of course I didn't pay anything." I asked him: "Were you not afraid to trust yourself in that cage? Was it not too cheap?" "O, no," he said; "it was cheap for me, but it cost the company a lot of money to sink that shaft." And without another word the truth of that admission broke upon him and he saw that if he could have salvation without money and without price it had cost the infinite God a great price to sink that shaft and rescue lost men.—G. Campbell Morgan.

**What Is It?** The quails came at night, just for the one time; for they were not the right kind of food for them to live on. The next morning the ground was covered with little round white things. These had come down from Heaven with the dew in the night. The people were greatly surprised and began looking at it. They said to each other, "Manhu! Manhu!" This was the Hebrew language and meant, "What is it? What is it?" So it was ever afterwards called "Manhu, or manna." They went to Moses about it, and he said, "This is the bread that God has sent from Heaven; gather it and eat." They did so, and liked it, for it had a flavor like honey. Moses told them that it would come every day, and there would be enough for all. This was to picture forth the Saviour who was to come. Christ Himself said, "I am the bread of life," and He told the people, that He came down from Heaven just like the manna did. Christ was

to feed the soul life, as the manna fed the body.

**The Ever-Ready Saviour.** A man in one of our meetings was anxious to be saved, and he said, "I will go home and pray and see if I can't get the blessing." He had three miles to go, and while walking the thought came to him, "Why wait till I get home? Why not pray here and now?" So he began, "God be merciful—" And when he spoke the word "merciful" God blessed him even before he got to the word "me." He found and ate the bread of life.—Chapman.

**The Law and Lesson of the Manna.** There were some special laws about the manna, that were to remind the people of God, and train them to obey God. One law was that it must be gathered early, before the sun melted it. Another law was that it was to be gathered every day, and only enough for that day. Some people disobeyed this law, and gathered some to keep over, and the next day they found worms in it. This was to teach the people to trust God day by day. Another law was that on the sixth day they should gather enough for two days, so that they could rest and worship on the Sabbath day. Thus they were taught Sabbath observance even before the Commandments were given. Some disobeyed this law, and they found no manna on the seventh day. So these people had nothing to eat that day, for the others had only enough for themselves. This bread from Heaven was a constant voice from God, as if it said, "I am God; and I am thinking of you and caring for you." So it was a daily sermon on the providence and goodness of God. In these many ways also it was a beautiful picture of Jesus Christ, and the people long afterwards could understand it.

**Gathering Manna For Others.** How eagerly these men are picking up the manna and putting it into bags, baskets and jugs. At that rate each man will soon get enough for himself for one day. But look at that last picture. There are mothers and children sitting in their tents. Some think that only the men were allowed to gather the manna. But anyhow all could not go to the fields. Some were needed at the tent home. This suggests another great law of the manna and that was the law of distributing to others. The command was, "to take ye every man for them which are in his tent." When Christ fed the multitudes, He gave to the few, and said to them, "Give ye them to eat." For whatever reason some may be

without the manna except for disobedience, those who gathered were to gather for them. The teaching is that the very blessing you receive is a call to you to get a similar blessing for those who do not have it. As the manna stands for Christ, who is the bread of life for the whole world, we can see that it expects Christ to be preached to all the world. The Christ manna may not fall in some lands like China, Japan, India and Africa; at least it may not fall there in sufficient quantity. So those who live in Christian lands should gather this Christ manna, which is the gospel, and carry it to all who do not have it. There is abundance for all, but all Christians must see to distributing the gospel to those who otherwise might not get it. What would you think of an Israelite who would not gather manna for his family? Just so with the Christian who does not help to give the gospel to the heathen. The heathen are a part of the family of man, and those farthest away are yet our "neighbors," as Christ taught.

**Giving the Gospel to Others.** "Others." There is no place in the world where this keyword does not fit in. There is no problem of daily living that it does not help to solve. There is no spiritual tangle that it does not aid in straightening out. There are young men and women to-day suffering from moods of doubt who need most to turn away their eyes from themselves and "do something for somebody, quick!" Self is the great obstacle in the Christian life. The less one thinks of one's self, the more one thinks about others, the surer is spiritual growth. The Lord's Prayer begins with "Our," not "My." In thought for others, in service to others, in unselfish love and cheerful self-denial, lies the secret of the saints. Any Christian can write the keyword on his heart. Any Christian can go forward in its power.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What else was kept in the ark, besides a pot of manna? 2. When did Christ feed a multitude and how did a boy help him?

**Challenge Text.** "I am the living \_\_\_\_\_ which came down from \_\_\_\_\_." John 6: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. To complain of our circumstances, or of God's providences is to complain of God. 2. Prayer, not murmuring or complaining, is the true recourse in time of perplexity.

3. Trials are often for the purpose of testing and strengthening the faith. 4. God makes it easy, as well as obligatory, to observe His day. 5. Jesus Christ is a daily necessity for the soul, as natural food is for the body. 6. Do not worry tonight; the new day will bring its new supply of food. 7. God proves us alike by prosperity and adversity whether we will be true to Him. 8. Even our murmurings are graciously turned into prayers and answered. 9. We should seek and gather spiritual manna, day by day.

DR. J. M. COON.



# OUR DUTIES

to God

to Man

I  
Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

II  
Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III  
Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV  
Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor

thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-day and hallowed it.

V  
Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

VI  
Thou shalt not kill.

VII  
Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII  
Thou shalt not steal.

IX  
Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

X  
Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbor's.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS THE 20TH CHAPTER OF EXODUS.

**Prayer:** O Lord God, We thank Thee that Thou hast spoken to man. Out from the opening heavens come Thy voice, of law, duty and obedience for the whole of life. Out of Thy heart of love Thou hast spoken mercy, forgiveness, pardon and peace by Thy Son Jesus Christ. Make our ears to hear, our hearts to love, our wills to obey, For Christ's sake. Amen.

**Lo, God Is Here!**

"Lo, God is here! Let us adore  
And own how dreadful is this place!  
Let all within us feel His power,  
And silent bow before His face!  
Who know His power, His grace who prove;  
Serve Him with awe, with reverence, love."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, Mount Sinai in the Horeb range. Persons, Moses, God, the Israelites.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of God's Law. The Law of the Lord, Psa. 19. Keeping the law, Psa. 119:1-16. Christ and the law, Matt. 5:17-37. Obedience and law, Matt. 19:16-30. Christ the end of the law, Rom. 8:1-28. Great law of love, John, 15:1-17. The new covenant law, 2 Cor. 3:1-18. Mt. Zion and the law, Heb. 12:18-29. Condemned by the law, Rom. 3:1-20. Redeemed from the law, Rom. 3:21-31. Law and love, 1 John 3:1-16. The law a type, Heb. 9:1-28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** These ten great words of God to man emphasize man's duty to God and to his fellow man. They cover every phase and condi-

tion of life. 1. Man's duty to recognize one God and hear and obey Him. 2. To worship in spirit and truth, without idol or image of any kind. 3. To have holy reverence for the name of God. 4. To remember and keep holy the day of God. 5. To respect and obey parents and those in authority. 6. To take no human life, not even one's own. 7. To maintain right and pure relations between man and woman. 8. To take no man's property by force, or fraud, or trick of any kind. 9. To injure no one nor destroy his good name by lie or slander or half truth or gossip, or even joke and jest. 10. To covet nothing that belongs to another, for even these desires of mind and heart are sins. These ten great commands are God's life-guard for man.

### GOD'S TEN GREAT LAWS FOR MAN.

Did you ever see soldiers drill? Then you heard the drill master say, "Present arms," "Ground arms," "Forward march," and many other orders. These ten commandments are God's orders to us, to show how we are to do in the marching or battling of life. God is our Commander and Drill Master. He made us, guides us, keeps us, blesses us, knows what is best for us; and so He has a right to command us. It is not only our duty to obey, as good soldiers, but it is much to our profit and pleasure every way. Every order is a soldier-like order, with a ringing "thou shalt" in it.

**A Wonderful Pulpit.** But I must tell you how the people first heard these orders. It was a most solemn and glorious way. We have learned of God doing many, many wonderful things; but this is almost the most wonderful of all. Think of a high mountain covered with clouds that seemed all on fire. Then remember that there are much thundering and lightning flashes; and that the mountain itself is shaking with power.

All around it are the tents and camps of the Israelites, stretching row after row; thousands and thousands of tents. Suddenly Moses told the people to wash themselves and get ready for God to speak to them. Then out from this trembling mountain, as if it were a great pulpit, God spoke these ten great laws to His people. God wanted these people to be His in a special way, and so He gave them these commandments to help them.

He said, "I bare you on eagle's wings, and brought you unto myself." As He is holy, so He wants His people to be holy and good. This they could not be without one law and one Lawgiver. Even Moses could not keep them from breaking away from the truth and the right.

**Engraved by the Finger of God.** God wanted to be very sure that the people would never forget these ten great orders. He not only spoke them so that all the people heard, but He wrote them on two tables of stone. This He did Himself and gave them to Moses. He meant them to be for all people for all time. They are just as much for us now as for the Israelites then. God called Moses to come up into the mount to get this two-leaved stone book. The people were glad enough for Moses to go, for they were so afraid. Moses was afraid, too, but he knew God better and so trusted himself to go. He took Joshua part way up, and then God told him to come on alone the rest of the way. Moses was there forty days and nights, and God told him many things about the way the people should live and work and worship and how they should treat one another. In that way Moses was to give many lessons to the people by type or picture of things that could be seen. We will learn more about these types in other stories. In the four corners of the commandment page are pictures of Moses going up in the mount and returning. Look at them all carefully.



**A Kindergarten School.** These rites and types were like a series of pictures to teach the Israelites in their childhood as a nation. The high priest was a picture of Christ. The ceremonial law was like a scaffolding around a building. The moral law is like the rafters in a building, or even like the foundation, for they are the important part of the building. Again, the ceremonial law is like the blossoms on a tree, which whisper of the fruit to come. The blossoms fall off to make way for the fruit. But the spiritual principles are permanent like the trunk and the great branches which carry the leaves, blossoms and fruit.—A. L. O. E.

**Man's Duty to God.** On the first stone table are four great laws or orders; and they all show what we should do and be towards God; and how we should treat Him and His purposes. The first of these orders tells us that we must worship God, and Him alone; and that we must love Him more than anything else, or anybody else. The second order forbids any kind of images in our worship. God knew that if we began to worship Him through an image we might soon begin to worship the image itself; this way the image would become a false god. The third order, or commandment, warns us against using God's name lightly or irreverently.

The fourth commandment tells us that we are to keep God's day holy, and to use it only for Him, and to help the suffering and needy when we can. God is very jealous of His holy day, and many things people do in these days are violations of this great command. We should guard this command all the more because it seems so easy and popular to break it. The wicked world is all the more wicked on that day. Even a decent respect for God, though one did not love Him, should make him most careful on that holy day. We can almost find another ten "nevers" for the Lord's day, as we did for the Lord's name. For example, on the Lord's day never go to any game of any kind; never go to any picnic; never go to any park or museum; never go riding for mere pleasure; never use God's day for your own purpose, however good, as any secular study or work; never steal God's time for mere physical rest; never neglect worship in God's house on His day unless providentially prevented.

**Man's Duty to His Fellow Man.** There are six of these great duties or laws. They were written on the second leaf of this stone book. The fifth commandment teaches love and obedience to parents. It is almost next to love of God. Love and obedience are shown by our conduct just as is our love to God. The way boys and girls treat father and mother will show how much they love and respect them. The home is the great school where

the best lessons of life and character are learned; as obedience, faith, love, reverence, duty, sacrifice, helpfulness. As a help and spur to obeying this command God has offered the prize of long life in a good land. It is the only commandment with a prize promised, and every boy and girl can win that prize.

The sixth commandment forbids anyone taking human life—not even his own life. To commit suicide is to kill; and as God gave life so He only can take it away. Christ taught that even if we wished another person would die, that was murder in the heart, and in God's sight heart sins are the worst kind. The seventh commandment tells us to be pure and right in all our actions; and teaches us to treat all women and girls as we would our own mothers and sisters. The eighth commandment says that we must not take what belongs to another. Even if we have done it by mistake, we should at once return it. This big sin may be committed by taking even a toy, or any small thing. The ninth commandment declares that we should not be untruthful so as to hurt another person in any way. This may be done sometimes just by leaving out a little or adding a little when we are telling anything. The tenth commandment tells us to be content with what God gives us. To covet a thing is to wish it were ours. God knows best what we need, and we should trust Him, and believe that what we actually have is the best for us.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Moses was in the mount forty days and nights. What are other Scripture instances of "forty days"? 2. What strange fire did Moses once see on this mountain? 3. What three reasons can you give why God has a right to order us? 4. When did God speak to Christ from the clouds, and what did He say? 5. How many "Blesseds" did Christ once speak to the people?

**Practical Lessons.** 1. God is Creator of all and offers to be Father of all who will accept Him. 2. God's claim on man is not arbitrary, but is based on His goodness and mercy. 3. Idolatry may be in thought and desire as really as in act. 4. Light and trifling talk is often the threshold to profane swearing. 5. We should hold the Lord's day sacred to his glory and man's spiritual good. 6. The Lord's day, the Lord's house, the Lord's book, the Lord's people are the four great factors and forces for advancing the Lord's kingdom. 7. Long life to the individual and to the nation is a logical result of obedience to parents. 8. God has put a high estimate on human life, and He alone has the right to end it. 9. Purity of act, word and desire are vital to the home and nation. 10. There are many kinds of stealing. Watch against that which is called by other names. 11. The only sure guard for the good name of ourselves and of others is a good heart. 12. To desire the good things of others is sin and may lead to more sin. 13. God's "Thou shalt nots" are simply the Divine railing between us and the pitfalls and precipices of life.

DR. J. M. COON.



And Moses turned,  
and went down  
from the mount,  
and the two tables  
of the testimony were



the tables were written  
on both their sides,  
on the one side and  
on the other were they  
written. And it came  
to pass, as soon as  
he came nigh unto



that  
he  
saw  
the



and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he



and



beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and



and  
ground  
it to  
powder,  
and  
strawed  
it upon



and made the children of Israel drink of it



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 32:1-35.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and to worship only Thee. Give us a new vision of Thy glory and grace. Wean us from any earthly good which keeps us from loving Thee. May Thy law and will be the rule of our lives. Show Thyself in the face of Thy Son, and abide in us by Thy Holy Spirit. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"In stone of snowy whiteness,  
And precious ores of earth,  
Triumphant genius carves or moulds  
All shapes of human birth:  
He calls up forms and features  
Which never yet have been,  
But vainly will he toil or think  
To show the Great Unseen."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, foot of Mt. Sinai. Persons, Moses, Aaron, the people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Idolatry. Warning against idolatry, Deut. 13:1-11. A king's idolatry, 1 Kings 12:25-33. Folly of idolatry, Ps. 115-1-8. A common idolatry, Col. 3:5-13. Idolatry ridiculous, Isa. 44:10-20. Guard against it, Deut. 9:7-21. Judgment against it, Jer. 16:1-11. Idolatry punished, Rev. 14:6-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The tendency to idolatry is natural to the sinful heart of man everywhere. A study of this great sin is as needful now as ever. 1. The cause of idolatry is in the fact of sin. The instinct of worship is present,

but it seeks wrong objects and methods. 2. Incentives to idolatry are found in man's ignorance, in his surroundings, in the example of others, in the hope of imaginary good. 3. The result of idolatry is to destroy the idea of the true God and to dull the spiritual sense. 4. Some forms of idolatry are man-worship in its many forms; the worship of gold, of pleasure, of appetite, of business, of ambition. 5. The remedy for idolatry is the acceptance of the true God. Man must worship in some way, and only God is worthy. 6. The punishment for idolatry is certain and terrible. 7. The only sufficient help against idolatry is the intercession of Jesus Christ, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

### A GOLDEN CALF FOR A GOD.

**Doing Like Other Nations.** God had done all He could to keep the new baby nation free from sin. He separated this people from other nations, and gave them many blessings. He wanted especially to keep them from worshiping gods of wood, stone and animals, as the other nations did. For this reason He showed himself to them in the burning mountain, and gave them that splendid set of rules. No other nation ever had ten such good rules. The Israelites promised faithfully that they would love and obey God in all things, and keep his commandments. But after Moses had been gone day after day, for nearly forty days, the people got restless. At last they said to Aaron, "Make us gods, for as for this Moses we do not know what has become of him." This was very ungrateful to Moses, and was a sin against God. Aaron ought to have rebuked them, and explained where Moses had gone. He was left in charge for that very purpose. Perhaps Aaron thought he might become the leader instead of Moses. But a true leader will always be anxious to do as God would have him do. Anyway, he listened to the people's complaint and told them to bring their jewelry to him and he would see what he could do. He may not have realized how quickly all this would grow into great and terrible sins. No one can know when he begins a wrong course how it will turn out. The only safe way is not to begin at all.

**Don't Begin the Wrong.** Once there was a little fly who saw a spider's web in the corner of a room. "I'll keep away from it," he thought; "for if I should get one foot in it I might get two, and soon I would be caught altogether." Wasn't that a wise little fly?

In the same little room was a little girl who had broken a vase. Something whispered in her ear, "Hide the pieces and don't tell mother." "No, no!" said she. "If I should deceive mother once, I might again, and pretty soon I should be telling wrong stories. I won't begin." Wasn't she a wise little girl?—Mayflower.

**Folly and Sin of Idolatry.** How fast Moses is hurrying down the mountain side! And how serious he looks, and worried. God has just told him that the people were doing wrong things, and He said He had better destroy them all, and begin another nation with Moses. God could see them, although they were so far away. Moses pleads for the people and then hurries down to see what they really are doing. He finds Joshua waiting for him and they go on together. Soon they hear a great noise and Joshua said he thought it was a shout of war. But Moses knew it was something else and even worse. It was worse, for it was war against God. Look at that picture, and you will see for yourself. They were actually dancing and singing around that calf which Aaron had placed on a stand. They called the calf a god, and their dancing was worship! Could anything be more foolish and silly? It was sinful too; it was more like a drunken frolic. And these were grown up men, and

they claimed to think and reason! And just before them was the mountain where God had stood and spoken to them. It may have been blazing with fire even yet.

**The Questionable Should Unquestionably Be Avoided.** A young lady gives the following reasons why she will not dance: 1. Dancing is injurious to health and usefulness. 2. Dancing will lead me into close contact with pernicious company. 3. Dancing requires a freedom with the other sex I believe to be wrong. 4. My parents would be anxious about me if I were out late. 5. Good people disapprove of dancing, and it is not safe to set myself against them. If a thing is doubtful I wish to be on the safe side. 6. Dancing has a bad name, and I mean to study things that are pure, lovely and of good report. 7. Dancing is often accompanied with drinking. 8. Drinking is a snare to young men, and I would not have anything to do with leading them astray. 9. Dancing unfits the mind for reflection and prayer, and I mean to do nothing to estrange me from my Savior.

**Righteous Anger of Moses.** Do you wonder that Moses was angry? He surely had a right to be, and God does not rebuke him for it. He must have felt like Christ did when He found the people buying and selling in the temple, which was intended to be a "house of prayer." His eyes blazed forth wrath and He drove the buyers and sellers out. The first thing Moses did was to dash the tables of stone to the ground. God had written the ten commandments on them with His own finger and given them to Moses. The two pictures show this! Then he finds Aaron and asks why he allowed this. Aaron said that the people brought their gold jewels and when he put them in the fire this calf came out! That was not true at all, for he himself had fashioned it into a calf. He was thoroughly ashamed of it all, and wanted to throw the blame on someone else. Many people try to excuse themselves and blame others when they are caught in wrong doing. The manly way is to confess the sin, and ask for forgiveness.

**"I'll Change My Life."** David Farragut was a drunken cabin boy on the vessel his father commanded. One day his father took him in a room by himself, and said, "David, what do you mean to be?" "I mean to follow the sea. I will tread the quarter-deck and command as you do." "No, David; no boy ever trod the quarter-deck with such principles as you have and such habits as you exhibit. You will have to change your whole course of life if you ever become a man." His

father left him and went on deck. He was stunned by the rebuke and overwhelmed with mortification. He said to himself: "A poor, miserable, drunken sailor before the mast, to be kicked and cuffed about the world, and die in some fever hospital! That's my fate, is it? I'll change my life, and I will change it at once. I will never utter another oath, never drink another drop of intoxicating liquor, never gamble." He kept his pledge and became famous.—Boy's World.

**A Terrible Punishment.** In breaking the tables of stone, it was as if Moses had said to the people, "See how you have broken God's law!" Then Moses took the calf, and burned it with fire and pounded it to dust, and sprinkled it in the running stream where the people had to drink. All this is also pictured out. After that he called out, "Who is on the Lord's side?" The family of Levi ran to him, and he told them to go through the whole camp and slay with the sword everyone who had been leading in the calf worship. This was in order to save the nation. If idolatry had continued all of them would have been destroyed. So it was really a merciful act. If one did not repent he was to be slain, even if it was one's own brother. Three thousand were killed, but the nation was spared at the earnest prayer of Moses.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What command was violated by the making of the golden calf? 2. What other commands were violated in the worship of the calf? 3. What are some things which people worship today? 4. Moses breaking the tables reminds us of what act of Christ in the temple once? 5. Moses interceded for the people. Who is our Great Intercessor and where is He? 6. Three thousand slain. Do you remember other times when people were punished for sin? 7. What made the face of Moses shine as he came from the mount? 8. What other cases of face-shining in the Bible? **Challenge Text.** "Little ———, keep yourselves from ———." 1 John 5: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. He who is too faithless to trust God is foolish enough to trust idols. 2. There are only two sides in this world—the Lord's side and Satan's side. Every one is on one side or the other. 3. One man, in the right with God, is mightier than a whole nation. 4. The punishment of the wicked is necessary for the protection of the righteous. 5. Our confession of faith (covenant) is tested by our life relations and conditions. 6. The great value and power of a true leader. 7. God loves to forgive the sinner but the sinner must love to be forgiven. 8. God is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. 9. Peace of conscience and love to God are the cosmetics which make the face beautiful.

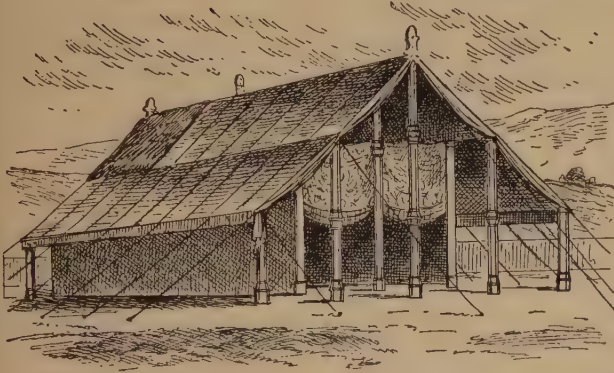
DR. J. M. COON.



And all the congregation of the children of Israel



from the presence of Moses. And they came, every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the



of the congregation, and for all his service, and for the holy



And they came, both



as many as were willing-hearted, and brought



all jewels of gold: and every man that offered offered an offering of gold unto the Lord. And every

man, with whom was found blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' hair, and red



of rams, and badgers' skins, brought them

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 35:20-35.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the giver of every earthly good. Help us to use all for Thy glory and for Thy cause. Save us from being enslaved and injured by the very things Thou hast given us. Keep us from the selfish and ungenerous heart. May Thy free gifts to us inspire us to be givers, freely and constantly. Above all, may we give Thee our hearts. For Christ's sake. Amen.

**The Joy of Working and Giving.**  
And only the Master shall praise us,  
And only the Master shall blame;  
And no one shall work for money,  
And no one shall work for fame;  
But each in the joy of the working,  
And each in his separate star,  
Shall draw the thing as he sees it,  
For the God of things as they are.

—Kipling.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1491. Place, Valley at foot of Mt. Sinai. **Persons,** Moses, men and women of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** **A Study of Giving.** Liberal giving, Mark 12:41-44. Giving and getting, Mal. 3:6-18. Christ's example, Luke 6:30-38. Loving and giving, 1 John 3:17-20. Blessings of giving, 2 Cor. 9:6-11. Growing by giving, Prov. 11:24-31. Giving for Christ's sake, Phil. 3:1-12. A costly gift, John 12:1-11. Giving from the heart, Matt. 26:6-16. Christ's gift to man, 1 John 4:9-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This is a charming and beautiful picture of giving, which is also heart worship. Some of the great laws and motives for giving and service are shown or implied: 1. We should give because we have been forgiven. 2. We should give because all we have belongs to God, and is only loaned to us. 3. Because God asks for our

gifts, and is pleased to receive them, our gifts are needed by Him. 4. Because the gift opens heart and life to receive other and larger blessings from God. 5. Because the gift will help herald and declare the love of God. 6. Because the gift will be used to do much more than we had planned or supposed. 7. Because the gift is seal and proof that our love is genuine. 8. Because the gift will challenge others to do and give. 9. Because the heart gift makes one like the great Giver, and brings one into fellowship with Him. 10. Because such giving is one of the best checks against a sordid, selfish and worldly spirit. 11.—

"It is in loving, not in being loved,  
The heart is blest;  
It is in giving, not in seeking gifts,  
We find our quest."

### THE POWER OF A LOVING HEART.

**Hearts Made Penitent.** You have heard it said, "Where there's a will there's a way." That is true, and it often explains the great difference between people. Some do so much more than others because they will to do it. This story shows that where there is a heart there is a way. But the heart must be made right before it can do anything for God. You remember how wicked the Israelites were in worshiping the golden calf, instead of God. Moses did not stop with just destroying the calf. He wanted also to take the bad thoughts and purposes out of the hearts. He could not do that, but he knew God could. So he went back to finish his pleading with God, that He would forgive the people and give them another trial. God agreed to do this, and He told Moses to come up to Him into the mount. Moses was there again forty days and nights. God told him to bring two more stone tablets, and on them God wrote the Ten Commandments the second time. These two tablets were carefully kept in a special box that was called The Ark. Now God wanted to show the people that he had forgiven them. He had Moses build a tent, far away from the camp of the people. Then He came down in a cloud and met Moses and talked with him. By this sign the people knew that God had forgiven them. They stood in their tent doors and saw it all. How

good Moses was just to pray and pray to save this whole people! This was a figure of the work which Jesus Christ is doing for all who love Him. He is our great intercessor, which means that He prays for us. We can have any right thing we desire, if we ask Him for it in a right way; for He is very much greater than even Moses, and "All power is given unto Him." God wants us to give from the heart, so that we may be able to receive more from Him. Giving makes the heart grow, and the more it gives the more it has to give.

**Starting the Heart Pump.** What we give is as nothing to what we receive. Dr. Elder illustrates thus: "You come with an almost empty pitcher to a deep, cool well of water, whose refreshing fulness you can reach only by means of an old-fashioned suction pump. But the pump will not work; the valves are dry and warped, and you work the handle in vain. At last you pour into the pump your poor remnants of water; the shrunken valves are closed and all the fulness of that well is yours. You give a quart and gain a whole spring."

So the pouring of our scant lives into God's gives us His fulness in return. If tithes, honestly paid, will open the windows of Heaven, our whole property put at Christ's disposal and administered in His name will bring down Heaven itself into our lives.

**Hearts Made Willing.** Moses was told all about the tabernacle and its furniture. This was to be the house where God would meet His people. When the people learned that they might have a part in getting this house



ready, they were glad. They all must have felt as Moses did. It showed in his face when he came down from the mount the second time. His face was shining so bright, the people asked him to wear a veil when he talked with them. He had been with God so long that he had the very glory of God in his face. But we know it must have come to the face by way of the heart. We are all apt to be a good deal like those we go with; and for this reason we should choose always the best people for companions. In that first picture Moses has been telling the people what God wanted. They go at once to do it, and tell the others what to do. Moses would tell a few, and they others and yet others, until all had come to know of the great work. The next picture shows the tabernacle. Our next story will be about that. There you see some of the fine robes they were to make. The twelve squares on one of them are twelve precious stones set in gold, each one having the name of one of the twelve tribes. This breastplate was the most costly, beautiful and glorious part of the high priest's robe. This was to be worn by Aaron, and would show that all these tribes, even the smallest, would be held up before the Lord. Now, it is said, "Every one whose heart stirred him up" came. But the reason was that God touched the heart, or whispered to it, and stirred it. They were sorry enough now for the past sins, and they wanted to show their love and gratitude. They may not have known it, but all such heart obedience is just like a prayer for God to continue to bless.

## Give and Live.

Forever the sun is pouring gold

On a hundred worlds that beg and borrow;

His warmth he squanders on summits cold,

His wealth on the homes of want and sorrow;

To withhold his largeness or precious light,

Is to bury himself in eternal night.

To give is to live.

**Something For Each One To Do.** "They came, both men and women." It is also said that "Everyone whose heart stirred." Some think that each did something. The work was so great, and of so many different kinds, that there was a place and a part for each. At least, if one's heart did not stir him it was his own fault. The last pictures show some of the things which were given. It must be "free giving" when one is willing to part with that which was treasured as an ornament or keepsake. Here are bracelets, rings, earrings and tablets. These last were smooth on one side, and the bright

polished surface was used as a mirror. God wants us to give the best gifts for His house and His cause. The whole cost of the tabernacle and furniture was about \$1,250,000. This meant both willing hearts and many of them, to accomplish it all. And how beautiful these gifts are. Any gift from the heart is beautiful; but these are specially so, for they mean personal sacrifice. Still more beautiful they become when made into the things for the tabernacle. Purple is the royal color; blue means heaven and love, scarlet is for glory and beauty; white stands for purity; gold is always precious and valuable. They would all be glad afterward that what they did, and what they gave, helped to make all these beautiful things possible. And you notice that each one gave and did what he was best fitted for. It was all necessary.

**"I Mixed the Mortar."** A stranger in a city stood viewing a magnificent cathedral, admiring the genius of the architect who designed its fine proportions. An old man who was watching him drew near and inquired: "Well, sir, what do you think of it?" After listening to the stranger's expressions of praise and delight, the old man drew himself up and said, with a ring of pride in his voice: "I, sir, mixed the mortar for that building!" Had no one been willing to do the lowly work of "mixing the mortar," the beautiful building could not have been erected.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What gift does God want first from everyone? 2. What else can we give Him? 3. What did Christ give for us, and why? 4. What did Christ say was "more blessed"? 5. Christ once said of a small gift in the temple that it was the largest of all. Whose was it, and why was it large? 6. What reason does Paul urge why we should "freely give"? 7. Who was it that "hardened his heart" against God? 8. How can we give to God besides helping His cause and Church? "Inasmuch as ye did it etc., ye did it unto Me."

**Challenge Text.** "For God ——— a cheerful ———." 2 Cor. 9.

**Practical Lessons.** 1. Everyone, man, woman and child, can find something to give, or do, for God. 2. One's own life, or talents, or surroundings, will suggest the best gift for him to make. 3. The commonest offering is glorified, if prompted by the Spirit, and is made for God's glory. 4. Free giving can come only from a freed heart, freed from sin and fear. 5. If one will not give, and will not give, at last he shall not be allowed to give! 6. God will show each one what and how to give and do; and He also will help. 7. We should pray to be givers and doers, or to be better givers and doers. 8. In every power, talent or faculty there is a voice whispering, "Give it to God," "Do it for God." 9. Let the heart have full swing in all your giving and doing for God, for it has a fine instinct of what is best. 10. A heart gift to God is a direct blow to Satan and his plans. 11. If you do not give, it is because you do not love. You may have fancied it was because you were not able. Not so; love always, always, finds an offering.

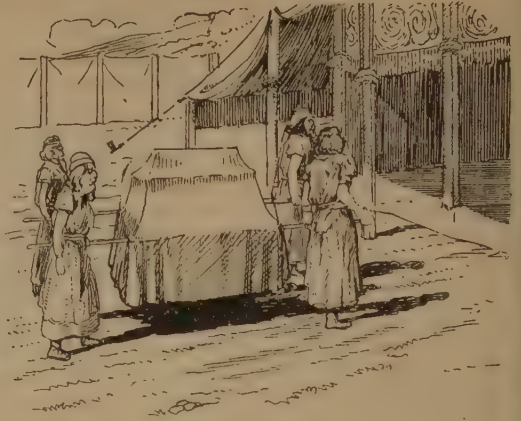
DR. J. M. COON.

# THE TABERNACLE SET UP

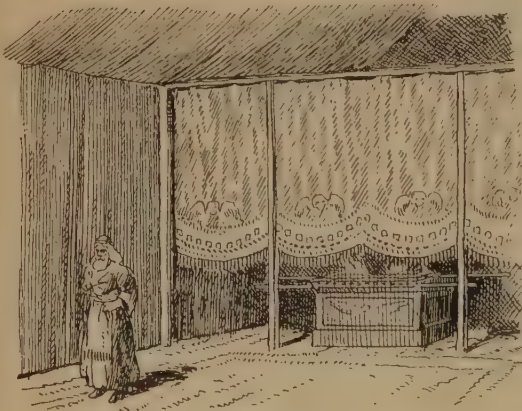
And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, On the first day of the first month shalt thou



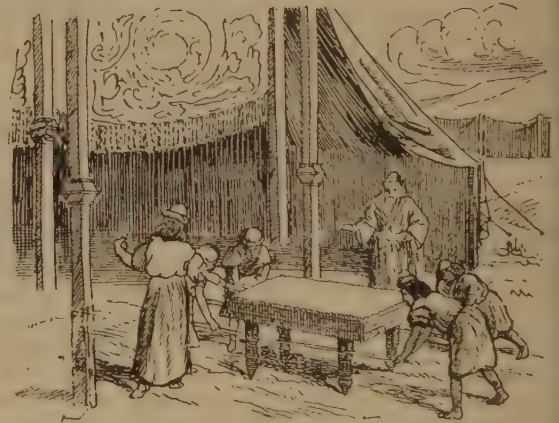
of the  
tent of  
the  
congre-  
gation.  
And  
thou  
shalt  
put  
therein  
the



of the testimony, and cover the ark with the



And  
thou  
shalt



and set in order the things that are to be set in order upon it; and thou shalt



and light  
the lamps  
thereof.  
And thou  
shalt



of gold for the incense before the ark of the testimony,



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EX. 40:1-30.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for Thy house, where Thou hast promised to meet Thy people. We thank Thee for all of life's Bethels and Peniels, and the altars in the homes. May we ever have a true reverence for holy places and holy things. Make each heart a temple for Thine own shining presence. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Sail on, O glorious church Divine!  
Sail on, sail on! in Christ's light shine!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years,  
Await thy word of faith and life!  
We know what Master laid thy keel—  
What glorious Captain holds thy wheel!  
Ride o'er the mighty storm at will  
Of Him whose power said, Peace, be still!  
Through every tempest safe thy prow shall glide;  
Thine anchor drop at last in Heaven's tide.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, before Mt. Sinai. **Persons,** Moses, Aaron, people building the tabernacle.

**Scripture Setting:** The House of God. Right foundations, Isa. 44:18-28. For God alone, 1 Chron. 15:14-28. Prayer necessary, Dan. 9. Rebuilding the temple, Ezra, 3:1-13. Right spirit and motives, 1 Cor. 3:10-23. The true sanctuary, Eph. 2:13-22. Zeal for God's house, Ps. 69:1-9. Love for God's house, Ps. 84. The more perfect house, Heb. 9:1-14. Service of the soul-temple, Heb. 13:12-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here in pictures are set forth the great principles underlying all true worship. Certain vital laws may be seen: 1. Law of Divine origin by revelation—not a discovery or invention by man. 2. Law of time and place—

now the Lord's day in the Lord's house. 3. The law of the Divine indwelling (ark)—without which all else is hollow mockery. 4. Law of spiritual sustenance (shew bread)—by constant participation. 5. Law of prayer and consecration (incense)—effective only in and by the atonement. 6. Law of Christ's sacrificial death (altar of burnt offering)—the great central and radiating truth of the gospel system. 7. Law of the Divine order and anointing—every part of worship in reverence and in right sequence and relation. 8. Law of the Divine presence and guidance—securing and assuring all other conditions of worship. 9. Law of salvation by the steps of atonement, regeneration, prayer, communion, anointing.

### BUILDING THE FIRST MEETING HOUSE.

**How and By Whom Built.** How many church buildings have you seen? How many do you think there are in all the world? This story is an account of the first one ever made. It ought to be interesting, and it certainly is important. The plans for the building were made by God Himself. He told Moses about them, and cautioned him to have them carefully carried out. He even said He would pick out two men and fit them to lead in the work. He gave them ideas and skill and wisdom and they taught others, so that a great many helped. This first one was called a tabernacle, because it was tent-like in appearance. It was made this way so that it could be taken down easily and carried from place to place. They carried their meeting house with them wherever they went. The floor was only the grass or sand, wherever they were commanded to set it up. It must always be set right in the midst of the camp of the people. This was so that all could come to the services, and have the benefit of it. When it was moved from place to place, only the tribe of Levi were allowed to carry the parts. Everything was very sacred, and God taught them to handle all reverently. There were two parts to the tabernacle. The smaller one was called the "Holy of holies," and had only the ark in it. This was made of hard wood and covered with gold. The

cover was solid gold and was called the "Mercy-seat." Above this were two angels facing each other, their wings overspreading the mercy-seat till they almost touched each other. This was to show God's love and care. In the second picture this is covered with a mantle, for no one was to see it except the high priest, and he only once a year. This room had no window, nor lamps, but was lighted by the glory of God.

**The Tabernacle a Parable Picture of Salvation.**

1. The tabernacle, the house of God, its construction and meaning. 2. The brazen altar of sacrifice, before we enter the tabernacle; so only by the sacrifice of Christ we can begin a holy life. 3. The laver, still outside, showing the need of cleansing, the washing of regeneration. Expressed in baptism. 4. We enter the holy place, the church on earth, and find the candlestick, the light of God's word. 5. The table of shew-bread, signifying communion with God—the Lord's Supper. 6. The altar of incense, typifying prayer. 7. The anointing, vers. 9-11, 15,—the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. 8. All this leads to the holy of holies, perfect holiness—Heaven, with the mercy seat, holding the tables of the law, the expression of a holy nature.—Peloubet.

**The Holy Place.** The larger room was so named, and was separated from the holy of holies by a veil. It contained the altar on which to burn incense, which was a type or picture of prayer rising from the heart to God. Here also was the candlestick with its seven lamps, to give light, and the table

of shew bread which always had twelve cakes on it, to represent the twelve tribes. The cakes were changed every week, and only the priests were allowed to eat those removed. Aaron was the only high priest, made so by the sign of the budding rod. Aaron's four sons were the first priests. When he entered the holy of holies, once a year, it was to sprinkle the blood before the Lord. This was called the great day of atonement. No one saw him do this! When the priests served in the holy place the people were allowed to see them, for the curtains were lifted. The people did not go into the tabernacle to worship, as we go to church, but stood outside in what was called the outer court. At the entrance of the holy place stood the altar of burnt offering, and near it the laver where the priests washed themselves and the offerings. These are shown in the pictures, and also the people may be seen setting up the court and lifting the hangings and the curtains. The altar of burnt offering signified that only those for whom atonement had been made could enter the holy place. It included the idea of entire consecration and submission. The brazen laver stood near where the priests washed. This was made from the polished brass mirrors donated by the women.

**Building the True Temple.** Slowly throughout all the universe that temple of God is being built. When in any world a soul by free-willed obedience catches the fire of God's likeness it is set into the growing walls, a living stone. When, in your hard fight, in your tiresome drudgery, or in your terrible temptation, you catch the purpose of your being and give yourself to God and so give Him the chance to give Himself to you, your life, a living stone, is taken up and set into that growing wall. Wherever souls are being tried and ripened in whatever commonplace and homely ways, there God is hewing out the pillars for His temple. Oh, if the stone can only have some vision of the temple of which it is to be a part forever, what patience must fill it as it feels the blows of the hammer and knows that success for it is simply to let itself be wrought into what shape the Master wills!—Phillips Brooks.

**What It All Meant.** Now let us try to see what the tabernacle and its furniture meant. For one thing, this building would be saying always, "God is here, God is here." And specially so, when they remembered that everything was planned by God, and was to be very holy. Every church building in all the world is saying that today. Whenever we see a church we should remember that its walls and towers, its doors and windows, its pulpit and furniture, all spell out the great truth, "God is here." For another thing, this building would be saying,

"Your sin is atoned for." This is what was meant by the blood of the sacrifices morning and evening, and on the great day of atonement when Aaron sprinkled the blood on all things. Then, too, the goat was sent into the wilderness, a figure that their sins were carried away, away, and would never be seen again. Every church building today is saying, "Christ has died for you." He is the true sacrifice, "The Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." I can mention only one more thing, among many, and almost the best of all. This building kept saying, "Come, Come, Come." It did that by being placed right in the center of the camp; it said it also by the beautiful ark, with the golden angels over the golden mercy seat; and it said it by every article of furniture, and by every act of the priests. So, too, God's house today is just one big chime of "Comes." And the quiet, holy Lord's day is given us that we may the better hear and heed the tender and sweet invitation—"Come." No one would want to live when there are no churches. But too many live as if there were none. Can you tell why? Do you always hear and obey the "Come" of God's house?

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What were the two rooms of the tabernacle called? 2. Which had only one article of furniture, and what was that? What three articles of furniture were in the other room? 3. What three things were kept in the ark, and why? 4. Where was the veil of the tabernacle and of the temple, and what happened to it when Christ died? What did that mean? 5. What five different names have been given to the house of God at different times? 6. What did Christ say his house should be called? 7. What different names have been given to the people of God? 8. What name of Christ shows that he was to be an offering or sacrifice.

**Challenge Text.** "The spirit and the bride say —; and let him that heareth say —; and let him that is a thirst —." Rev. 22: (1)

**Practical Lessons.** 1. The tabernacle stood in the middle of the camp, so the church should be planted where the people are. 2. The tabernacle service was the most important duty of the Israelites, so religious duty is central and commanding. 3. The church, like the tabernacle, is by Divine order and appointment. 4. The tabernacle and its furniture pointed the way to salvation and holiness. 5. The believer should offer himself to God as a "living sacrifice," which is his reasonable service. 6. The believer is the real temple or tabernacle for the Holy Spirit's indwelling. 7. Jesus Christ in the flesh is the fulfilment of the tabernacle type, for He "tabernacled among us." 8. The house of God should be clean, pure and beautiful in all its parts and furniture. 9. The tabernacle and its furnishings taught the holiness of God, the sin of man, the way of salvation, separation from the world, consecration to God. 10. The house of God, the day of God, the book of God, the people of God, are the four great agencies for building up the kingdom of God.

DR. J. M. COON.

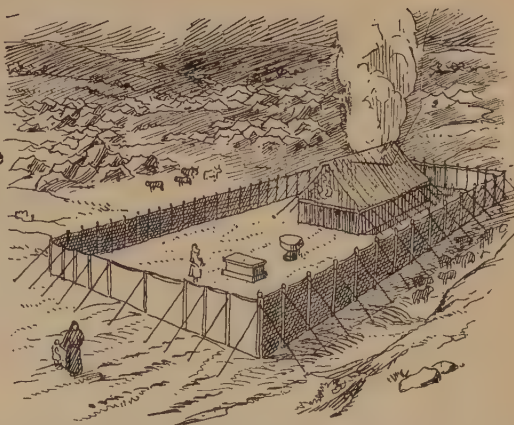


# THE BURNT OFFERING

And the Lord called unto



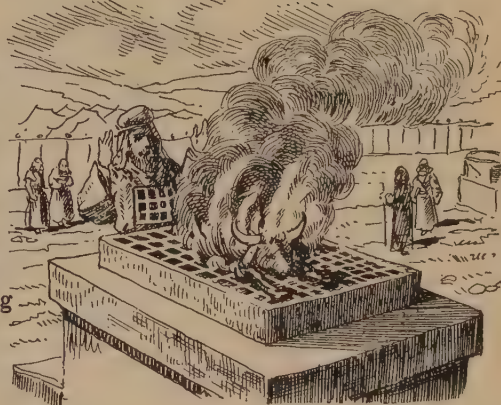
and  
spake  
unto  
him  
out  
of  
the



of the congregation, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord, ye shall bring your offering of the



even  
of the  
herd,  
and  
of the  
flock.  
If his  
offering  
be a



of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish: he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the



of the  
con-  
gre-  
gation  
before  
the  
Lord.  
And  
he  
shall



of the burnt offering; and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS LEV. 1:1-14.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Teach us, we pray Thee, the lesson of entire consecration. As Thou didst give Thine all, even Thy life, for us, so may we dedicate all, even our lives, to Thee. Thou art worthy of our best, and Thou art calling us to Thy love and sacrifice. May Thy Spirit help us to respond. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,  
Accept this gift today for Jesus' sake.  
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,  
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;  
But here I bring within my trembling hand  
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small—  
And Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand  
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield mine all.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, Valley before Mt. Sinai. Persons, Moses, priests, worshippers.

**Scripture Setting:** **How a Good Life Is Made.** By an atoning Christ, Isa. 53. By the new birth, John 3:1-8. By true repentance from sin, Ps. 51. By forsaking all for Christ, Luke 14:25-33. By being recreated, Eph. 4:17-32. By an obedient faith, Heb. 11:8-19. By taking Christ as a pattern, Phil. 2:1-8. By the Holy Spirit's leading, Rom. 8:14-27. By service and suffering, Heb. 12:1-11. By entire consecration, Rom. 12:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The burnt offering is a pictured story of the nature and blessedness of the new life. We find here: 1. The new

life is made possible by the blood of Jesus Christ, the Great Sacrifice for sin. 2. Because, in and by the perfect Christ, it also may become perfect in Him. 3. It is Divinely ordered, both as to the Christ who saves and the sinner who is saved. 4. It includes forgiveness of sin, and also love of holiness. 5. It means personal and absolute choice of Jesus Christ as a Savior. 6. It calls for minute and entire surrender of one's self and possessions to the chosen Master. 7. It is conscious of the Divine approval, for it is "a sweet savor unto the Lord." 8. The new life begins on earth and grows in and by all earthly experiences, and is crowned at last in Heaven and before God.

### THREE CHAPTERS IN A GOOD LIFE.

**How a Good Life Begins.** The burnt offering is a parable, a beautiful picture. It tells us three very important things about a good life. Everybody wants to live a good life, and here the model is given. The first thing we learn is that the good life is made possible because Jesus Christ died to take away sin. Sin hurts and spoils and makes ugly. You will notice that when the animal was killed, to be burned, the blood was saved by the priest, and then it was sprinkled over everything to show that it was cleansed. Now we know that the blood of an animal could not cleanse anything. Even the blood of a man, the best man, cannot cleanse from sin. But God intended that the blood of this animal should stand for the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ, who was to come and die for sinful men. It was hundreds of years before Christ, but God accepts this kind of blood until the real "Lamb of God" dies on Calvary. The only way a good life can begin is by the soul being sprinkled by Christ's blood of cleansing. People may be good in the home, and as neighbors and citizens, and do many good and kind things; but they never can be good in the sight of God till they are cleansed from sin. This is possible only in and by the blood of Christ. This, too, will make one better among all his earthly friends. In the picture of a herd of cattle, the man who felt his sin was to pick out the best ox and bring it for a sacrifice. By laying his hand on its head he confessed his sin and prayed for forgiveness. So it

was accepted as an atonement for it was a picture of Him who alone can forgive sin. This is all so important we might call it the blood chapter, for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." This blood relationship to Christ makes one a joint heir with Him to all of His possessions. God has put away our sins for Christ's sake.

**How Our Sin Is Covered.** The lid which covered the ark was the mercy-seat. The blood of atonement on the mercy-seat typified the blood of Christ satisfying the demands of the law. A primary teacher asked if there was anything God could not see. "No," "No," came from every part of the room, until one little lad had the courage to differ from the rest and said, "Yes." "What is it?" asked the teacher. "God can't see my sins when they are covered with the blood of Christ." The mercy-seat was the place of propitiation, mediation, where sin was confessed, judged, atoned for and forgiven. At the mercy-seat God was revealed in grace. The blood was always a picture of Christ giving His life to save man from sin.—Selected.

**How a Good Life Shows Itself.** This is the second chapter, and this too is pictured out here. After the bullock was killed and the blood sprinkled as shown in the pictures, the body was cut into pieces. All was made clean and laid in order on the wood. The sacred fire was put under it and it was burned. Sometimes a part of the body was saved to be eaten by the priests, but here all was burned. This was to teach that the whole life was surrendered to God, to be used in His service. This is the true test of a good life. When the body was cut into



pieces it meant that all was open before God and was given honestly to Him, for His glory. Sometimes people show their kindness to others by deeds of sacrifice, and even by giving up life; but even bad people may do that, as often soldiers may die fighting for their home and land. The act is good, though the man at heart may not be good. Here, both the act and the heart are seen to be good, and the whole body of the animal being burned shows that all one's life and powers are given to God for His glory and service. The first time an offering was burned on the tabernacle altar, God sent the fire down from Heaven. After that the priests always kept the fire burning. It was never to go entirely out, night or day. Here is a beautiful hymn which shows many ways in which we can do things which will please God. It is by Frances Ridley Havergal, who has written much on this subject of devotion and consecration:

### My Sacrifice.

Take my life, and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.  
Take my moments and my days,  
Let them flow in endless praise.

Take my hands, and let them move  
At the impulse of Thy love.  
Take my feet, and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for Thee.

Take my voice, and let me sing,  
Always, only, for my King;  
Take my lips, and let them be  
Filled with messages from Thee.

Take my silver and my gold—  
Not a mite would I withhold.  
Take my intellect, and use  
Every power as Thou shalt choose.

Take my will, and make it Thine—  
It shall be no longer mine.  
Take my heart, it is Thine own—  
It shall be Thy royal throne.

Take my love, my Lord, I pour  
At Thy feet its treasure-store.  
Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee.

**How a Good Life is Blessed.** The first chapter is the blood chapter, showing how a good life begins. The second chapter is the fire chapter, showing how a good life shows itself. This is the incense chapter, showing how a good life is praised and blessed. A good life is beautiful always. Even the people who are not good themselves are compelled to respect those who are. But God is specially pleased with all who do His will,

and who really love Him. This offering is said to be "of a sweet savor unto the Lord." That means that He noticed it, and was rejoiced at it. Such a life is to God as a beautiful, fragrant bouquet would be to us. We would like to hold it, look at it, and smell its fragrant odors. Upon such a life God showers blessings of many kinds. He even urges us to be true and consecrated by promising these blessings. Read Malachi 3:10, and you will find out what God thinks of consecrated people. One thing is sure, God will never let such persons get far away from Him and be lost. He loves them and will love them to the end, and will have them ever with Him.

**"Papa, Take Hold of Me."** It makes a good deal of difference whether you take hold of God or God takes hold of you. Said a father: "My little girl today refused to let me take hold of her hand when we were walking together. She thought she could go alone. But when we came to a place which was slippery she took hold, first of my little finger and then, as it grew more icy, of my whole hand. As we went on and it was growing worse, she let go entirely and said: 'Papa, take hold of me.' She knew I was strong and that she could not fall unless I fell. Now," said he, "I have been slipping, slipping for the last eleven years, and the reason is that I have not put my hand into the hand of God. I have been trying to take hold of Him, but not asking Him to take hold of me. As long as He has hold of my hand I can't fall. He would have to be dethroned first. If our hands are placed in His whose throne is in Heaven, we never can fall down into hell."—D. L. Moody.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many ways has God spoken to Moses and the other patriarchs? 2. What is meant by "patriarch"? 3. How does God speak to people now? 4. Why is this book of the Bible called Leviticus? 5. Many great events happened 1492 B. C. that is before Christ. What great event happened in 1492 after Christ? 6. What great festival days did the Israelites have? Which one was like our Christmas? which like our Thanksgiving? 7. What animals were clean, and what unclean? 8. Every gift or offering had to be the very best. What does this teach as to what we give or do for God? 9. Why are we to let our good works be seen by others? Matt. 5:16.

**Challenge Text.** "Be ye ———, for I am the ———, your God." Lev. 11: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. All we have and are should be dedicated to God and His service. 2. Our gifts to God are proofs of blessings. 3. The very act of giving to God increases our ability to receive from Him. 4. Love that never has an offering is only a hollow mockery. 5. We can give to God by our influence; testimony, example, prayers, money. 6. Consciousness of our need is the best preparation for giving to God acceptably. 7. All we give or do for God's cause should be of the best we have. 8. Our gifts, like our prayers, are tested by our attitude toward Jesus Christ. 9. All may not give large sums of money, but all can consecrate time and talents.

DR. J. M. COON.

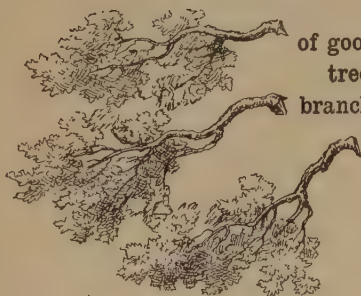


# THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Also in the  
fifteenth  
day of the  
seventh  
month,  
when  
ye have



in the  
fruit of the  
land, ye shall  
keep a feast  
unto the Lord  
seven days:  
on the first  
day shall be a  
sabbath, and  
on the eighth  
day shall be a  
sabbath. And  
ye shall take  
you on the  
first day the



of goodly  
trees,  
branches of



and  
the boughs  
of thick



and willows of the



and  
ye  
shall



before the Lord your  
God seven days. And  
ye shall keep it a  
feast unto the Lord  
seven days in the  
year. It shall be a  
statute for ever in  
your generations:  
ye shall celebrate it  
in the seventh month.  
Ye shall dwell in



seven days; all that  
are Israelites born  
shall dwell in booths:

That your generat-  
ions may know that I  
made the children of  
Israel to dwell in booths,  
when I brought them  
out of the land of  
Egypt: I am the Lord your God.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS LEV. 23:33-44.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Make us thankful for Thy many mercies. May the heart of every believer be as a harp to sound praise. Keep our faces toward Heaven, and our hearts full of Thy love. We thank Thee for what Thou art, for what Thou hast done, for what Thou hast promised to do. Abide in us by Thy Holy Spirit. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Serve God and be cheerful! Religion Looks all the more lovely in white; And God is best served by His servant When, smiling, he serves in the light, And lives out the glad tidings of Jesus In the sunshine he came to impart; For the fruit of His word and His Spirit Is Love, Joy and Peace in the heart."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 1490 B. C. Place, in the valley before Mt. Sinai. Persons, Moses, priests, people.

**Scripture Setting:** Thankful Offerings. Praise is beautiful, Ps. 33:1-22. God is wonderful, Ps. 40:1-17. Praise for redemption, Luke 1:67-79. Praise for deliverance, Ps. 18:6-17. The first fruits, Deut. 26:1-11. Like produces like, Matt. 7:15-20. Prompted by the Spirit, Eph. 5:9-13. Joy of worship, Ps. 122:1-9. Joy of fellowship, 1 Thes. 5:5-15. Joy of service, 1 Tim. 1:12-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The feast of tabernacles teaches the grace and duty of thankful praise. Many reasons and motives are present for

this: 1. The nature and character of God invite it. 2. The abounding mercies of God inspire and impel it. 3. The very ability and capacity to offer praise suggest it, and make it obligatory. The beast is not able to give thanks, and yet some of them make crude efforts to do so. 4. The act of thanksgiving fosters all those qualities which make a person lovable and efficient. 5. The lack of the thankful spirit is a serious self-confession and self-condemnation. 6. The more thankful one is the more he is blessed of God. 7. A look into one's life will discover abundant cause for thankfulness. To be thankful will invariably make one thankful.

### WHY WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL.

**We Should Be Thankful for Present Blessings.** The feast of tabernacles is a call to thankfulness and thanksgiving. It is also an illustration of the thankful spirit by the Israelites. How many kinds of grain and fruit can you find in that first picture? How eager they are as they gather in the crops! And how loaded they are, too! It must be that the good soil yielded a hundred fold this time. This is the third of the great yearly feasts. The first was the feast of the Passover, to celebrate their going out of Egypt. It was called "Passover" because the angel of death passed over the houses of the Israelites which had the mark of the blood on the door posts. The second feast was seven weeks later, and was called the feast of harvest, for it came in the early harvest. It was also called feast of Pentecost, meaning fifty, because it was fifty days after the Passover. This third one was the feast at the full ingathering of the crops. It was like our Thanksgiving, and was a joyous time and a religious time. At each of these great feasts every man was to come to the tabernacle and bring an offering to the Lord. This festival was held five days after the great day of atonement. After that solemn service of repentance and putting away sin, they would be in much better spirit to give praise to God. They would also be much more likely to see their blessings. The reason why people are not thankful is because sin has clouded their vision, and even blinded them. Such people are much more apt to find fault and grumble and murmur. The heart is like a musical instrument, and

when sin is in, the heart is out of tune. Christ alone can drive sin out. After the heart is in tune, it is quite easy for one to be thankful to God and helpful to all the persons he meets. He sees blessings everywhere, for he shares all things in Christ.

**Joint Heir with Christ.** A dying judge the day before his departure to be with Christ said to his pastor, "Do you know enough about law to understand what is meant by joint tenancy?" "No," was the reply; "I know nothing about law. I know a little about grace, and that satisfies me."

"Well," he said, "if you and I were joint tenants on a farm, I could not say to you, that is your hill of corn and this is mine; that is your blade of grass and this is mine, but we would share and share alike in everything on the place. I have just been lying here and thinking with unspeakable joy that Jesus Christ has nothing apart from me, that everything that He has is mine, and we will share alike through all eternity."—Sel.

**We Should Be Thankful for What We Are.** We have been looking at the crops God raised by the soil. They are His gifts to man. But God can raise other crops than those raised in and by the soil. These are not so easily seen in themselves, but we can see the effects and results. The pictures show some of the things which grow in man. The very gathering in of the crops teaches that we have power to look ahead and lay up things for the future. It is well to use that power to look far, far ahead and lay up treasures in Heaven. Those treasures do not perish like earthly goods. The pictures of the boughs and branches show that man can use the things God has made, and use them for His glory. Then that great picture of

waving the branches tells us of several things which grow in the soil of the soul.

There is happiness of the best kind, a joyous happiness which shows in their faces and in their actions. There is fellowship, old and young meeting together in their rejoicing. There is love to God, as well as love to and for each other, for this is a religious rejoicing. These and many more things are grown in the soul. Just stop and think how glad you ought to be that you are so much more and better than a mere animal. In his body man is an animal, and the best one God made, but in his soul he stands alone; and the soul lives forever. Some people live as if they forgot altogether about their souls. We should be thankful that we have souls; and thankful, very thankful for the crops God grows in the soul—love, joy, friendship, faith, hope, forgiveness, godliness. We should be harvesting those crops, too; gathering them for use day by day in this life. Some people are so much more agreeable than others. This is because they gather in large crops of these beautiful fruits, and feed on them. The Holy Spirit will grow such fruit in any soul that will let Him do it. The list may be found in Gal. 5:22, 23. There is also a long list there of the bad things that grow in too many souls. This is Satan's harvest, and they are like weeds in a garden. God intended the soul to be a garden of beautiful flowers and fruits. All weeds should be pulled up and destroyed. We should be thankful that by the help of the Holy Spirit, who is the Gardener of the soul, we can grow so many good things.

### Some Golden Praise Keys.

A bunch of golden keys is mine,  
To make each day with gladness shine.  
"Good-morning," that's the golden key  
That unlocks every day for me.  
When evening comes, "Good-night," I say,  
And close the door of each glad day.  
When at the table, "If you please,"  
I take from off my bunch of keys.  
When friends give anything to me,  
I'll use a little "Thank you" key.  
"Excuse me," "Beg your pardon," too,  
When by mistake some harm I do.  
Or if unkindly harm is given,  
With "Forgive me" I shall be forgiven.  
On a golden ring these keys I'll bind;  
This is its motto: "Be ye kind."

### We Should Be Thankful for Past Mercies.

This reason for a thankful life is shown in the very last pictures. The "booth" was a sort of shed or tent house, made quickly with whatever they could find, and covered with branches. The Israelites were to live

in these sheds for a whole week. Here they were to eat, sleep, talk, study, pray and do all else that they usually did. What was the reason for this? This was to remind them of their great deliverance from Egyptian bondage. When God brought them out of Egypt He provided booths for them to live in. Now, by living in them they would be reminded of God's grace, care and protection. This was but one form of Divine goodness, but it would suggest many others. A pot of the manna was kept in the ark, and Aaron's rod that budded, as memorials of the wonderful ways God had helped them. So whichever way we look we are inspired to be thankful. As we look around us, we see present blessings; as we look within us we see wonderful powers and gifts; as we look ahead of us, we see the shining promises; as we look backwards, we see the many helpful providences; as we look above, we see a Heavenly Father, and Divine Intercessor and a mighty Holy Spirit. Really, every day should be a day of thanksgiving and praise for all that God has done.

**How Our Thanksgiving Day Began.** The early New England fathers, in their anxieties and trials, had often had public days of fasting and prayer for deliverance. One day when it was proposed to appoint another fast day, a farmer arose and said that he proposed that they keep a day of thanksgiving instead for the mercies they had already received. They did so, and there has never been a year since when they and their descendants have not had abundant mercies for which to be thankful.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name as many as you can of the religious feast days of the Jews. 2. When were branches of palms and trees used for Christ? Tell all you can about that event. 3. What Scripture urges us to praise and be thankful? 4. What do you know about how our Thanksgiving day began? 5. How do we know that God wants all to be happy? 6. What reasons do you have to be thankful? 7. Name some of the fruits and grains gathered by the Israelites. 8. What are some of the crops God gives us in our land? 9. What kind of trees and branches are shown in the pictures? 10. What are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit? (Gal. 5:22-23.)

**Challenge Text.** "What shall I — unto the Lord for all His — unto me?" Ps. 116:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Praise is a condition of prayer, and prayer is occasion for praise. 2. To fail of thankfulness is an acknowledgment of thoughtlessness, for if one is thankful he will be thankful. 3. The religious life is full of joy and blessing, and it should be made manifest. 4. The highest kind of thanksgiving is for Christ's salvation and the truest form is by consecration to His service. 5. We show that we are thankful by giving to those who are less fortunate than ourselves. 6. If God is leading, we may confidently thank Him for all things, and even in advance. 7. Our Thanksgiving day is a fitting time for reunions of families and friends. 8. The day should be guarded from degenerating into a time of mere worldly pleasure. 9. God is the source of all our blessings, and He should be specially remembered always.

DR. J. M. COON.



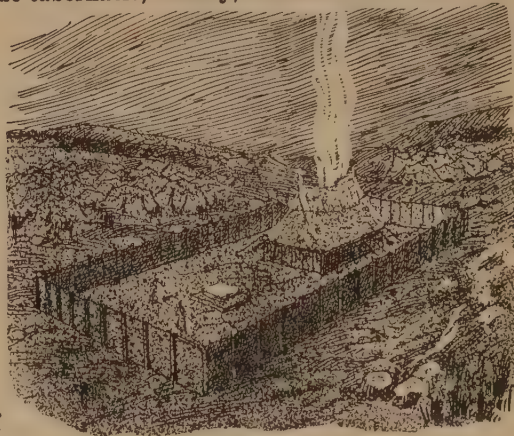
# THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE.

And on the day that the tabernacle was reared up the

covered the tabernacle, namely, the tent of the testimony:

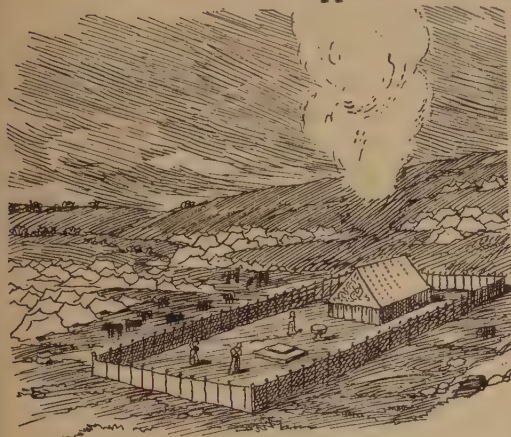


and at  
even  
there



was upon the tabernacle as it were the appearance of

until the morning. So it was alway: the cloud covered it by day,  
and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was



from the  
tabernacle,  
then after  
that the  
children  
of Israel



and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel



\* \*  
At the  
command  
ment of  
the Lord  
they  
rested



and at the commandment of the Lord they journeyed: they kept the  
charge of the Lord, at the commandment of the Lord by the hand of Moses.

NUM. IX: 15-17, 23.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS NUM. 9:15-23.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the Way, the Truth and the Life. Thou hast made very plain the way to salvation and blessedness. May we be eager to follow Thee and obey Thee. Keep us from straying in act or thought or desire. Walking thus by Thy Word and Spirit, may we have joy and peace through all of life's pilgrimage, and be led at last to Thy Heavenly home. For Christ's sake. Amen.

I seek no guide, save only Thee,  
Nor ask the way Thou ledest me!  
My only prayer: "Lord, may I know  
The work that Thou wouldst have me do?"

If in far lands, Thou ledest me,  
'Cross arid plains, or storm-vexed sea,  
By pathways dark, or lone, or drear,  
Clasping Thy hand, I will not fear.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, the valley before Sinai. Persons, Moses and all the people.

**Scripture Setting:** Heavenly Guidance. Jacob guided, Gen. 28:10-15. Israel guided, Ex. 13:17-22. David guided, Ps. 25:8-12. Paul guided, Rom. 1:7-13. God's guiding hand, Luke 12:1-7. The Spirit teaching, Neh. 9:13-20. The Spirit guide, John 16:7-15. The Spirit helper, Rom. 8:14-27. Gifts of the Spirit, 1 Cor. 12:4-10. Guided and kept, Ps. 121:1-8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Scripture and the story suggest the Heavenly guides in the earthly pilgrimage. There are many helpful analogies, for—

"The path of life we walk today  
Is strange as that the Hebrews trod;

We need the shadowing rock, as they;  
We need, like them, the guides of God."

1. God furnishes many guides to man, as: the Bible, His shining providences, His Holy Spirit, Conscience. 2. All these are needful in view of the many enemies, dangers, pitfalls. 3. A true conception of life includes all these God-given guides. 4. He who has received the guidance and the guides is under obligation to lead others also. 5. It is the believers privilege to be conscious of the Divine guidance and favor. 6. There should be constant praise for past guidance, and constant prayer for future guidance. 7. All who are Divinely guided are brought safely into the Heavenly Canaan. 8. The guides of God are true to us and we should be obedient to them.

### THE WONDERFUL HEAVENLY GUIDE.

**Ready for the Journey.** The Israelites have been camping here by the mountain of Sinai for nearly a year. God has been getting these people ready to be a nation; His chosen nation. He intends to do a great work for the world through the nation, so He prepares them for it. When He brought them out of Egypt it was like being born into a new world. They were just a baby nation. Now they are able to stand and walk, and they have learned many things about God and about themselves. Especially have they been taught as to how they should worship the true God. The ten commandments have been given, and the tabernacle has been built. It was all according to the plan God gave to Moses. In the account of all these things, the words "as the Lord commanded Moses" may be found a hundred times. This shows how important it was that all should be done just right. So in our lives, God wants everything to be right and everyone to do right.

You remember about the ark and the other furniture in the tabernacle. Also about the burnt offerings, and the great day of atonement, when one goat was slain and the other was sent into the wilderness carrying the sins of the people. All these things were pictures of Christ, who was to come hundreds of years later. The three great annual feasts—Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles—were special times of service. Aaron was the one high priest and his four sons were

priests. These each had a special dress, to show what their work was. Aaron's was very beautiful and very costly. This tabernacle was the place where God was to meet man. Before the tabernacle men built altars as meeting places—you remember Adam, Noah, Abraham and others built altars to the Lord. Later the tabernacle became the temple, and in the time of Christ they had also synagogues. In these days we call them churches. In the old world they were called cathedrals. They are all holy and sacred because they are meant to be places where God meets man. Remember this always when you go into the house of God anywhere, and so go there reverently and to meet Him.

**Follow the Copy.** The tabernacle was made after the plan God gave to Moses, and it was a type of Christ. Christ is our pattern, John 13:15; Matt. 11:29; 1 Pet. 2:21. We are a pattern, 1 Tim. 1:16; Phil. 4:9. "Be likeminded one toward another according to the example of Christ," Rom. 15:5, margin. A teacher gave a boy an example in arithmetic, with the printed rule. Perseveringly the boy tried, but, failing, laid his head on the desk and sobbed. The teacher sat beside him, patiently worked out the example, and showed him how. God commanded, "Be ye holy," and gave the law. But when men failed to keep it, He sent Jesus to show them how. He is the pattern for our imitation. Let us ask, in every difficult place, what John Stuart Mill is said to have asked toward the last of his life: "What would Jesus of Nazareth have done if He had been in my place?" Let us look at our Pattern and follow Him. "Do as I have done to you," John 13:15. "Those things . . . ye have . . . seen in Me, do," Phil. 4:9.



**The Guide Comes Suddenly.** But now all is ready to take the first journey. How and where shall they go? When a baby is able to stand and is ready to walk, the mother reaches out her hand and the baby toddles toward it. Did something like that happen to this baby nation? Yes; look at that first picture and you see a cloud over the tabernacle. That is from Heaven, and is as if God reached down His hand to be the guide. It is true that Moses had often guided them, but even he was a kind of God's hand to them, for God always told them what to do. But I think this was better than Moses, for it was direct from Heaven to the people, and it never made mistakes. Moses did sometimes make mistakes and one of our stories will tell about a very bad mistake he made. This could never make mistakes, and so the people were more ready to trust and follow it. The people did not have to ask what Moses thought, or Aaron, or anyone else. They saw what the cloud did, and each one obeyed for himself. When the cloud moved they knew it was time to follow, and when the cloud stopped they ceased their journey and set up their tents again. In the picture the cloud seems on fire, at times; this is in order that it may be seen at night. The shining will also give light to show the way. Can you think of any reason why the Israelites would welcome this guide? Had they ever seen it before? Yes; this was the same way by which they were led out of Egypt. The cloud was bright toward the Israelites and dark toward the Egyptians. Then, too, you remember that God just looked out of the cloud toward the Egyptians, and they were thrown into terror and confusion. So the cloud was to be not only a guide, but a guard. Surely they would be pleased to follow a guide that had led them and kept them in the past.

The other pictures show how they journey and how they pitch their tents again, and how they are abiding in their tents. All their movements were directed by this wonderful Heavenly guide.

## Who Is Your Pilot?

Who is the pilot that's steering your bark  
Over life's waters, tempestuous and dark?  
Who is your pilot? Oh, who can it be  
That's guiding your bark to Eternity?

Who is your pilot? Your vessel is frail;  
'Gainst the tempests of life it cannot prevail.  
For the billows of sin will your vessel o'erwhelm  
Unless Jesus, the Pilot, is holding the helm!

Who is your pilot? What storms can he brave?  
Who is your pilot? Is he mighty to save?  
Who is your pilot? Will winds do his will,  
Or the tempests obey when he says, "Peace, be still"?

—John Richard Moreland.

**The Bible Our Guard and Guide.** Do we have anything like that to guide us now? Yes; we have something even better. God's word is "a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path." And David says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee." The Bible is called "The Word," because it is God's word to man, telling him how and where to go and what to do, in every condition of life. As God wrote the ten commandments on tablets of stone, so by His Spirit He wrote the Bible on the heart tablets of holy men; and by them the Bible is given to the whole world. Peter speaks of this, and says it is a more sure word of prophecy; that is, a surer guide. If one obeys the Bible he is certain to see the way he should go and the work he should do. And each person may have this guide book all for himself and in himself. Isn't that better than a cloud? Then the Holy Spirit is in and with the word, and by His help we are kept willing to be led by the word, and are really given power to obey all that God commands. Besides, the Bible and the Holy Spirit guard us from all evils and all enemies. Thus you see that the Bible and the Holy Spirit are much better than the cloud the Israelites had. God guides the birds in the air, and the fishes in the sea, and will He not guide us?

**Quiz and Study.** 1. When was the pillar of cloud first seen, and why? 2. Why was one side dark there, and the other light? 3. Tell what you can about three wise men who were guided by a star, and what did they find? 4. What is the guide called which every one has in himself? 5. How must it be set right and kept right? 6. What is that called which guides the ship on the ocean, and what must it point towards? 7. What is the place called where we are said to meet God for worship? 8. To what place will those who love and obey God be guided at last? 9. What part of the Lord's prayer asks for Divine guidance?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. In the life pilgrimage God is the leader, the Bible is the chart, the Holy Spirit is the guide, and Heaven is the final home. 2. An invitation, rightly given and followed up, is the most effective Christian service. 3. Many of those who say "I will not" are yet likely to be won by the truth. 4. God, by His providence, is seeking out a "resting place" for His people. 5. Prayer leads to praise, and praise prepares for prayer. 6. Since God leads, we may be sure that "all things work together for good." 7. Life is full of perils and enemies and temptations, and a Divine Guide and Guard are positively necessary. 8. Jesus Christ not only saves us from sin, but is our perfect Example and Guide in life.

DR. J. M. COON.

And



sent  
them  
to spy  
out  
the  
land  
of



and said unto them, Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the land, what it is; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they be strong or weak, few or many; And what the land is that they dwell in, whether it be good or bad; and what cities they be that they dwell in, whether in



or in



And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence



and  
they



upon a staff;  
and they brought  
of the



and of the





# THE REPORT OF THE SPIES.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS NUM. 13:17-33.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, we are glad that Thou knowest all things, and art seeking to bring us into the large places of blessing. Thou art also showing us the best ways by which to overcome enemies and to enter into life's true successes. May we not fear the enemies or the difficulties but trust always to Thy power and grace. Open wide the gateways to our inheritance. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Oh! thanks, and thanks a thousand times repeated!

We know your names, ye valiant, faithful two;  
Your lowest words are like a song from Heaven,  
Ye searched the land out better than ye knew!  
When through the camp there rings a cry for  
'Egypt,'

And all the tribes sway backward in despair,  
We turn to you who bear the purple clusters,  
For still ye say, 'Surely the land is fair.'"

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, Kadesh Barnea, fifty miles south of Beersheba. Persons, Moses, the twelve spies, the people.

**Scripture Setting: The Life Campaign.** Put on the whole armor, Eph. 6:10-20. As a good soldier, 2 Tim. 2:1-15. A battle with self, Rom. 7:7-25. The Spirit leader, Ezek. 37:1-14. Our Heavenly helpers, 2 Kings 6:8-23. Divinely girded and guided, Psa. 18:30-40. Some past victories, Heb. 11:32-40. Personal responsibility, Rom. 6:8-15. Wise confidence, Psa. 46. The final victory, Rev. 14:1-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Life has been shown to us as a training, in many of these stories. Here we begin to see it as a campaign of conquest. Some of the winning qualities in this life campaign are suggested by this story: 1. A spirit of conquest. One will win what he hopes and plans to win. 2. Wise and careful forelooking necessary that we

may know our own strength, and also that of the enemy. 3. Following instructions. The leader may be God Himself, by His Holy Spirit, or some Moses whom God has given. 4. Rallying and uniting the forces. In the individual, the forces of heart, brain, conscience, will; in the organization, all the people, for all kinds of helpers are needed. 5. A right kind of optimism—the kind that sees the plan of God, and has a grip on the promises and power of God. 6. Ready for evil reports and objections. That means to have unshaken faith in God. Joshua and Caleb had that, and therefore they could not be moved. 7. Remember that life is a campaign, not merely one battle. You may lose many battles and yet win in the whole campaign. Don't be alarmed if you have an occasional Bull Run. You are sure to win at last.

## FINDING OUT THE BEST WAY.

**The Man and the Land.** Here are two pictures that you are getting to know better and better. One is the man Moses, who led the people out of Egypt, the other is a picture of the land of Canaan, towards which the Israelites were led. Moses was a wonderful man, greater than any man who ever lived, unless it was the Apostle Paul. He was greater than Paul for the time in which he lived; a wonderful man, and a wonderful life, and all because a wonder-working God was with him. And here was the land we have heard so much about, and which sometime was to be the birthplace of Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world. How familiar that map is to you! This was the land promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and they had so many blessings connected with it. It was the land of promise, and now Moses is here to enter it and live in it. It is wonderful how Moses kept the promised land in his eye and mind and heart. This was one thing which helped to make him strong and true. This, too, made him earnest in his intercessions for the people. He gave himself up to this one great undertaking. It is as if he said to himself over and over again, "This one thing I will do." This is the land of Abraham, of Isaac, of Jacob, the land which God had promised again and again to give to His people. And now they are

coming back to take possession of that land. Though Moses never was to enter it himself yet he was constant in prayer and effort that the people he led might come into full possession.

John Knox was so anxious about his native land, and that it should be a Christian land, that he prayed, "O God, give me Scotland, or I die." Just so Moses was possessed with a master purpose to bring the people of God into the promised land.

**A Faithless People.** Here was the land, and God said, "Go up and possess it." If they had obeyed, God would have given it to them at once. But they were fearful, and asked that spies might be sent to learn about the land and the people. God agreed to that, just as He agreed later to give the people a king when they insisted on having one. Then God overruled this to work out good. Just as he put Moses for forty years in the shepherd life in the wilderness, to train him for his work; so now he puts this child nation in the wilderness college for forty years to train it for its great work in the world. The very best way would have been for the people to obey God and go in to Canaan at once. The next best was to submit to God's punishment, and go to school for forty years. The people tried to play truant and have their own way as we learn

in the next story but God whipped them back into his school-room. Moses was submissive to God in all this matter. But how much better if they had all done as God commanded, and gone right in and possessed the land.

**Do It Now.** When you've got a job to do, do it now! if it's one you wish was through, do it now! If you're sure the job's your own, then just tackle it alone; don't hesitate and groan—do it now! Don't put off a bit of work, do it now! For it doesn't pay to shirk, do it now! If you want to fill a place, and be useful in the race, just get up and take a brace, do it now! Do not linger by the way, do it now! You will lose if you delay, do it now! If the other fellows wait, or postpone until it's late, you hit up a faster gait—do it now.—Intelligencer.

**Spying the Land.** Now Moses picked out the best men to go as spies, one from each tribe except the tribe of Levi. They went two and two so as not to be seen together and probably dressed themselves so as to look like travelers or traders. They were forty days in the work, and found out a good many things. They learned that the people dwelt, not in tents like those in the pictures, but in places that were well built, and which would be hard to take from them. The Israelites always lived in tents, for they were moving from place to place. One day two of the men came to a small stream on the banks of which were the largest grape vines they had ever seen. They cut down a branch with one large cluster on it. They said that such a cluster would be the very best way to prove to the people how fruitful the land was. It took both men to carry it, one at each end of a pole. Others brought pomegranates and figs.

**The Spies' Report.** At last the spies are back to camp, and the people are anxious to hear their report. The twelve spies all agreed that it was a good and fruitful land, and the things they brought back showed that. But they differed in the matter of going up to take the land. Ten of the spies said that the land was a good land: but the people are giants and we were only as grasshoppers in their sight and they have cities with walls and strongholds. Then up spake Caleb and said, "Yes, that is true, but we have God on our side, and He has promised to give us the land. Joshua agreed with

Caleb and together they tried to persuade the people. But the ten declared that it was no use to try. The longer the people hesitated the weaker they became in spirit. They seemed to forget entirely the God who had led them and kept them so wonderfully. So now the very thing they came out of Egypt for, and, which is just at hand and offered to them, they fail to see and accept.

The ten cowardly spies God struck with a plague and they died. But their evil report had done its work like a poison, and had made cowards of all the people. How much better it is to see the things which God is showing us or which He is telling us to do. God commanded Caleb and Joshua by saying that they wholly followed Him. God also promised that they should both enter the promised land after awhile. All the rest of the people, over twenty years of age, should wander about in the wilderness until they died. Each one will get what he is looking for; or, as the Bible says, "According to your faith be it unto you."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How far had the people come and where were they now? 2. Was God able to give them victory if they had gone in and battled for the land? 3. What makes you think He could and would? 4. What last great command of Christ begins with "Go ye"? 5. Who should we keep watch of lest he make us sin? 6. Who were dwelling in Canaan at this time? 7. How many people did Moses lead from Sinai? See Num. 1 and 2. 8. What did God send them when they murmured and complained of the manna?

**Challenge Text.** "Thou therefore my — be strong in the — that is in —." 2 Tim. 2: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God promises blessings, but expects man to work and fight for them. 2. No matter what the giants of difficulty and opposition, just so God orders the battle. 3. Caleb believed the promise of God, and therefore had courage and power. 4. Man's bad habits may be as giants, and his sinful life as a walled city, but all may be overcome by faith in Christ. 5. The church is able to go up and possess the land, and failure is only because she does not really attempt the work. 6. Almost in Canaan, and yet through unbelief doomed to die in the wilderness; so many are "almost persuaded, but lost." 7. Our victories lie along the line of our faith and our vision. 8. One will not win the Canaan of Heaven unless he has faith in Christ as Saviour and leader. 9. If we are cowards we can't make others courageous. 10. We should stand with God whether ten or ten thousand are against us, or even the whole world.

DR. J. M. COON.



## ISRAEL'S UNBELIEF

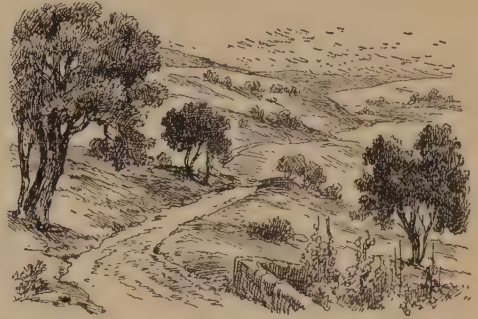
And Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh,  
which were of them that searched the land,



And they spake unto all the company of the children

of Israel,  
saying, The  
land, which

we passed through to search it, is an exceeding good



If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with



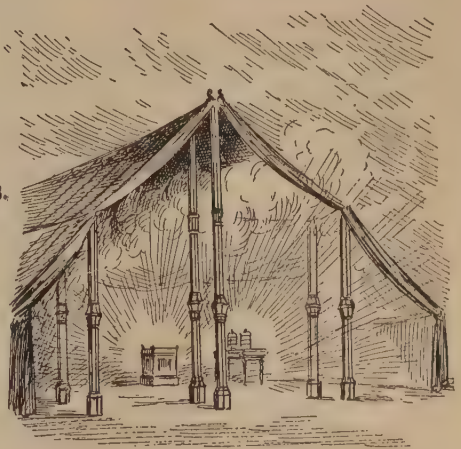
Only rebel  
not ye  
against  
the Lord,  
neither  
fear ye  
the



of the land; for they are bread for us: their defence is departed from them, and the Lord is with us:  
fear them not. But all the congregation bade



with stones.  
And the  
glory of  
the Lord  
appeared  
in the



of the congregation before all the children of Israel.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS NUM. 14:1-25.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Keep us from following our own blind selves. Keep us from the sins of selfishness and unbelief. Open our eyes and minds and hearts, that we may see and receive Thee. Enable us to measure rightly the things that have eternal value. May we not sell our birthright for a mere mess of pottage. Give us faith, peace, joy, courage, victory. For Christ's sake. Amen.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, Kadesh-barnea, headquarters for thirty-seven years of their wilderness wandering. **Persons,** Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Caleb, the people.

**Scripture Setting:** Sin of Unbelief. A bad heart, Rom. 3:10-20. Bad teachers, Matt. ch. 3. Blinding power of sin, 1 Cor. ch. 2. Worldly spirit, Acts 19:29-40. Saul rejected, 1 Sam. 15:12-26. Rejecting God, Ps. 106. Warning against sin, Jas. ch. 4. Causes of unbelief, 1 Sam. 8:1-10. Folly of unbelief, Ps. 118:1-16. Punishment for it, Luke 20:9-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The sin of unbelief is one of the cardinal sins, both as to frequency and

We can't afford to lose the soul  
For this world's fleeting breath;  
We can't afford to barter life  
In mad exchange for death.  
But blind to good are we apart  
From Thee, all-seeing Lord;  
Oh, grant us light, that we may know  
The things we can't afford. —Selected.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

as to terrible consequences. 1. It is the mother of all sins, and it makes every other sin worse. 2. It starts with a cold heart and soon ends by making a heart of stone. 3. It keeps one from the love and friendship of God all through life, and keeps him out of Heaven at last. 4. It is so subtle and flattering that it hides in many people who think themselves good, and who really are good in many ways. 5. It grows rapidly to murmur against God and to persecute the godly and righteous. 6. It often pretends to be only a desire for knowledge, and so it begins to question and cavil.

## FIGHTING AGAINST GOD.

**Rejecting Good Counsel.** The Israelites refused to take the advice of Moses and the two good spies. These men stood in the place of God, and to oppose them was to fight against God. Their first advice was to go in and possess the land; but the people were made afraid by the report of the coward spies.

Then, when they repented and were determined to go and take the land, Moses cautioned them not to go, for God would not go with them. This also they rejected, and they wilfully rushed against the enemy and were defeated. What wicked people they were! In both cases they were fighting against God. The first picture shows Joshua and Caleb rending their outer garments. This was a sign of great indignation or of great sorrow. Sometimes it meant both indignation and sorrow, as in this case. They knew that this refusal, to obey God's command by Moses, would delay their entrance into the promised land, and probably bring punishment besides. These ten spies found just what they feared in their heart of unbelief. One will usually see what he is himself. The outside world is a mirror of the inside thought.

**What They Saw and Found.** "Did you observe the beautiful colors of the sunset beyond the mountains there?" asked the passenger in the seat ahead, as he rejoined his fellow traveler. "No," replied the latter, "I didn't see it at all." "Why, where were your eyes?" "Well, I had noticed several heaps of bones where cattle had died out here on the prairie, and I was counting the skeletons." What are you looking for—sunsets or skeletons, beauties or bleached bones? You are likely to see about what you look for. Indeed, there are many that say, "Who will show us any good?" but the principal reason why they cannot see any good is

because they are always looking for evil. Look for skeletons and you are apt to find them, or, if not, you will think you do, which will afford the same sort of grim satisfaction.—Exchange.

**Losing Their Inheritance.** Joshua and Caleb make one more effort to persuade the people. They tell them about the goodly land flowing with milk and honey. The two pictures show that the expression "flowing with milk and honey" meant that the land had an abundance of all things needful for food. They also remind them of the promises of God and of His great power, and that the very strength of the enemies of the land will be given to them as food, if they only will obey. Still further they cautioned them not to rebel against God. All this was lost because they fought against Him. But, worst of all, they lost God's favor and help and guidance. The same law is at work here as in the case of Pharaoh. You remember that he hardened his heart against God, time after time, and at last it became fixed in that hardened state. So these people would not listen to reason or to pleading. They were more and more unbelieving.

**Business or God.** "Mamma," asked little three-year-old Freddie, "are we going to Heaven some day?"

"Yes, dear, I hope so," was the reply.

"I wish papa could go, too," continued the little fellow.

"Well, and don't you think he will?" asked his mother.

"Oh, no," replied Freddie; "he could not leave his business."

What influence will such a father exert over his children? Yet that would not, to a child, be an unnatural conclusion.

**Stoning Their Best Friends.** As the people had turned against Moses and Aaron, so



now they turn against Joshua and Caleb. The more urgent these two good men are, the more angry the people become. At last, as you see in one of the pictures, they take up stones to stone them. God protects them by the outshining of His glory, as seen in the last picture. By this they are overawed and terrified. But they were not changed in heart. This glory of the Lord that appeared was just like the hand of God from Heaven laying hold of the people. They dare not continue to stone the good spies. It was like what happened that night at the Red Sea, when God looked at the Egyptians and threw them into confusion. In that case, it was in judgment and to destroy them, while in this case it was in mercy to restrain them from committing murder. Moses and Aaron had been praying for the people, and this glory of the Lord was in answer to their prayers.

**Praying and Helping.** "The happiest woman in my church," said a pastor in a suburban town, "and the most valuable in all kinds of church work, once told me the motto by which she had regulated her church life from the beginning of her membership. It was short, but to the point:

"Expect little, and do all you can."

"She called it her golden rule, and it certainly worked like a charm. Where other women are disappointed and discouraged, I notice that she goes along as blithely as possible. She never shows any hurt feelings, or indulges in any pride, or demands any praise or recognition. That is probably why she always gets it from those who appreciate good work. It is a happy motto."

**"Thou God Seest Me."** The ten coward spies forgot this great truth. While they were spying out the land, God was watching them, and He not only destroyed the ten spies, but is prompted to destroy all the people for being influenced by their report. And now a remarkable thing happens. Moses is moved to intercede for the rebellious nation. God had praised Joshua and Caleb, but this did not atone for the unbelief and sin of the whole people. What Abraham did for Sodom, Moses now does for the children of Israel. He thinks not of himself, but only of the good of the people and the glory of God. He urges the Divine plan and purpose and the vindication of God's ways before men. He pleads also the great mercy and long-suffering patience of God. His prayer is heard, and the nation is spared. But God punishes them by decreeing that none of those who were twenty years old and upward should be allowed to enter the land, except Joshua and Caleb. It is a grand and thrilling chapter in the wonderful life of this great man.

**Getting On the Wrong Side.** The Israelites were fighting against God in this matter, and Caleb and Joshua were with God. This was not the only time, but it was one of their worst sins. This was in the second year of their travels in the wilderness. Our next story is about what happened near the close of the forty years. We know only a few of the things which happened to them during all those years. But among those events are other instances of unbelief and sin.

There was the revolt of Korah and others (two hundred and fifty in all), and they were swallowed up in the earth as a punishment for their pride. This happened before all the people, and was a terrible warning. There was the jealousy against Aaron, when God showed them that Aaron was His choice for high priest. He did this by having twelve rods, one for each tribe, laid before the ark over night. In the morning it was seen that only Aaron's rod had budded like a living branch. This was the "finger of God to them." Then there was the time when Aaron and Miriam, his sister, were jealous of Moses, and God smote Miriam with leprosy. Moses prayed for her, and God healed her. She and Aaron were also cured of their pride and sin.

By all these cases of sinning we see that it was their habit to get on the wrong side; against God. God was good and merciful—whenever Moses prayed for the people; though they kept sinning, He kept forgiving.

**Be Sure You Are Right.** A father, mother and boy were going along the street to a certain store one day. The lad got impatient because the parents walked so slowly, and ran on ahead. Not having his parents to guide him, he missed his way and went up the wrong street. After a while he discovered he was wrong, and had to retrace his steps, and come back to father and mother for guidance. His impatience gained for him only a waste of strength, and he was glad to submit to the guiding of his parents. We make progress only when we are right and under the direction of wisdom and experience.—Selected.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why did the ten spies fear to go up and take the land? 2. What made the people change their decision? 3. When before did the glory of the Lord appear?

**Challenge Text.** So we see they could not—because of —. Heb. 3:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Unbelief boasts of its wisdom, but it is supremely foolish. 2. Unbelief always fails in the end, and faith always wins in the end. 3. Unbelief produces grumbling and trouble; faith leads to prayer and harmony. 4. Unbelief shuts one out of every promised land and out of Heaven at last. 5. The man of unbelief is a dead weight in any enterprise. He is built on negatives and ignorance, and so fails and falls. 6. The man of faith is a power and inspiration. He is built on God and truth, and so is successful and victorious.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE SMITTEN ROCK

And Moses



Aaron gathered the congregation together before the

from before the Lord, as he commanded him.



And  
Moses  
and

and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he



twice:  
and  
the



abundantly, and the congregation



and  
their



also.  
150

NUM. XX: 9-11.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS NUM. 20:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art Saviour, and Thou alone. Thou didst give Thy life on the cross, that sinful man might be saved. Help us to accept the life that is possible through Thy blood. May we be sheltered by the blood, cleansed by the blood, saved by the blood. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me;  
Let me hide myself in Thee!  
Let the water and the blood,  
From Thy riven side which flowed,  
Be of sin the double cure;  
Cleanse me from its guilt and power!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1452. Place, Kadesh-barnea. Persons, Moses, Aaron, the people. **Scripture Setting:** Salvation Pictures. Christ the light of the world, John 1:1-9. A Star shines, Num. 24:12-17. A sun rises, Mal. 4:1-6. Dawn breaks, Luke 2:27-32. The light of the world, Isa. 9:2-27. Christ at Jericho, Luke 19:1-10. Christ at Cana, John 2:1-11. Christ at Jacob's Well, John 4:28-42.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is a miracleparable of salvation in a series of pictures. 1. A picture of man in thirst and unrest because of sin. Whatever the cause, and whether conscious of it or not, all men are sinful and sinning and unsatisfied. 2. A picture of the utter failure of earthly conditions to satisfy the awful thirst of sin, or even alle-

viate it. The world is a wilderness, stony and bare, as far as any spiritual blessings are concerned. 3. A picture of the supernatural coming of Christ to bring salvation. Christ is from above, and the direct gift of God to man. 4. A picture of the complete satisfaction Christ gives to the sinful nature of man. The water is an emblem and figure suggestive of purity, cleansing and health. 5. A picture of the fulness and freeness of this salvation—"enough for each, enough for all, enough forevermore." 6. A picture of the human agency in the distribution of salvation's blessings. 7. A picture of the ease and comfort and joy in partaking of salvation. It is only drink and live. "Oh, taste, and see that the Lord is good!"

### A ROCK THAT BECAME A SPRING OF WATER.

**Why the People Grumbled.** They had grumbled before many times. We might almost call them the grumbling nation. That is not a very good name for a nation, nor for a man or boy. Nobody likes a grumbler, not even if he is a grumbler himself. But what made them grumble this time? They had come to a place where there was no water for themselves or cattle. Well, it is hard to be thirsty, and no water anywhere. But can you think of anything that would have been better than grumbling? You say, hunt for water. Yes, that was better than grumbling; but they had hunted and found none. How much better to have asked God about it. God had provided them with water once, soon after leaving Egypt. God had cared for them all the way. Once when Ishmael was thirsty he prayed, and God showed his mother where there was a well of water, and this saved his life. You can read about it in Gen. 21:14-19. They grumbled at Moses and Aaron. But they were not to blame, for they had only followed the cloud. So really they grumbled against the cloudy pillar—that is, against God. People that grumble are more apt to make mistakes because their minds and hearts are not bright and true. At such times they may blame their best friends, just as the people did here. If things do not seem to go just right, the better way is to ask God to change the things to suit you, or to change you to suit the things. God will know which to do.

**Don't Grumble and Snarl.** You often hear boys and girls say words, when they are vexed, that

sound as if made up of a snarl, a whine, or a bark. Such a voice often expresses more than the heart feels. Often even in mirth one gets a voice or tone that is sharp, and it sticks to him through life. Such persons get a sharp voice for home use, and keep their best voice for those they meet elsewhere. I would say to all boys and girls: "Use your guest voice at home." Watch it day by day, as a pearl of great price, for it will be worth more to you than the best pearl in the sea. A kind voice is a lark's song to a heart and home. Train it to sweet tones now, and it will keep in tune through life.

**The Magic Rod.** What is that which Aaron is handing to Moses? That is the wonderful rod by which Moses has worked many miracles. You have heard of the wand of the fairies, which is said to change things or make them seem so. This was much more wonderful, for it really did change things just as God wished. The rod stood for the power and wisdom of God. In answer to their prayer, God tells Moses to take this rod and go and speak to a certain rock, and the water will gush forth. Moses obeys, and stands before the rock, and he is talking to the people:

"Hear now, ye rebels (that means grumblers), must we fetch you water out of this rock?" Then he smote the rock twice. In the second and third pictures you can see this illustrated, and the water begins to flow. The people knew that something unusual was about to happen, for the glorious light had flashed out from the cloud. They knew that was God, and they had stopped their bitter talk against Moses. What a good thing it was the people had Moses and Aaron to pray for them. You may have

some good friend who is praying for you, and because of it, God may be giving you blessings or keeping you from grumbling and sinning. But it is a good thing to learn to pray for yourself, too, and for others.

**How Moses and Aaron Sinned.** Did the great and good Moses sin? Yes, and God punished him for it; and Aaron also. If you will read carefully what God told them to do, and then see what they actually did, you will find four ways in which they disobeyed. They spoke to the people instead of to the rock. They smote the rock instead of speaking to it. They spoke angrily just as if they did not want the people to have water. They said, "Must we fetch you water," as if they did it by the rod. In all these four ways they disobeyed God; and God punished them by not letting either of them go into the promised land. It was an instance of doing a right thing but in a wrong way. Moses had been impatient and hasty, when a young man. You remember that he killed an Egyptian taskmaster once, and had to run away to another land. But God had been training him to be meek and patient; and he had been a good scholar, for he was famous as a meek man. (Num. 12:3.) But his old nature flashed out here and his old sin trips him up. As Abraham, famous for faith, sinned from lack of faith; and as Peter, famous for courage, sinned from lack of courage; so Moses, the meekest man, sinned from lack of meekness. Satan often tempts us to sin just when and where we feel strongest. The only safe way is to trust God at all times. The rod was good in itself, but Moses seemed to put it in the place of God. So also it is a sin if we put the minister or the church in the place of God. They are both good, but they are not God. This doing right things in a wrong way or time is a common kind of sin; like using the Lord's day to study a week-day lesson, or to visit the park or museum. Now this was a severe punishment to Moses and Aaron. Here they are, just ready to enter the land of promise, and one sin keeps them out! It was severe, but God could not overlook such a sin, even in a good man, for God is no respecter of persons. Indeed, because Moses was a good man and with God so much, the sin was all the greater. God was merciful to them even in His punishment, for He took them to the Heavenly Canaan after He had first let them

view the promised land from the top of a high mountain.

**Keep the Lines in Repair.** Man's best life is dependent upon uninterrupted communication with its source—God. He who neglects regular prayer and Bible study is like a town whose telegraph and telephone wires are down, and whose railroads and other means of communication with the outer world are cut off.—The Sunday-School Times.

**The Rock a Picture of Christ.** Moses has been a picture of Christ the most of the time. He could not be that here, for he sinned so. But the rock does show forth Christ smitten and crucified for us. In this way, He comes to be the Water of Life to all who thirst because of sin. Christ was scourged and smitten before He was crucified, and then when on the cross He was pierced by the spear of the Roman soldier. By dying for sinful man, Christ became the spring and source of salvation to all.

It was very strange for water to come out of a rock; so in the same way Christ is a wonderful Saviour. He is wonderful in the way He came. He is wonderful in giving life by His death; He is wonderful in His life and teachings, so different from all other teachers; He is wonderful in the plans and means for setting up His kingdom in the world; He is wonderful in overruling the wickedness of man to help build His kingdom. Thus in many ways that strange sight of water flowing out of a rock is a picture of Christ. Paul tells us that this rock meant Christ. 1 Cor. 10:4. The two last pictures are beautiful and forcible illustrations of how water satisfies thirst; and so they are a picture of how Christ satisfies the soul.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How had Moses used that rod in all other miracles? 2. Was there any power in the rod itself? 3. When did Moses perform a similar miracle? (Ex. 17:1-7.) 4. Count up all the sins by Moses and by the people in connection with this miracle.

**Challenge Text.** "And did all ——— the same spiritual drink, for they ——— of that spiritual Rock." 1 Cor. 10:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The weaknesses and sins of leaders greatly harm God's cause. 2. We should judge a man by his motive and character, and not by an occasional failure. 3. Every life has its ups and downs and its zigzag journeys. 4. In times of failure, go to God rather than to self and man. 5. That which seems an opposing rock may turn to a refreshing fountain. 6. The real source of all our sins is unbelief. 7. God does not overlook sin even in the best of men. 8. The "meekest man" yet sinned by an outburst of temper.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE BRAZEN SERPENT

And the people spake against God, and against Moses. Wherefore have ye brought us up out of



to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth

this light bread. And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they



and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee; pray unto the Lord, that he take away the



from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one



when he looketh upon it, he shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and



and it came; to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld,



he lived.  
153

NUM. XXI: 5-9.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS NUM. 21:1-9.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, What a wonderful salvation is that which comes simply by the asking and receiving! Help us to see our need, and then to see Thy power and grace. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"There is life for a look at the Crucified One;  
There is life at this moment for thee;  
Then look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved—  
Unto Him Who was nailed to the tree!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1452. Place, Valley of Arabah, which extends from the Dead Sea to the eastern branch of the Red Sea. Persons, Moses, the people.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Grace and Love. "Behold the Lamb," John 1:29-36. "God so loved," John 3:1-16. Look and be saved, Isa. 45:15-25. The only way, Acts 4:5-12. A perfect sacrifice, Heb. 9:11-28. Gift of Holy Spirit, Joel 2:21-29. The Redeemer shall come, Isa. 59:12-21. Take warning, 1 Cor. 10:1-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The incident in its connections suggests God's providential guidance, and illustrates His gracious dealings with the sin-

ner. 1. It is a dealing by training and teaching. This was true of the whole wilderness experience. 2. It is a dealing by pledge and covenant, leading them step by step. 3. It is a dealing by specific tests and commands, like the command not to fight their way through Edom. 4. It is a dealing by punishment and suffering which are severe and yet in mercy and for blessing. 5. It is a dealing which is intended to produce repentance, as in this case it does. 6. It is a dealing which includes a full and free salvation to all. 7. It is a dealing which makes it easy for all to accept the salvation. It is simply "Look and live." 8. It is a dealing which reveals and declares that Christ crucified is the only way of salvation from sin.

### HOW GOD HELPS AND SAVES.

**Serpents That Bit the People.** As you look on those first pictures you see them to be very different. Almost any one would choose the first as the pleasanter place to live. But sometimes the pleasanter place is not the better one. God had led the Israelites out of Egypt into the desert because it was better for them. Just now they could not go the way they wished. And when Moses led them around another way it seemed as if they were going directly from the promised land. They murmured at this, and then began to find fault with the manna that God had sent them as food. Just think of it! God had specially provided this food, white and sweet as honey and good enough for angels to eat, and yet they call it vile and said they were tired of it and that they wanted to go back to Egypt. Do you wonder that God was angry with them? I do not think God likes anyone who grumbles and growls because he can't have things just his own way. Well, God sent a terrible punishment this time. He let the fiery snakes of the desert come into their tents and bite them. They were everywhere, and they flashed like fire as they darted here and there; and their bite was like the sting of fire, and it killed them. There had been serpents there all the time, and even wild beasts of all kinds, but God had protected the people from them. But now he let the serpents go where they pleased. This does not look like helping and saving, does it? But it was God's way, and we shall see that it was a very good way. It might be called the trouble chapter in helping people to be saved. It was very wicked to grumble against Moses and God, and the

people needed to be punished. But their very punishment was graciously overruled to bring salvation.

**A Death and Life Verse.** One evening a lad chanced to drop into a strange church and heard the minister preach from the text, "For the wages of sin is death." The boy left the church very much worried. He had forgotten where the text was, and had forgotten the rest of it. He went home, went to his room, went to bed, but could not sleep. The text haunted him: "For the wages of sin is death." He rose, dressed himself, and tried to find the text in his Bible. Several times he started to the door of his mother's room to ask her about it, when his courage failed.

Finally he went to his mother's room, woke her at an early hour in the morning, told her the whole story, and heard from her sweet lips the comforting words: "But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." This brought him peace of mind, and he went back to his room, yielded himself to Christ, and slept peacefully the rest of the night.

**"Take Away the Serpents!"** This was the cry of the people to Moses. It was a sort of prayer and then Moses went to God and prayed that He would save the people. This might be called the sorry chapter or the prayer chapter. God loved the people, and for that reason He sent the serpents to bite them. Then they would see how sinful they were, and cry to God for help. In those three pictures we can see how the serpents followed them everywhere. The people try to escape but cannot and some are dying from the poison. So they go to Moses, and say, "We have sinned; pray to the Lord that He will take the serpents from us." Then conscience told them they had done wrong, and they are willing to confess it before God. We see no mention of Aaron here for he had died as God ordered.



Moses took him to the top of a mountain with Eleazar, Aaron's son. Then as God commanded, the beautiful robes were taken from Aaron and put on Eleazar and after that he was high priest. Aaron died on the mountain top and Moses and Eleazar buried him there.

Moses does not condemn the people nor even rebuke them, but he prays for them. Moses had learned a lesson of patience and meekness, and he did not make the blunder he made when he smote the rock. This prayer of the people and of Moses was the next step to God's help. Was it possible for the serpents to be taken away, and the poison removed from the system? Yes, and we shall see how it was done. Just so the worst sinners can be saved by Jesus Christ.

**"Look and Live."** A woman once came to Moody and said: "Mr. Moody, I would like to become a Christian, but I'm so hard-hearted." He replied: "My good woman, did the Master say, 'You soft-hearted people, come?' Nothing of the kind. He said: 'Come unto Me'—all black hearts, vile hearts, corrupt hearts, deceitful hearts—all." If your heart is hard, who will soften it? You can't. The harder the heart, the more the need of coming. Isn't that so? The harder, the viler, the more deceitful the heart, the more need there is for the Saviour; so come along and get rest. If you can't come as a saint, come as a sinner; if you can't run, walk; if you can't walk, creep to Him; but come."

**A Serpent That Cured the People.** Moses prayed that the serpents might be taken away. But God did something better. He not only called away the serpents but he told Moses how to cure the people who were bitten. How do you think it was done? It was very strange, but God had a great lesson in it for these people and for all the world. He told Moses to make a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole, and then tell all those who were bitten to look at it and they would be cured. That seemed like a queer remedy; but Moses believed God, and it turned out as God had promised. If we know that God has said a thing we can be sure it will come to pass. It is the same whether it be a promise of blessing or a threat of punishment and judgment. After that, whoever looked at that brazen serpent was cured at once. If a person could just open his eyes anywhere and look to the serpent the fiery pain left him and he could walk away strong and well. It was really wonderful, even the greatest of miracles. The lesson that was intended to be taught to them, and to all people everywhere, was that Jesus Christ the Son of God would come to earth some day; and that He would be lifted up on the cross and die for sinful

men. Then whoever looked to Him, and trusted that Christ would save him, would really be saved from sin. Man is bitten by the serpent of sin; and Christ took on human nature (like a sinner though without sin himself), and died for us on the cross. We have now only to look to Him, in faith, and be saved. This is the heart-and-will chapter in salvation, or the faith chapter.

Now anyone, anywhere, can be cured of the sin bite, and sin poison if he will only "look to Jesus." In the last two pictures there is not a serpent to be seen, except the brazen serpent. And how joyous and grateful these people seem as they look and are cured. Some of them are on their knees thanking God for their wonderful deliverance. Christ himself told us what this brazen serpent meant when he said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have eternal life." When Christ says "Son of man" he always means Himself. It is all very, very wonderful; and we should be glad and rejoice that such a way of salvation is provided. The truest and very best way to rejoice is by loving and trusting the Saviour who died for us.

**"Made in the Likeness of Sin."** As the serpent was a "cursed" creature, Gen. 3:14, so Christ was "made a curse for us," Gal. 3:13. They crucified Him between two thieves, Matt. 27:44. They chose a robber and a murderer instead of Him, Luke 23:18. "They made His grave with the wicked," Isa. 53:9, R. V. Christ was counted as a sinner, treated as a sinner, and died as a sinner for our redemption. 2. As the "brazen serpent" was made in the likeness of the fiery serpents (v. 9), so the Son of Man was made "in the likeness of sinful flesh," Rom. 8:3. 3. As the "brazen serpent" was without poison (v. 9), so Christ was "holy, harmless, undefiled," Heb. 7:26. There was no sin in Him even while our sin was on Him. 4. As every one that "beheld the serpent of brass" was healed (v. 9), so every one that sees Christ as the Great Physician will be healed.—A. C. Morrow.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How long had the Israelites been in the wilderness? 2. On what other occasions had they murmured? 3. How did the brazen serpent represent Christ?

**Challenge Text.** "And as Moses lifted up the ——— in the wilderness, even so must the ——— be lifted up." John 3:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The greatest blessings come to be forgotten, and even despised, because common. 2. The marvelous deliverances of God are almost outranked by the marvelous unbelief of man. 3. By warnings and judgments, as well as by mercies, God would bring man to repentance. 4. The very freeness and easiness of salvation are used by Satan to keep men from Christ. 5. God shows His love to man as often in His punishment as in His mercy. 6. "If God does not answer prayers, it is not because He forgets, but because He loves."

DR. J. M. COON.



# MOSES PLEADING WITH ISRAEL

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all  
thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command  
thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt



diligently  
unto thy  
children,  
and shalt  
talk of  
them  
when  
thou



and when thou



and  
when  
thou



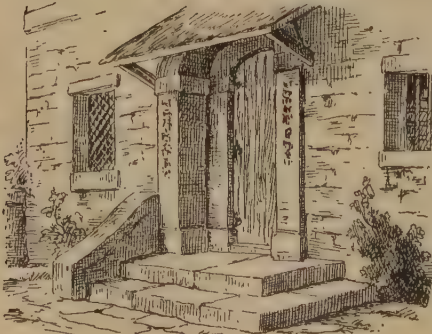
and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine



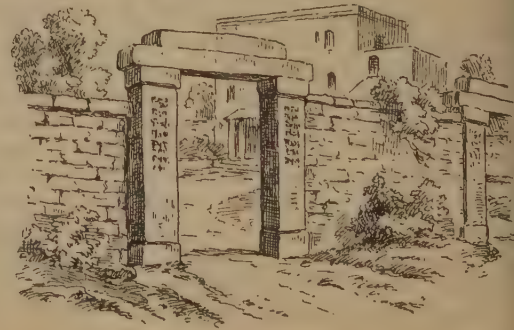
and they  
shall  
be as



And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy



and on  
thy





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS DEUT. 6:1-25.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the voices of prayer that go up to Thee for us. Hear Thou, and for Thy glory's sake grant the blessings we need. May we also seek to swell the volume of prayers for good to all the children of men. Make Thou effective and mighty the prayers of Thy people for Thy people. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Oh, great, true-hearted leader,  
Oh, soul of love and zeal,  
Oh, mighty force to help along  
The cause of human weal;  
Thy life an inspiration  
To many and many a heart,  
Bidding it rise from selfish ease  
And bear a noble part."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1451. Place, East of the Jordan, opposite Jericho. Persons, Moses, the people.

**Scripture Setting:** The Blessed Life. Christ and the blessed life, Col. 1:19-27. Love and the blessed life, John 14:15-24. The Spirit and the blessed life, Rom. 8:14-27. Grace and the blessed life, Eph. 2:1-10. Forgiveness and the blessed life, Psa. 32. Humility and the blessed life, Phil. 2:1-12. Service and the blessed life, Mark 10:35-45. Fidelity and the blessed life, Rev. 2:1-17. Benefit of the blessed life, Deut. 6:16-25. Seeking the blessed life, Deut. 5:1-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here, in brief form,

are some of the aids to a blessed life: 1. Obedience to the Divine commands. These commands are vitally important. 2. A right attitude to God and acquaintance with His promises which inspire and enable one to do his best. 3. Supreme choice of God and His Word, and a constant love for both. 4. The Christian home is a chief agency for training the child for life and Heaven. 5. Godliness in the life both gives blessing to others and brings blessings to ourselves. 6. Gratitude for blessings received; a thankful heart will be a blessed one. 7. A reverent and continuous loyalty to God. This only will guarantee and assure the blessed life. To forsake God is to be God-forsaken.

### WHAT WILL MAKE A HAPPY PEOPLE.

**Hearts that Love God.** Moses knew that he was to die soon, and he wanted to leave his last message to the people he loved. We know that it would be some message for their good, for his whole life had been spent in helping them. He is very anxious that they be a happy people, and he gives four ways by which they may become so. He was thinking of the whole nation, but the same rules are good for the whole world, or for any small part of the world, like a city or town, or neighborhood or school, or even a company of people young or old. You can guess easily what his first rules would be. It would have to do with God and the heart, for these are the two greatest things we can think of. The heart of even one person is worth more in the sight of God than all the beautiful things in all the world. When He says, "Hear O Israel," He means that they should give careful attention to what He is about to say. And as each person must hear for himself, it is just as if he spoke to each. "Thou shalt" means here that it is what each one ought to do, both because God commands it and because one's own conscience tells him so. Then, too, the benefits of loving God are many. Notice also that it is an "all love." God is not satisfied with a little love. It may begin that way, but He wants it to grow and grow till it fills every part of one's being. We should love with "all the heart," "all the soul," "all the might." He is the Lord our God, the only true God, and it is a great privilege that we may love Him; and it means that He

has first loved us, and that He will continue to love us.

**The Rosy Touch.** "If I can put some touches of rosy sunset into the life of any man or woman," said George Macdonald, "then I feel that I have wrought with God."

**Homes that Teach the Bible.** Now we begin to see our story pictured out. Our artist could not show the heart very well, but he can show the parents teaching the children out of God's book. It is a queer-looking book, but that was the way their Bible was bound. It rolled on two sticks, back and forth to the place they wanted. All their books were made that way. That is the reason we often call a book a "volume," for volume means a roll. These four pictures show us the parents teaching the children. Even the very young boy or girl can learn of God and what God would like to have one do. That youngest one is only a few years old, but they are all very much interested. Children always like to learn about the God who made them and who loves them. In one of the pictures two of the children are reading the roll for themselves. I know a boy who had read the whole New Testament through before he was seven years old. Did you do as well as that? How careful they are to hold the roll without tearing it! The Bible ought to be treated reverently by all, for it is God's book, His wonderful message to the world. It is better not even to throw the Bible down as one might sometimes do with some book that man wrote, or to bend the covers back on each other.

Such rude actions might make one careless about the teachings of the Bible. I wonder what that father is saying to the boy, as he points while they walk together! We know that it is something out of God's great book. Can you think of some Bible verse that might fit that picture? This is a beautiful picture of a Christian home, and is just what God intended every home should be. The earthly home ought to be used to fit children and others for the Heavenly home.

**"Feed My Lambs."** The story of the cross has a peculiar fascination for children. A child was asked whether she would rather stay with Aunt Jane or Aunt Mary, both of whom were kind. She said, "O, I like to stay with Aunt Jane best because she always puts the cakes and tarts on a low shelf where I can get them easily." Too many talks to children are like Aunt Mary's cakes, on a high shelf. Set the cakes low.

A Christian mother led her little boy to a quiet spot, and kneeling, commended him to God. As she ceased praying the child looked into her face, with happy tears in his eyes, and said: "Mamma, I am so glad you told Jesus my name. Now he knows me, and when I come up to Heaven he will say, 'Come in, Arthur; your mother told me about you.'"

A. C. M.

**Lives that Are Good and True.** Now here is a picture of an arm, and another of a head. On each there is a sign which stands for God's law. Did you ever tie a string around your finger to remind you of something you were to do? Well, these signs were to remind the Israelites of the words God had spoken, His orders as to what they should be and do. God was very good to use all kinds of ways to train these people. While this is Moses talking to them, you must remember that God had told him what to say. But these signs meant also that the hand and head were obedient to the laws which the signs represented. That sign on the arm runs clear down to the fingers. It must mean that whatever that arm and hand did should be pleasing to God. How many things a hand would do in a day! All should be in obedience to God and for His glory. Paul says that even when we eat and drink we should do all for God's glory. The very fingers should be as little messengers and workers for God. That sign between the eyes means that all that one sees, or even thinks, should be good and true, and so help him to live a godly life.

**Christ in the Home.** The atmosphere of the home shall be full of these truths. Men will speak often of that which is of the greatest interest. Conversation is a marvelous power for culture and training. The events of the day, the deeds of ourselves and of others, can be made the occasion of moral instruction, in a concrete and vivid form. They are to great moral principles what the particles in the air are to the light, which would be gen-

erally invisible but for the objects which reflect and disperse it. The home is in its nature a university. It is a large part of the true "university extension" movement. There is something in it, if rightly used, to train every faculty of the mind. The home is like the philosopher's garden, of which he boasted to his friends. A visitor wondered, when he saw how small it was. "Yes," said the philosopher, "it is not very long, nor very broad, but, oh, it is wondrous high." Mrs. Hunt says that the Star of Bethlehem for temperance stands over the school house. The Star of Bethlehem for morals and religion stands over the home. Peloubet.

**Ways of Making Known God's Laws.** This is the fourth rule for making a people happy. Sometimes a family might try to be good and happy just in itself, and forget about other people. Even one person might act that way, not caring how others might get along. That is a poor rule, and really won't work. The world calls it "looking out for number one." But he who does that alone can never get the best blessings of life. Such a course is contrary to God's teaching, and for that reason we should not follow it. The last two pictures show that the laws of God should be made known to all. Every Christian home should stand for something, and should show it forth to all who pass by. The very gates leading up to the house should say in some way that the people who live here love God and obey Him, and also call on all others to love and obey. All this means also that as far as the influence of that house can go its voice should be for God and His laws. It means that when anyone went out from this home he went with a helpful message to everyone else in all the world. When Christ was leaving the earth He told His disciples to "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." This gospel, or good news, is God's great love-letter to sinful man, and everyone who has heard of it should tell all others everywhere.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What was the last command of Christ to His disciples? 2. What were the last words of Paul to Timothy? 3. Do you remember the last words of any great men? 4. What is "the commandment with promise"? 5. What does James say about the tongue?

**Challenge Text.** Yea ——— is that people whose ——— is the Lord. Psa. 144: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The commands, warnings, judgments of God are guide-posts to the blessed life. 2. The home is as a great university, with its instructors, fellowships, incentives, ideals, worship. 3. All things are made to work for, and pay tribute to, the true child of God. 4. A person instinctively and necessarily takes on the qualities of the God he worships. 5. "Godliness is profitable unto all things," "a hundredfold in this life," etc. 6. The French nation forgot God and the terrible revolution followed. 7. God's Word is the bulwark of the nation as of the home.



# THE DEATH OF MOSES

And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord shewed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan,

And all Naphtali, and, the land of Ephraim, and, Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea,



And the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.

And the Lord said unto him, This is the land which I swear unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither.

So Moses the servant of the Lord



there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he



in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Bethpeor: but no man knoweth of his



unto this day. And Moses was an hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.

And the children of Israel



for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days: so the days of weeping and mourning for Moses were ended.

DEUT. XXXIV: 1-8.

# THE DEATH OF MOSES.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS DEUT. 34:1-12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the godly men and women in all ages. Wondrously Thou has shown Thy grace and power. May we seek to emulate their example and so perpetuate their influence. Grant unto us a measure of their faith and power. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"And had he not high honor?  
The hillside for a pall,  
To lie in state, while angels wait,  
With stars for tapers tall;  
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes  
Over his bier to wave,  
And God's own hand in that lonely land  
To lay him in the grave."  
—Cecil Frances Alexander.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1451. Place, Mount Nebo, the highest summit of Mount Pisgah. The Israelites were encamped at the foot of this mountain.

**Scripture Setting:** The Called Leader. David called, 1 Sam. 16:4-13. Elisha called, 2 Kings 2:1-11. Paul called, Acts 9:1-20. Christ the great leader, Isa. 42:1-16. Laborers and leaders, 1 Cor. 3:1-15. Approved of God, 2 Tim. 2:15-22. By my Spirit, Zech. 4:1-14. A leader's prayer, Psa. 90.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here are some great lessons from a great life. 1. Mountain-top experiences fitting him for great undertakings. 2. A friend of God, and so rising to the Divine level of

power and achievement. 3. Greatly honored of God in many special ways. 4. Great as a patriot, in the true and real sense. 5. Great as a statesman, holding high relation with God, and with full recognition of the claims and needs of men. 6. Great as a prophet, and as such, a type of Christ. 7. Great as a general and leader. Think of his outwitting Pharaoh, leading a whole nation out of bondage into a new land, giving laws and religion to the child nation, securing a matchless code of morals, welding and cementing the nation for military conquest. God did it, you say. Yes, and God will work through you—if you let Him.

### A WONDERFUL DEATH AND BURIAL.

**The Land of Promise.** How familiar we are with that map picture. It has been printed millions of times, and is found in nearly all Bibles and lesson helps. It is a map of the most famous land in all the world. Moses is now having a view of it before his death. He is both sad and joyous as God shows it all to him. He is sad because he can never enter it; but he is joyous, for he knows that God will give it to the people he led and loved. I read of a large company of foreigners who were returning from the United States to their home land. How glad they were to visit it again! Some such feelings Moses had for his people, for was not this the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Before his death Moses gathered up the main parts of the law, for the use of the people. This was what we have in Deuteronomy, which means the second law. This was of constant use to the priests, and the larger law was interpreted by them at special times. Moses was anxious also that the people should have a good leader. God told him who it should be. In this way He answered the prayer of Moses. Who do you think it was? Some might guess it was Caleb, for he was so brave and good. But God chose Joshua and set him apart to be the successor of Moses. God also showed His approval by the glory from the cloud at the tabernacle and He gave some of the very spirit of Moses to him. Almost the last thing Moses did was to teach the people a beautiful song about the good-

ness and mercy of God. Read it some time in the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy. Someone has called it the swan song of Moses, for it was just before his death. It was like singing at his own funeral.

**"That's My Land."** In 1889 delegates went from the United States to the first world's Sunday School convention in London. They crossed the ocean in the Cunard steamship *Bothnia*. The 300 delegates held a Sunday School Convention 3,000 miles long, with sessions morning, afternoon and evening. As we neared the end of the trip I noticed a strange looking man peering off across the waters. At last he began to sing loud and strong in the Welsh language. He was a Welshman and he had caught a glimpse of the mountains of his own dear Wales. A company had gathered about him as he sang, and suddenly he turned to them and exclaimed in broken English, "That's my land! There is no land like that under the sun."

**"God Kissed Him There."** This is the way the rabbi teachers describe the death of Moses. Of Enoch it was said, "He was not for God took him;" and Elijah went up in a chariot of fire. But the death of Moses was even more remarkable. God told him to come up into the mountain and meet Him. He had been with God on a mountain before, but this was to be the last talk with God on earth. The time had come for the people to go into Canaan. All the older people had died except three. God had said that none of them should ever go into the promised land except the two good spies. Moses was the third one, and he had sinned at "the smitten rock," and so could not go over. But God will show him the land. Our artist



has pictured Moses standing on Mt. Nebo, where God is showing him all parts of the land. He has good eyes yet, and is strong every way, and God also helped so that all passed before him. He said to him, "This is the land that I swear to give to Abraham." If God made a pledge like that we may know it would be fulfilled. Moses knew it very well, for God had never failed in any promise He had made. Moses sees that the land is watered from the clouds, as if God had used a great watering pot whenever rain was needed. This was so different from Egypt, for that land depended on the river Nile for water for crops and cattle. This abundance of water made the land fruitful in corn, grapes, olive trees and grasses. When God had shown him all he put him to sleep by the angel's kiss and buried him there. No one ever knew where, for God "buried the grave also." Moses lived one hundred and twenty years, and his life was divided into three periods of forty years each; forty years in Egypt, forty years in Midian, and forty years in the wilderness. As the angels tenderly bear him to his hidden tomb their bright wings seem to lighten up the rocks around. The poet has said,

"And no man knows that sepulcher,  
And no man saw it e'er,  
For the angels of God upturned the sod,  
And laid the dead man there."

"And had he not high honor,—  
The hillside for a pall  
To lie in state while angels wait  
With stars for tapers tall.  
And the dark rock-pines like tossing plumes  
Over his bier to wave,  
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,  
To lay him in the grave."

**A Mountain Top Man.** As the people saw Moses go up the mountain side, they knew they were looking at him for the last time. They realized as never before how much he had been to them. For forty years they had him as a leader, and many times he had pleaded with God for them. It is hard for them to think of living without him. All through the camp of over two million people there were little groups like that in the last picture. There were times, too, when they met in larger companies and talked of what he had done. While they are weeping and mourning let us also think a little of how great a man he was. He was great in many ways, a teacher, a prophet, a law-giver, a leader, a general, a writer. In

all these ways he was indeed a wonderful man. But most wonderful of all was his fellowship with God. Of him alone it is said that he talked with God face to face. Because of this friendship with God he was often spoken of as a type or figure of Christ. Each made known the law of God to man; each wrought great miracles; each stood in the place of God to men; each was greatly honored of God; each was criticised and opposed by the people; each seemed to fail in life's work at last; each died and went to Heaven in an unusual way. But Christ was only partly pictured by Moses, for Christ was sinless; Christ revealed the love of God and His grace and truth; Christ saved from the guilt and punishment of sin; Christ was Saviour and Friend of the whole world; Christ was God Himself, come down to earth.

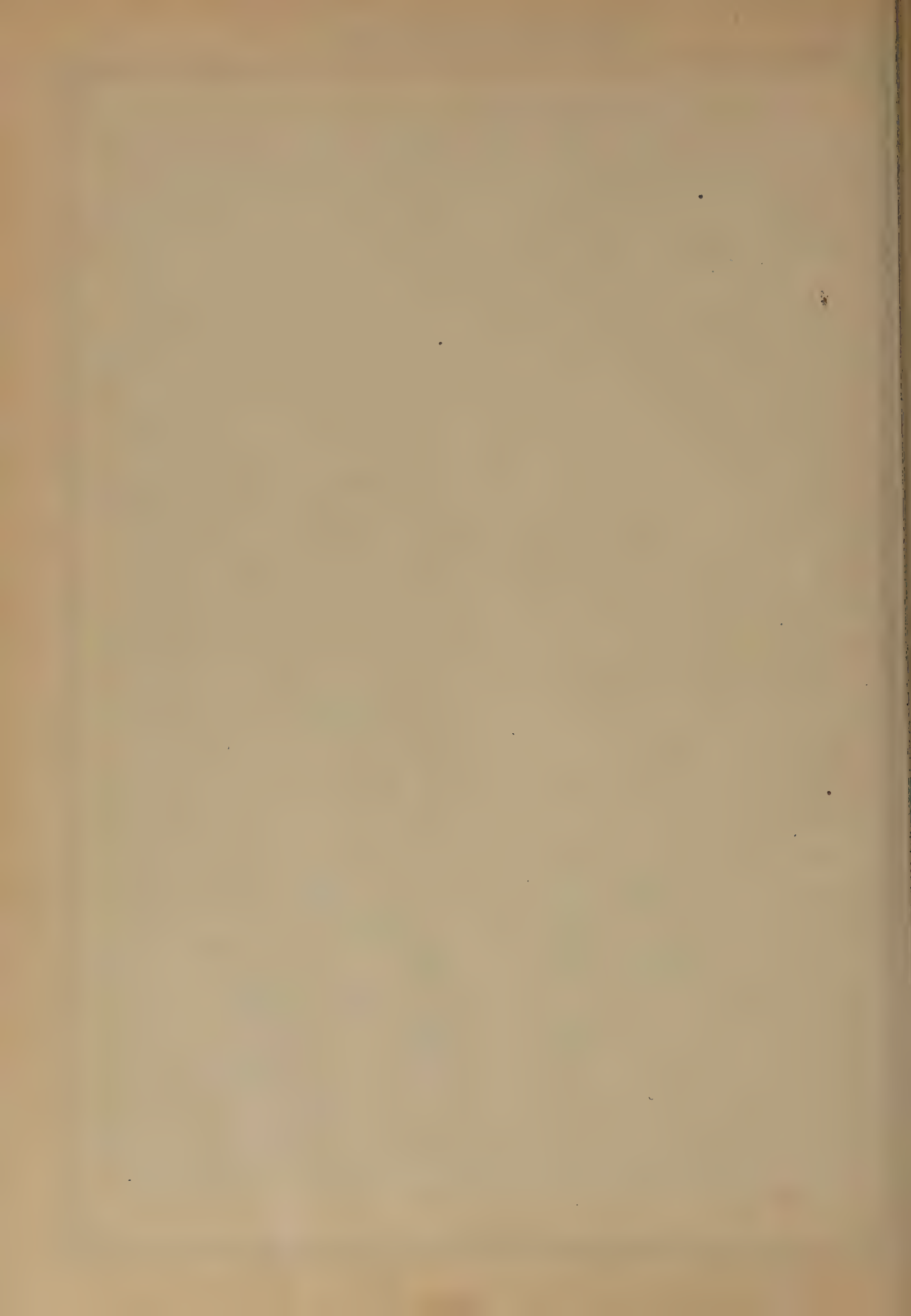
**A Light Gone Out.** Moses lived so that he was missed. A newspaper tells how a traveler in Norway came to a village early one morning, and was struck by the air of gloom which pervaded the streets. Unable to speak the language, he could not ask the cause, and concluded that some sickness or financial trouble had befallen the community. As the day wore on, the houses were closed, shop windows were covered, and all business ceased. It was death then. Presently he saw the people gathering for the funeral. There were the village officials, the nobleman from the neighboring chateau, and apparently every man, woman and child in the village. "It must be some dignitary of the church or some county official," he thought. As he stood watching the crowds passing down the little rocky street, he caught sight of the face of an acquaintance. He beckoned to him: "The town has lost some great magnate, apparently?" "Ah, no; it is only a young maiden that is dead. No, she is not beautiful, nor rich, but oh, such a pleasant girl, monsieur! All the world seems darker now that she is dead."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name two other mountains connected with the life of Moses. 2. Give a mountain picture in the life of Elijah. 3. Also one in the life of Christ. 4. What great American is likened to Moses in the work he did? 5. Name five traits of character in Moses. 6. When did Moses appear to Christ, and who else was with him? 7. What great leader in the New Testament does Moses make you think of?

**Challenge Text.** "And behold, there appeared unto them \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ talking with them." Matt. 17: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Life may be a success, though we fail of certain cherished plans. 2. One may lead others to blessings he does not attain for himself. 3. He is poor indeed and foolish who misses the Heavenly Canaan. 4. No one can predict the future from the babe in the cradle, for "every life is a shut casket of possibilities." 5. Moses dies, but his life, character and spirit live forever; and never more influential than now. 6. The power of a single man if God is allowed to mould and sway the life. 7. God buries the worker, but carries on the work. 8. The death of one man is the call and opportunity of another.

DR. J. M. COON.





SECOND DIVISION  
THE HISTORICAL BOOKS

## JOSHUA ENCOURAGED

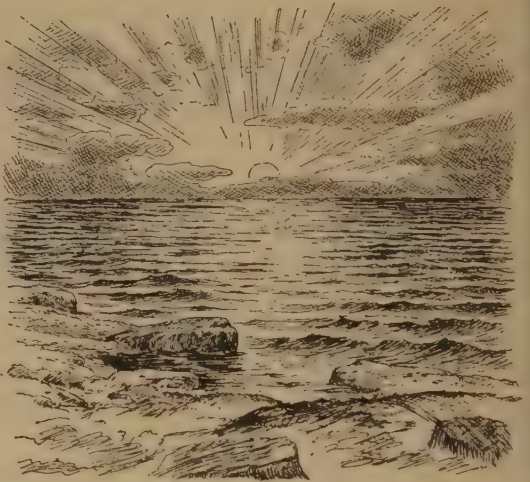
Now after death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' minister, saying, Moses my servant is



now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you, as I said unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon even unto the great river, the



Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great



toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast. There shall not any man be able to stand



all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this



shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOSHUA 1:1-9.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We are glad that Thou knowest us altogether, and at all times. May we not fear what man can do, for we know Thou art near to help, guide and bless. May we ever be watchful to receive and obey Thy messages, in whatever form they come. It may be the hard task, but may we be able to undertake it, and so be led, encouraged and blessed. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"So, ready to do and to dare,  
Should we in our places stand,  
Fulfilling the Master's will,  
Fulfilling the soul's demand;  
For though as the mountains high  
The billows may rear and toss,  
They'll not overwhelm if the Lord's at the helm  
While over life's ocean we cross."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1451. Place, Near the Jordan fords, opposite Jericho. Persons, The Lord talking to Joshua.

**Scripture Setting:** Courage and Success. The motive power, 2 Cor. 5:14-19. Power of the Spirit, Acts 2:1-13. Created for success, Eph. 2:1-10. Success demanded, Rom. 14:1-10. Key to success, Prov. 3:1-18. Success or failure, Psa. 1. Success tested, 1 Cor. 3:6-23. Success rewarded, Rev. 2:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here are given some of the Divine voices calling Joshua to service. 1. "Arise, go." It was very easy and natural for

Joshua to be hesitating and disturbed because of Moses' death. 2. "I have given unto you," Joshua was to enter into the plan already started. 3. "I will not fail thee." He is assured of all the power of God Himself. 4. "Be strong and of a good courage." God can not do his best work through a weakling or a coward. 5. "Observe to do all." The revealed law was His book of specifications. 6. "Have not I commanded thee?" The very power and authority of God were his by Divine investment. These six Divine voices came to Joshua with most inspiring effect.

### HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE.

**Ready for One's Opportunity.** When "the Lord spake unto Joshua" it opened up a great opportunity to him. There was a reason why God spoke to Joshua rather than to anyone else. Can you guess what it was? Yes, he was willing to hear what God had to say. Then, too, he was able to hear; able to hear not merely with his ears, but also with his mind and heart and all his powers. This is just another way of saying that he was ready to do that which God had been getting ready for him. It is a good thing when one can hear with his ears, but it is even more important to be able to hear and understand. Think of the ways in which Joshua had been getting ready for this great work. For one thing, he was born of good parents, and had good training. He was only a slave boy, but he had good blood in him. I am sure that he was faithful in all that his master told him to do. It might be that he was a messenger boy for Pharaoh. If so, he did good work always. You remember what he and Caleb did as the two good spies, and how they wanted to go right ahead and enter Canaan, and trust God for victory. That was forty years before, when Joshua was a young man, for those days God remembered, also, and He probably said to Himself, "There's a young man I'll use some time." God knows how to plan for those who wish to do His will. All through this wilderness journey Joshua was a close friend of Moses. We know how much that meant, in preparing him for his life work. Moses was a great teacher, and Joshua was quick and eager to learn. And at last Moses put his hands on him and prayed that God

would make him a true and courageous leader.

**Opportunities Lost.** A story is told of a man who dreamed a guide took him through a corn field; every ear of corn was a precious jewel, and he went from one to the other until he came to the end of the field without picking one, when the guide said, "Opportunities lost." Are we not impressed that this world is a field of precious lives, and we pass from one to another, and with all the opportunities that are ours, we will, like the dreamer, say, "Opportunities lost." "Count that day lost whose slow descending sun views from thy hand no worthy action done."—Exchange.

**Brave Amid Difficulties.** "Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan." That was the call to Joshua. It would have been thought impossible by many. Look at that first picture, Moses lying dead, and think what it meant to that people. Here was the hardest thing God had commanded, and the people had lost their tried and loved leader. Joshua is asked to take this discouraged people and make an army out of them, and go over the river to conquer fierce enemies in battle. Just now, too, the river was the deepest and widest that it had been for a year, with a strong current. There were no bridges, and they had no boats. The very strongest man could scarcely swim across, without armor and arms. And even that would leave all the women and children, and the weaker men. The place God led them to was right opposite the strongest city of the enemy. And it looked as if it was foolhardy to try to cross then and there. Surely here was enough to make the stoutest heart fear. But Joshua was not discouraged. The difficulties seemed to him like

so many voices calling him to go forward. Like a boy who had a hard problem, and who says to himself, "Well, I guess I'll master you." Such a boy or girl always wins; if not at first, then the second time, or the third, or the tenth. Joshua was sure he was obeying God, and that stirred him to be brave and do his best and improve opportunities, and even to make opportunities.

**Now Is My Chance.** General Grant, in his memoirs, tells how he secured his first promotion. He was sorry to hear, by a private letter, that a neighbor boy at West Point had failed in his examination and was coming home. Grant took time by the forelock, and, going to his Congressman, got him to promise him the first vacancy, and thus he secured the coveted place. So there is a just ambition that is the secret of true greatness. It is not by getting, through the solicitation of friends, titles to our names.—Exchange.

**A Picture of What God Wanted Done.** Joshua was brave and eager, partly because God had told him what he should do, and what he actually could do. The second and third pictures give some idea of this promise. This river Euphrates was the eastern boundary of the land he was to conquer. The "great sea," the Mediterranean sea, was the western boundary. Then the wilderness of Arabia, where they had wandered for forty years, was the southern boundary, and the white mountains of Lebanon were the northern boundary. This land, where Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had lived, was what Moses had seen but what he could not enter. It is pictured out to Joshua and he is commanded to go in and possess it. Joshua had shown himself brave in battle, when as commander of the Israelites he fought the Amalekites. This vision, or picture, which God gave to Joshua was like a copy set for him, and he wanted to do just as God ordered. People now have visions of what they would like to do and be. This is specially true of young people. Often this is the call of God to a life work. Sometimes it comes very early in life. If one is sure it is of God, then he should try to follow the copy, and God will help him to do it well. Even what is sometimes called an "air castle," the dream of what one would like to do, may be one way in which God is leading to one's life work. If we are in doubt about what God is picturing out as our work, we can ask Him to make us certain about it. For we should not begin anything that is not pleasing to Him.

**Pictures and Dreams.** Men, from the time they are little boys, see ahead of them some goal. They aspire to be president of the United States, a justice

of the Supreme court, a great surgeon, a great artist or a great business man. They dream of their future and count each month as precious time to be filled with acts that shall help in the carrying out of their ambition. They let nothing stand in the way, and thus we hear of boys who have been rail-splitters and canal boys reaching the highest office within the gift of the people; of some poor little peasant who becomes a great painter.—Exchange.

**Strong In and For God.** That last picture shows how Joshua will conquer all his enemies. The man has lost his sword and shield and is fleeing before Joshua. This is partly because Joshua is naturally bold, but it is chiefly because God is with him and because God has chosen him to be successful and victorious in all his battles.

Look at that picture of the dead Moses again. Do you see the angels? What do they mean? They are there to bury Moses, and they are also ready to give courage and faith to Joshua. They did another thing, too, that you will learn about in the next story. Now Joshua remembered all the wonderful things God did for Moses and through him, and so he was brave amid the difficulties. I can fancy the spirit of Joshua present at the burial of Moses, and that the spirit of the great leader passed into him. What were difficulties to one who had God with him and for him? He was told that he should both conquer the wicked people then living in Canaan, and should divide up the territory among the different tribes. Joshua's name at first was Hosea, meaning "help;" but it was changed to Jehoshua, or Joshua, which means "the help" or "salvation of God." We may be sure he will succeed if he remains true to his name.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What remarkable case of one prophet following another in the time of the kings? Both names began with E. 2. What martyr in the New Testament times was followed by one who helped to stone him? And who was he? 3. How long was Moses preparing for his great work? And Joshua? 4. Who were the only two old men who entered the promised land, and why? 5. Why could not Moses go there? 6. What had been the food of the Israelites in the wilderness?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Circumstances often declare the duty of the hour, and voice a call to action. 2. The believer is the true hero, and the true world-conqueror. 3. Enemies should be measured in the light of our resources and defenses. 4. The Divine command is the pledge of success and therefore the secret of courage. 5. Possession by foot-claim and hand-title. 6. God always has his Joshua to succeed Moses. 7. As Joshua led Israel through Jordan to Canaan, so Christ leads his followers through death to Heaven. 8. We win promotion by fidelity in our present position. 9. We can do our best work only where God places us. 10. Every promise fulfilled makes more certain that all other promises will be fulfilled.

DR. J. M. COON.



# CROSSING THE JORDAN

And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests



bare  
the  
ark  
were  
come  
unto  
Jor-  
dan,  
and  
the

of the covenant before the people. And as they that

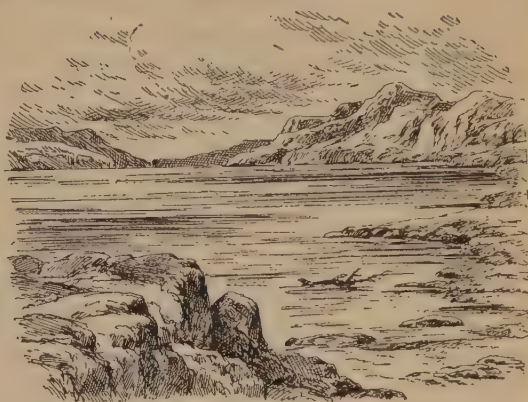


feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped

(for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) That the waters which came down from above stood and



beside



Zaretan: and those that came down toward the

of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off: and the

right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark



of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground

and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

JOSH. III: 14-17



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS JOSHUA 3:9-17.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast made all rivers and seas, and canst control them at Thy word and will. Thou canst protect Thy people on them, and even make a safe path through them. Thou sayest to the turbulent waters, "Thus far shalt thou come, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

Grant unto us that faith which will enable us to trust Thee in all times of trial and storm. May we sanctify ourselves that we may be glorified in Thee and that Thou mayest be glorified in us. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

There's always a river to cross,  
Always an effort to make  
If there's anything good to win,  
Any rich prize to take;  
Yonder's the fruit we crave,  
Yonder the charming scene;  
But deep and wide, with a troubled tide,  
Is the river that lies between.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, April, B. C. 1451. Place, near the Jordan fords and opposite Jericho. The Israelites were encamped on a broad plain from five to seven miles wide. **Persons,** Joshua, priests, and about 2,000,000 people, of whom 600,000 were men 20 years old and upward.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Helpful Guidance. Guiding by a ladder, Gen. 28:10-22. Guiding by a pillar of fire and cloud, Ex. 14:19-25. Guiding by the ark, Josh. 3:9-17. Guiding by His eye, Psa. 32. Guiding by His Word, Psa. 119:9-18. Guiding by His Holy Spirit, Rom. 8:14-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. God makes and

controls all forces in the world of nature, and of man. 2. Crisis times of trial and peril come to all, for every life has its Jordan, as every soul has its Gethsemane. 3. The faith that trusts God and obeys His commands is triumphant over all obstacles and enemies. 4. Conversion is like this crossing of the Jordan—a radical breaking away from the old life and a joyful entering into the new. 5. Death may be likened to this river, and it is triumphantly crossed by the believer through the power of Christ. 6. There is an unseen bridge over the Jordan of death, and the saved walk upon it by faith, prayer and obedience.

### CROSSING A RIVER WITHOUT BOAT OR BRIDGE.

"What Shall We Do Now!" This must have been the despairing cry of many an Israelite just at this time. Their journey had brought them to this rapidly flowing river, now three times its usual width by the freshets from the mountains. Just beyond the river they could see the walls of the hostile city of Jericho. Yet it must be that they go forward, for this is the land towards which they have been traveling for forty years. They might have remembered the wonderful guidance at the very start, when they were led through the Red Sea. They ought to have recalled the many, many times when God had delivered them from enemies and perils. Doubtless many of them did remember all the glorious past and so were confident that God would in some way lead them now. We know that Joshua and the obedient priests had such a faith, for there is not a murmur of objection by any one of them. We shall see how the Lord helped and saved in a most wonderful way. Surely

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea  
And rides upon the storm."

God has so made us that all we need to do is to be true to our best selves and to Him, then we need not be worried as to what we should do.

**How an Obstacle Became a Help.** The desert wandering had been a bitter experience to the Israelites, but it had also been a

splendid schooling for them. It was a sort of grade school, and now Canaan is to be their college course. The desert had taught them humility and trust, and had given them hope to expect great things from God. It was a time for growth and enlargement in many ways. Now they had come to the field for action, where their powers were to be tested. Israel, as a nation, was now of age, and God intended that it should play a manly part. They had an early chance to enter Canaan, but they did not have sufficient faith and courage. Now God gives them another chance, and under the leadership of the bold and dashing Joshua the nation is inspired to heroic action.

All along in the nation's history, obstacles and enemies had become helps to them. Here is another illustration of that truth. The two things which they specially feared just now were this swift, angry river and the strong walled cities of the enemy. God uses the one to overcome the other: This most wonderful miracle of cleaving a way through such a river helped in many ways. It showed that Joshua was God's chosen leader, a true successor to the great Moses; it proved that God was with His people to help them; and it struck terror and fear to the hearts of their enemies in the walled cities.

**The Dangerous Rock Becomes a Help.** The writer remembers visiting a famous bridge over a swiftly flowing river. In the midst of this stream was a mass of rock, which had wrecked many a vessel.



It had been the terror of river men. When at length the bridge was constructed this mass of rock was used to support the columns that upheld the bridge. That which had been an obstacle was turned into a help by the genius of man. Thus, often, God overrules our trials and enemies to give us strength and victory in the end.

**A Strange Guide.** By looking up the Bible references in the "Scripture Setting" you will find many ways in which God guided His people. One of the most remarkable is the one used at this time. It was the ark of which you are familiar by its mention in previous stories. The pictures give it great prominence, as it is shown in all but one of them. In the desert wanderings the guide was a pillar of cloud and fire, but from this time on that ceases and the ark takes its place. It was more spiritual as a symbol and stood for the God of all the earth. Today we have the Bible and the Holy Spirit as guides. Usually the ark was carried in the center of the camp. Now it is put ahead of the camp, and over a half a mile in advance. This was to teach the people reverence for God, and also to allow all the people to see it. It was really a command to the people to watch the ark, and act accordingly.

**The God Of All The Earth.** This is the real significance of the ark, and its power over the Israelites. How much that symbol meant of Divine love, wisdom, care, glory, to the true Israelite!

It is said that the Athenian orator could inspire any crowd or unite almost any differences among Athenians by calling the name "Marathon!" which reminded them of Athens' glory in the great battle. So it was not the sacred box, called the ark, but Jehovah's name that could unite Israel in the great purposes for which the nation was chosen. It was the God back of the ark who was the nation's real guide in this time of peril and opportunity.

**Faith Gives The Victory.** If some were timid and fearful at first, at last they are encouraged. Everything moves like clock work, and the great multitude pass over on the drained river bed. At the Red Sea the rod of Moses was the signal for the waters to divide; but here, it is when the feet of the priests step into the waters. Sud-

denly, as by a mighty unseen hand the waters are held back so that they look like a wall. The command is given to go forward, and the priests stand holding the ark in the very midst of the river bed till all the people are passed over. Then the waters begin to flow again, and the people realize that they are actually standing on the very land that was promised to Abraham! As "over the Alps my Italy," so with them, "over the Jordan our Canaan." And there is no retreating now, but they must go on and on, conquering city after city, and possessing the whole land. Now we can believe that all are saying, "We can and we will win." Faith may not know how God will work, but it is very sure that He will guide, deliver and save.

**Steam in the Life Engine.** A convention speaker once told of a visit to a locomotive round-house. "What impressed me most," said he, "was the notice: 'No engineer allowed to take his engine out of this round-house with less than one hundred and twenty pounds of steam.' I would like to paraphrase that notice," added the speaker, "for the benefit of every Sunday-school teacher in the land: 'No teacher allowed to go to his class with less than one hundred and twenty pounds of faith.'"

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Contrast and compare the crossing of the Red Sea and of the river Jordan. 2. A famous man in New Testament times lived and labored near the fords of the Jordan. Who was he and what was he doing? 3. Who were not allowed to enter the promised land, and why? 4. What two notable exceptions to this judicial ruling? 5. What effect on the Israelites to know that they could not go back over the Jordan? 6. What four reasons, or any of them, why the Israelites should drive out the inhabitants of Canaan? 7. What scenes on river or sea do you recall in the life of Christ?

**Practical Truths.** Difficulties and trials have two great uses—to reveal God to us and to draw us to God. 2. The fact of God's presence with us is proof of His advance work for us. 3. What God has done for His people is a prophecy of what He will do. 4. As the Lord is God of the whole earth, therefore His people should seek to win the whole world to Him. 5. Jesus Christ, greater than Joshua or Moses, is to guide us to our promised Canaan. 6. There never would be any entrance into Canaan if there were no departure from Egypt. 7. We cannot please God, nor serve Him acceptably without personal purity and faith. 8. Heaven, like Canaan, is a place which some shall not enter, and which others shall not lose.

DR. J. M. COON.

Then Joshua called the

whom  
he had  
prepared  
of the  
children of  
Israel, out  
of every  
tribe a  
man: And  
Joshua said  
unto them,  
Pass over  
before the



of the Lord your God into the midst of Jordan, and take you up every man of you a

according unto the number of the tribes of the



children  
of  
Israel:



That this may be a sign among you, that when your

ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall answer them,  
That the waters of



were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the

Lord;  
when  
it  
passed  
over



Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these

shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOSH. 4:4-24.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for holy times and places. We thank Thee for the memorials of Thy grace and power. Help us to be true to the call of all the monuments of grace. By the glorious deliverance and by the mountain-top experience, may we be taught, and may we also teach those who come after us. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"What's 'hallowed ground'? 'Tis what gives birth  
To sacred thoughts in souls of worth!  
Peace! Independence! Truth! go forth,  
Earth's compass round;  
And your high-priesthood shall make earth  
All hallowed ground."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1451. Places, the Jordan fords, opposite Jericho, and Gilgal, near Jericho. Persons, Joshua, priests, and the twelve picked men.

**Scripture Setting:** Memorial Lessons. Good to give thanks, Ps. 92:1-15. Memorial of mercy, 2 Tim. 1:12-18. Unto children's children, 1 Sam. 15:1-6. For Jonathan's sake, 2 Sam. 9:1-13. A fragrant memorial, Phil. 4:10-22. The Gospel memorial, 2 Cor. 5:17-21. A memorial land, Deut. 6:10-13. A memorial ancestry, Heb. 11:32-40. Memorial institutions, Ex. 21:2-6. God's wonderful works, Ps. 40:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The subject is suggestive of life memorials. These break into several kinds or groups. 1. Personal memorials, as one's

birth, conversion, marriage—any great life experience. 2. Family memorials, as reunions, death of any member, etc. 3. Church memorials, as baptism, the Lord's Supper, Christmas, Easter, any crisis time in the history of the local church. 4. National memorials, as Thanksgiving Day, Fourth of July, Decoration Day. 5. Scripture memorials, as those of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses. 6. World memorials, as the Crusades, the Magna Charta, war of independence, the Reformation, abolition of slavery, etc. It is a great privilege, and a greater duty, to study life, and the world's progress, by its great memorial occurrences and experiences. The Bible itself, the church and the Lord's day are great memorials of God's goodness and mercy.

### A NATION'S MEMORIAL.

**Twelve Picked Men.** They look like men that can be depended on. Joshua knew what he wanted and he knew how to select men. These men were from the twelve tribes, one from each. But what were they to do? It was an important work, and some would think it a dangerous one. They were to go before the ark to the middle of the river and stay there by the ark until all the thousands of people had crossed over. There were the surging waters heaped up on either side, but they were to be the last ones to go over. Can you think of anything that made them feel safe and strong? Yes, Joshua had ordered them, and they had confidence in him. But still better than that, the ark was with them, and they knew that meant the presence and power of God. Some things that are hard to do, and which seem unreasonable or even impossible, are made possible and easy if God is with the worker. "All things are possible with God." The ark is not seen, for it was always kept covered when out of the holy of holies. But they knew it was there, and so they did not fear. What an honor it was to be selected for such a work! It must be that, like Joshua, these men had been faithful at other times and in other work. It pays always to be faithful, wherever one is, for then he is apt to be chosen to do important things. One should be faithful in the home, at school, at his work, in every place where God puts him.

**How Picked Men Are Made.** One of the Lawrences, of Boston, once said: "I would not give much for a boy who does not say 'we' before he is with us a fortnight." The boy who says "we"

identifies himself with the concern. Its interests are his. He sticks up for its credit and reputation. He takes pleasure in his work and hopes to say "we" in earnest. The boy will reap what he sows if he keeps his grit and sticks to his job. You may take off your hat to him as one of the solid men of the town.

**Each One Doing His Part.** That is the lesson in the third picture. Each one has a stone on his shoulder. We see six of them, and the others are following. Did you ever hear the words, "Put your shoulder to the wheel"? That teaches the same truth. Each one is expected to do his part to make things go. All working together can do very much more than when each one does as he pleases. The Bible says somewhere "One can chase a thousand and two can put ten thousand to flight." The two working together in battle can do five times as much as when working separately. But what are these men going to do with the stones? Joshua told them to take stones from the very middle of the river and build an altar on the other side in Canaan. This was to be a memorial of the wonderful miracle God had wrought, in dividing the river Jordan.

It was necessary for each one to do his part, both in carrying the stones out and then in placing them together to stand as a memorial. Paul says that "all things work together for good," and it is also true that all persons in a given class or organization must work together to secure the greatest good.

**Are You a Lifter or a Shirker?** Two men were working together. One, who was a Christian, spoke frequently to his companion, who was not a Christian, concerning the claims of Christ and the church

upon his life. But when there was any work to be done, the Christian man was not always willing to do his full share, and the non-Christian man noticed this tendency to shirk. It naturally displeased him. Turning abruptly to his companion, when they came to the next heavy task, he said: "You say that you are a Christian?" "I do," was the reply. "Then lift," he said. It was a cutting rebuke, but one that was deserved. The man who will not do his full share of lifting in the world's work, who will not do faithfully as unto the Lord the common tasks, is not a consistent Christian. Real Christianity makes a man a better workman, a better neighbor, a better citizen. It lifts up and sanctifies all life and makes the commonplace truly great.

**A Young Class in History.** Did you ever attend a memorial service in the cemetery on decoration day? Perhaps someone told you why the graves were strewn with flowers. And you may have learned something of some of the battles and generals in the great war to save our Union. You may have seen Bunker Hill monument or Washington's monument, or his tomb at Mt. Vernon. If so, you had questions to ask and some older person answered them for you. These children in the fourth picture are wondering about this queer pile of stones and asking questions. I think they are saying, "Where did these come from? How did they get here? What are they for? What do they mean?" Suppose we try to give names to these six young scholars. There's Paul Pry, pointing with both hands, and just behind him is Tommy Think, and next to him is George Findout. Then there is Jane Wonder, the little girl with big eyes. The last two are Mary Look-again and Ruth Asking. I am sure they will learn all about those stones before they get through with them, for they are in dead earnest. They really do not need a teacher, but if anyone comes along they will be sure to pepper him with questions.

**The Sermon in Stone.** That pile of stones is a text for a sermon. I think it would not be difficult to find some great event in the history of the Israelites for each one of the stones. All their national life was directed of God, but some things stand out more prominently than others. We cannot name all of them, but here are a few to show what we mean by great events: The going of Joseph into Egypt, by which the family of Jacob was saved in the time of famine and then was favored so that it grew into a nation. The going out of Egypt under Moses and the miracles by which Pharaoh was compelled to let them go. In that one

period there was almost enough for all the twelve stones. The pillar and cloud as a guide was just like the hand of God reaching out from the heavens. The crossing of the Red Sea showed the wondrous power of God. The passover, the manna, the ten commandments written by the finger of God, would all be worthy to be singled out for special mention. While the stones would commemorate particularly the crossing of the Jordan yet all the other wonderful facts led up to that and are necessary to the complete sermon.

**A Great Memorial: Lincoln's Gettysburg Speech.** Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this, but in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.—A. Lincoln, November 19, 1863.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What great memorial days do we have as a nation? 2. What special memorial days do you have in your family? 3. What famous monuments have you ever seen? 4. What memorial service did Christ establish for His church? 5. What twelve men in Christ's time are suggested by these twelve?

**Challenge Text.** We have heard with our ———, O God, our ——— have told us what ——— thou didst in their days. Psa. 44:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. "We can do it," for we belong to the God-led people. 2. The memorial idea appeals to the mind and imagination, and so is the gateway to knowledge. 3. Neglect, indifference, and forgetfulness shut us out from many blessings. 4. A memorial day or experience or object is a perpetual call to love and loyalty. 5. The great truths of the Bible are even greater because of the element of mystery in them. 6. Christ's resurrection, the Lord's Supper, Baptism, are constant witnesses to God's power, grace and redemption. 7. The Lord was present in power, but Joshua was very careful to obey all commands.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE FALL OF JERICHO

And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the Lord hath given you the



So the people shouted when the



and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people



with a great shout, that the



flat, so that the people went up

every man straight before him, and they took the city.



And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and



with the edge of the sword.

JOSH. VI: 16, 20, 21.



# THE FALL OF JERICHO.

## THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT IS JOSH. 6:1-20.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the faith that overcomes and gives the victory. May we ever live in such nearness to Thee that we may have this faith which is true and strong. Without Thee we can do nothing, but with Thee we can do all things. Breathe into us Thy love and faith. For Christ's sake. Amen.

No help! Nay; 'tis not so.  
Though human help be far, thy God is nigh,  
Who feeds the ravens, hears His children cry.  
He's near thee whereso'er thy footsteps roam,  
And He will guide thee, light thee, help thee home.  
—British Weekly.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1451. Places, Gilgal, and Jericho, on the west side of Jordan. Persons, Joshua, priests, armed soldiers, people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Faith. Faith's Leader and Captain, Heb. 2. Faith's weapons, Eph. 6:10-20. Faith's achievements, Heb. 11:24-40. Faith's victory, 2 Chron. 20:14-25. Faith's way of doing, 1 John 5. Faith's power, 1 Cor. 1:18-31. Faith's boast, Ps. 44. Faith's song of praise, Isa. 25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The capture of Jericho gives us one of the very best pictures of winning victory through faith. It is a lesson we all need to learn, especially in this boastful and achieving age. Here we see: 1. Faith's one and only law—the law

of obedience to the Divine command. 2. Faith's use of human agency and appliances, as if all depended on that. 3. Faith girding and toning herself for the conflict, by the passover observance. 4. Faith's patient continuance. The world may laugh or deride, but faith knows what will be the result and never tires. 5. Faith's vision and instinct, for she looks out from the hills of God. 6. Faith's courage and unity. All acted together because all believed alike. 7. Faith's complete victory. "Every man went up straight before him and they took the city." Each doing his part, with God working through all, will take the city, the nation, the world for Christ.

## WONDERFUL CAPTURE OF A GREAT CITY.

**A Strange Plan.** Everything was very strange and wonderful in the taking of Jericho by Joshua. The plan was very different from anything that man would have thought of. After the Israelites had entered Canaan, they observed the Passover first, and worshipped God. They were encamped before Jericho, but they waited to learn how God would have them take it, for it was a city with high and strong walls. The very plan was given in a wonderful way. One day Joshua was thinking and planning, and suddenly a man with a drawn sword stood before him. Joshua asked him who he was, and he replied, "I am come as Captain of the army of the Lord." Then he told him just how to do in order to conquer the city. Joshua knew this must be the Son of God Himself, and he was greatly encouraged. He told the people the plan, and the next day very early they began to carry it out. The first pictures show how they were to start. The armed men went ahead; then followed the seven priests, each with a ram's horn for a trumpet. After them came the ark, borne by the priests, and last of all the people, without any arms of any kind. They were to march around the city once a day for six days, and on the seventh day they were to march around it seven times. This they did, day after day, coming home to their tents each night.

**Power of "Again and Again."** The great wall is not affected apparently by one, or a few, impacts of the battering ram, but it falls at last. "Why did you persist in following me and speaking to me so many times?" asked one who had recently

accepted Christ. "Because all the preceding invitations were not enough." Many fail to capture Jericho because they encircle it only six times.

**A Strange Warfare.** What a singular army this was, so different from the usual kind! Their arms were strange, too, for they did nothing but blow on the rams' horns day after day. This is what God had told them to do, and they were careful to obey Him. That ram's horn was their gun, and the constant blowing of this strange trumpet-gun must have seemed very mysterious to the people of Jericho. At first they probably laughed at it, but as it continued day after day, they grew to wonder and question and fear. The armed men, with swords, bows, spears and shields would keep the people of Jericho from any public assault against Israel. God intended to teach his people that the victory was altogether by His power. He had said, "See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof." Whatever plan is used God still gives the victory, but they could see it to be so more easily in this strange warfare.

**All Things Work Together.** "Everything is against me!" is a very foolish saying. The Bible tells us that everything works together for good to the true Christian; so to keep asserting the contrary is a sign of both a weak faith and a weak character. The common lot is—the common lot, with its share of difficulty, its proportion of obstacles, its continual gifts of opportunity and chances of blessing, and all taken together they work out good.

**A Strange Power.** Soon the six days were over and on the seventh day a great change was to take place. Instead of only going



around the city once, Joshua ordered his people to go around seven times, and at the seventh time, when the priests were blowing with their trumpets, above the noise they heard these words, "Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city." How the people shouted, and the priests blew a louder blast than ever with their trumpets and the walls before them shook and then fell crashing down, so that the people could go right in the city, for they were on every side, you remember, marching in procession. Did you ever watch a man open his big, iron safe? There is no keyhole for a key. He only turns the knob this way and that way, and possibly another way, and then "click," and it opens. He was very careful to do it all just right, and then he was able to get into the safe. This city of Jericho was a good deal like such a safe. All the turning and marching and trumpet blowing and shouting were parts of God's plan to break down these walls. God could have made the gates open if He had chosen; but He intended to destroy this wicked city, so He caused the walls to tumble down. As you look at the city, with its strong high wall and then see it in another picture, all broken and open, you are wondering what did it. No great machine was used, and the Israelites had not come up to the wall even, nor shot an arrow against it; and yet the wall is flat. This was clearly the work of God, as He had promised Joshua.

**God's Great Power.** What means God used for overthrowing the walls of Jericho no one can know. If an earthquake, the forces had been silently preparing for a long time. Others have suggested that "God knew the keynote of that wall; it was struck, and it fell." This does not seem probable, as no one ever yet has overthrown a city wall in this manner, and probably never will, but there are some very interesting illustrations of such a power. Not many evenings ago, says Harper's Young People, while a young lady was singing, the glass shade on a gas burner broke, frightening the singer nearly out of her wits, and, though the chandelier contained nine glass shades, the one immediately in front of where the lady stood was the only one broken. Her voice, which was loud and strong, had shattered the glass. This seems strange, but it is not less strange than true. But whatever the explanation, it was the finger of God.—Peloubet.

**A Strange Command.** Joshua was told to destroy the city utterly, man and child, and even the animals. Only Rahab and her family and friends were to be spared. This was because she had helped the spies and because she had asked them to protect her. They are true to their promise and she and all with her are saved. Can you think of any reason for this strange command? One

reason was, because these people were very wicked and they deserved to be destroyed. God had been patient with them, but they had grown worse and worse. Then the land was to belong to the Israelites, entirely, for God had promised it to them. They were not even to share it with others. Again, these people worshipped idols, and God wanted to keep His people free from that great sin. The only way was to destroy every trace of the old life and old ways. So you can see that there were good reasons for this strange command. It was enough that God did it, for all He does is right, but He also wants all to know why His acts are right. Another part of this command was that the Israelites should not take and keep anything they found in the city, for God would punish them if they did. This, too, was to show that they were to be entirely separated from these wicked people. They were not to use anything that had ever been used by them. Still another part of the command was that all the silver, gold, brass and iron should be consecrated to God, and put in His treasury. Joshua was very particular about all these things, and cautioned them again and again. He pronounced a terrible curse on any one who should even try to rebuild that city. You may be sure that this wonderful triumph, at the very beginning of this warfare, was a great inspiration to the Israelites and a great terror to all their other enemies.

**Duty Made Easy.** No duty that comes to us is too hard. We can do what God means us to do. The foes that attack us today and that seek to make us swerve from the path are our own thoughts, our fears, our doubts. Let us silence those traitors within the citadel and do the work that lies at hand, building "over against our house."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What happened to two blind men near Jericho in the time of Christ? 2. When did God make prison doors swing open to deliver an apostle? 3. What other times in the Bible is the number seven used? 4. What did the ark stand for, and why was it carried in the center?

**Challenge Text.** "By \_\_\_\_\_ the walls of \_\_\_\_\_ fell down after they were compassed about \_\_\_\_\_ days." Heb. 11:(9)

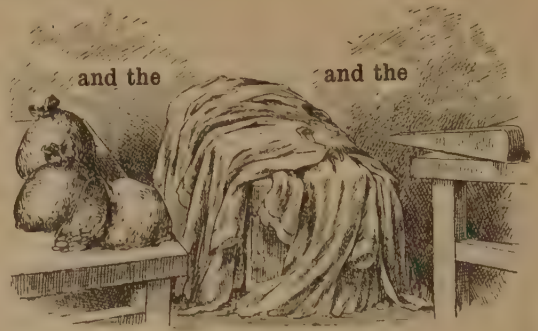
**Practical Lessons.** 1. God helps those who help themselves. 2. Divine gifts impose responsibility, demand sacrifices, involve struggle. 3. Faith argues from what God is and from what He promises. 4. The insight, foresight and far-sight of faith. 5. The faith force is that by which the Gospel wins its victories over the powers of earth and hell. 6. The necessity of each one being in place and in action, to secure the full victory. 7. With faith, the simplest means are effective; without faith the most complex and complete machinery is useless. 8. Conversion is the expulsion of sin from the soul; and this is by faith.

DR. J. M. COON.

And Joshua, and all Israel with him,



Achan the  
son of  
Zerah,  
and the



and the

and the

of gold, and his



and  
his



and his

and his

and  
his

and  
his

and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day, And all Israel

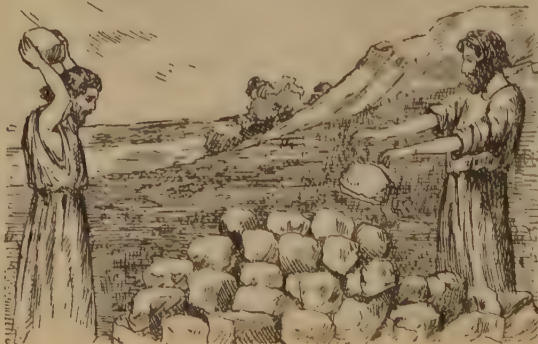


and



after they had stoned  
them with stones.

And they raised over  
him a great



unto this day. So the Lord  
turned from the fierceness  
of his anger. Wherefore  
the name of that place was  
called, The valley of Achor,  
unto this day.



THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOSH. 7:1-26.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou alone canst keep the heart pure and clean. Thou alone canst make it so. We pray, also, that Thou wilt watch eye and ear and hand as well as heart, that we may not sin against Thee. May the tempter never be able to enter these gateways of the soul to soil it and despoil it. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Gold! Gold! in all ages the curse of mankind,  
Thy fetters are forged for the soul of the mind;  
The limbs may be free as the wings of a bird,  
And the mind be the slave of a look or a word.  
To gain thee men barter Eternity's crown,  
Yield honor, affection and lasting renown.  
—Park Benjamin.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1451. Places, Plain of Jericho, near Bethel. Achan was stoned to death in the valley of Achor, between Gilgal and Bethel. **Persons,** Joshua, Achan, men of Ai, army of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Covetousness. Tempted through riches, Deut. 8:11-18. The great refusal, Mark 10:17-22. Warning against covetousness, Luke 12:15-21. Covetousness of Saul, 1 Sam. 15:1-9. Fate of the covetous, Luke 16:19-31. Covetousness of Gehazi, 2 Kings 5:20-27. Covetousness of Ahab, 1 Kings 21. Covetousness of Judas, Matt. 26:6-16. Covetousness of Ananias, Acts 5:1-11. Evil of covetousness, 1 Tim. 6:9-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The sin of covetousness is one of the most subtle and deadly of all sins. Some of the leading characteristics of this sin are seen in the case of Achan: 1. It may be committed by the good and prosperous. Achan was of the tribe of Judah and was not in need. 2. It may be committed while in the very act of doing God's work. 3. It may bring harm and disgrace to very many others. 4. It is apt to lead to other sins. 5. It may be committed in a moment, and apparently without warning. 6. It may not serve any practical purpose, but only feed the base desire for the things of others. 7. It brings remorse of conscience and the judgment of God.

A SIN OF THE EYE AND HAND.

**A Wedge of Gold.** How it flashed, as the sunlight fell upon it! There was also the silver and that beautiful garment with gold threads in it. I think Achan was a bold soldier and had gone ahead of the others into this home of a rich man. Now he is tempted! "The real owners of these things are gone; probably killed. They are not doing anybody any good. Nobody will see me, I need them for myself and family." All this Achan could say to himself in a moment.

Before he has time to think of the warning of Joshua he takes things and hides them. He may have continued fighting, and even harder than before, but this does not take away the stain and guilt of sin. The two hundred shekels of silver would be equal to \$100, the wedge of gold about \$30, and the beautiful robe was of great value. We call this a sin of the eye and hand, for by them the sin is committed outwardly. But the sin was first committed in the heart. When he is discovered he confesses that he "coveted" these things. Sin begins in the heart and runs out in many ways by the eye, the ear, the hand, the foot. The best way is to stop it at the very start and ask God to forgive even the thought of it or desire. If Achan had not let his eye and hand sin, he could have asked God to forgive the "coveting" of the heart. This would have saved the nation from disgrace and himself and family from death.

**What Kind of a Boy Are You?** When I see a little boy slow to go to school, and glad of every excuse to neglect his books, I think it is a sign that he is a dunce.

When I see a boy or girl looking out for "No. 1," and disliking to share good things with others, I think it is a sign that the child will grow up a selfish person.

When I see a child obedient to his parents, I think it is a sign of great future blessing from Almighty God.

When I see a boy fond of the Bible, and knowing it well, I think it is a sign that he will be a good and happy man.

Nothing that is really worth having will come to you if you do not earn it.—Ex.

**"Thou God Seest Me."** Achan forgot the command of God, and he also forgot the eye of God. He was alone and yet not alone. Very soon it happens that man also knows of his sin for these first pictures show the very things which Achan stole and also show Achan after he is caught. If we could see his face it would show shame and grief. But how did he get caught? God has many ways of finding out sins and sinners; and sometimes he lets the sin tell on itself. He did so partly this time, and it came about in this way. Joshua had planned to take another city, and the spies he sent to find out about it told him that it was a small city and weak. Joshua did not ask God what to do, but sent a small army to take the city, which was named Ai. His army was defeated, and thirty-six soldiers killed. Then Joshua asked God why it was, and God told him that there was sin among the people. He also told him how to find out the guilty person. He rose up early in the morning and cast lots, as God had told him, and the very tribe and family and man were discovered.

**God Reads the Heart.** The modern dentist seats you in his chair. He hands you a little lump of something, and asks you to hold it with one finger

against the inside of your jaw and shut your mouth. Then he turns upon you a series of electric sparks that rattle and snap like a bunch of firecrackers. In five seconds he says to you, "Please take out that film." So the "something" was a film, was it? He proceeds to his dark room, and in a few minutes returns with a picture of your whole dental skeleton! God will do even more than that. He will show you your innermost thoughts.—Ex.

**Sin Hurts Many.** Achan was alone when he sinned, and he thought he would keep his sin to himself and his own family. The things were hidden in his tent and perhaps all the family knew of it. We see already how that hidden sin had hurt the whole army and nation, and by it thirty-six soldiers had been killed. That large picture shows the further effects of his sin. His boys and girls are compelled to suffer because of the father's sin. Even the cattle and sheep are tainted because of it, and all are ordered to be destroyed. This was to teach the Israelites that God hated disobedience; and by that terrible warning he wanted to keep the others from such sins. One reason a sin hurts so many people is because it starts so many other sins. Just look at Achan's sin and you will see what a whole family of sins came from it. There was the sin of idolatry, for he loved these things better than God. He stole the things for they did not belong to him; and so he broke the eighth commandment. His sin led to the death of fellow soldiers, and so he broke the sixth commandment. His sin led to the defeat of the nation, and in this he harmed all the people.

**God's Searchlight.** Have you ever seen a searchlight? Thrown from the bow of a vessel, it lightens the landscape for yards in every direction, showing all the inlets and bays, crags and crevices. Shining from the front of a carriage, it illumines the road in every direction, revealing the hills and hollows, the smooth places and the rough. Such a light is the eye of God. It "runs to and fro in all the earth," and nothing is hidden from its penetrating gaze.—Ex.

**"The Wages of Sin Is Death."** This is what Paul said long after, and it is always true. Sometimes the punishment comes swift and terrible, as in this case. One thing has followed another, and in a few days Achan and his family are destroyed and his property also. By their law he himself was to be stoned to death; and afterwards all were burned with fire. The heap of stones over his ashes served as a warning to all Israel for a long time.

Sometimes the punishment is not so soon; but it always comes in some way and at some

time. The very word "sin" means a "missing of the mark," and shows that it is a mistake. Satan tries to make people believe that sin is a good way to succeed quickly. It sometimes looks so, but it never is so. Then Paul's word teaches that sin brings the judgment of God against the soul. This is spiritual and eternal death. The only way to escape that is by believing in Jesus Christ and repenting of all sin. His blood cleanses from sin and saves from death.

**God Punishes and Yet Forgives:** Every thought, word or deed is a seed. We reap what we sow. "They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same" (Job 4:8). If we have judged others, judgment waits for us (Matt. 7:2). If we have "considered the poor" we shall be "delivered in time of trouble" (Psa. 41:1), and shall "inherit the kingdom" (Matt. 25:34). To sow righteousness is to reap mercy (Hos. 10:12). To sow the wind is to reap the whirlwind (Hos. 8:7). Law is inexorable. God's government never changes. We need to see God in government as well as in grace. God in grace forgave David for being "unequally yoked" with a heathen woman; God in government permitted the issue of that unrighteous marriage to rise up against his father and attempt to take his crown. God in grace forgave the stealing of the "one ewe lamb;" God in government took away the tiny babe the loving father held in his arms. God in grace forgave the secret sin; God in government inspired the record which has exposed it to the gaze of the world for three thousand years. God in grace forgave the murder of Uriah; God in government permitted the secret resentment of Ahithophel, the grandfather of Bath-sheba. God in grace forgave the weak father the fond indulgence of his boy; God in government punished with a horrible death the son who transgressed on account of his father's laxity. God in grace says, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1:18); God in government says, "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). God in grace says, "I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34); God in government says, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).—Practical Commentary.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What man and wife in the New Testament fell dead because of covetousness and lying? 2. What heathen king said to Moses, "I have sinned"? 3. What one of Christ's disciples said "I have sinned" after he had betrayed Him? 4. What is true sorrow for sin, and how shown?

**Challenge Text.** For the love of ——— is the root of all ———. 1 Tim. 6: (9)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. A community or nation is responsible for the sins it might prevent. 2. Judgment and punishment are intended to show man his weakness and prompt him to repent. 3. Prayer is sometimes the best action, and action is sometimes the best prayer. 4. Gold and worldly goods need to be consecrated in order to be safe. 5. One may confess his sin, but it may be too late to escape its penalty. 6. Those who share in the sin are partakers also in the guilt and punishment.

Dr. J. M. COON.

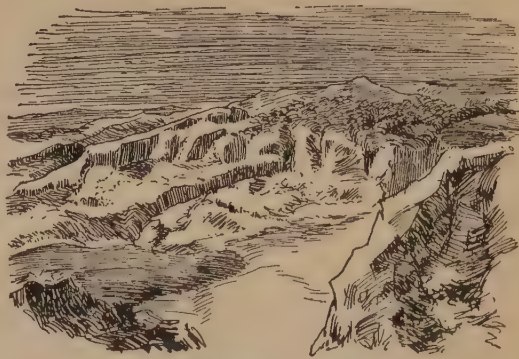


## CALEB'S INHERITANCE

And now, behold, the Lord hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the Lord spake this word unto



while the  
children  
of Israel  
wandered  
in the



and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as



this day as I  
was in the  
day that  
Moses sent  
me: as my  
strength was  
then, even  
so is my  
strength  
now, for



both to go out,  
and to come in.  
Now therefore  
give me this



whereof the Lord  
spake in that day;  
for thou heardest  
in that day how  
the Anakims were  
there, and that the

were  
great and  
fenced: if  
so be the  
Lord will  
be with  
me, then  
I shall  
be able to



as the Lord said. And Joshua blessed him, and gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh Hebron for an inheritance.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOSH. 14:5-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the bright faith Thou dost awaken in human souls. We thank Thee that they, too, become centers of faith and power, dynamos of spiritual energy. May we catch the spirit of all such, and so give hope and courage to others. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Don't say "I can't," but say "I will," if you would reach the goal;  
Don't even say "I think I can"—"I hope"—for Fate will dole  
Her favors out most grudgingly to one who weakness shows—  
To him who can be veered about by every wind that blows.  
Just set your teeth together hard and say, "I'll do or die!"  
Then stand your ground and trust—aye! trust; but don't forget to try.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1444. Place, Gilgal, Israel's first place of camping in Canaan. Persons, Caleb, Caleb's friends, Joshua.

**Scripture Setting:** **Spiritual Conquest:** Power with God, Isa. 62:1-12. Power of prayer, Gen. 32:24-32. Divine favor and blessing, Deut. 28:1-14. Spiritual equipment, Phil. 4:4-13. As a good soldier, 2 Tim. 2:1-15. Conquest of self, Rom. 7:7-25. Divinely guided, Psalms. 18:30-40. Present arms, Eph. 6:10-20. The old promise, Deut. 1:19-36. Faith in God, Psalms. 37:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here are some splendid laws of spiritual conquest: 1. Law of the Divine purpose—basal, comprehensive, inspiring. 2. Law of personal experience—keeping the vision

fresh and strong for God's good time. 3. Law of fidelity to the right—winning by the courage of his higher convictions. 4. Law of Divine favor—showing that God's eye and hand are upon those who are faithful. 5. Law of conscious faith and power—leading him to say, "I can, I am, I will." It is true modesty to have faith in one's self because of faith in God. 6. Law of recognized claim and ability. This follows logically from the preceding laws. People say, "Yes, he can do it, and he deserves it." 7. Law of actual achievement. Faith is an achievement, but it leads to the literal possession by hand and foot and life. Even the struggle incident to possession is in victorious assurance.

### HOW "I CAN" WINS HIS WAY.

**Holding On.** People are divided into two classes—the "I Cans" and the "I Can'ts." Caleb belonged to the "I Cans," and was among the first and best of the whole family. One of the strong winning qualities in a boy or man is the quality of holding on. When he see a good thing, or even dreams of it, he sticks to it till he gets it. When Caleb was a young man, he had a feeling or vision that he could drive out those giants, and capture Hebron. He tramped all over that country when he and Joshua and the ten other spies went to spy out the land. He and Joshua said even then, "We can take it"; "We can take it now." But the ten cowardly spies persuaded the people that they had better not try. How would you like that kind of a name, "Better-not-try"? or, "I Can't"? (It is better to write it "i can't," a little, cowardly i.)

Well, if you choose that name, or even act it, you will probably never be heard of again. Those ten cowardly spies are never mentioned by name again, but Caleb and Joshua are known and read about even to this day. Their faith and courage and obedience flash out like beautiful banners, saying to all others, "Come on; we can do it." For forty-five years Caleb held on to his early vision and purpose. Look at that picture of the wilderness and of Moses and

remember that Caleb has held on through all these experiences.

**Keeping Sweet.** Did you ever hear of a "sour" person? It may be because he has been disappointed in some way, or has been wrongly treated by some one. Anyway, he is grumpy and grouchy, now and then snarling like some animal, and always looking gloomy and sour. You can look Caleb all over, and look through the whole forty-five years and you can't find a sour streak or a gloomy line in him. Whenever you meet him he is fresh and bright and cheerful. Even if one did not know him, he would be apt to look around after he had passed and say to himself, "I wonder who that man is?" Or, he might say, "That's the kind of a man I need to manage my business." Why, even when Caleb was talking about that old experience as a spy, he spoke of the ten spies as "my brethren," and he never criticised them bitterly. And yet they are the very ones who prevented him from winning at that time. I'll tell you what I think helped him to keep sweet. He kept ever before him that heart-vision of victory. His name means something like that, and he was true to his name. You know that a person will be outwardly in act a good deal as he is inwardly in vision. If he is little and mean in his heart, he will be sour and mean in life; if he is large



and grand and noble in his heart, he will be good, true, and noble in his life. Caleb kept sweet, and this was one of his winning qualities.

**How to Keep Happy.** A. J. Gordon met an old man one day going to the place of prayer. "Aged friend," he said, "why should an old man be so merry and cheerful?" "All are not," said he. "Well, then, why should you be merry?" "Because I belong to the Lord." "Are none others happy at your time of life?" "No, not one, my friendly questioner," said he; and his form straightened into the stature of his younger days, and something of inspiration glowed upon his countenance. "Listen, please, to the truth, from one who knows; then wing it round the world, and no man of three-score and ten shall be found to gainsay it—the devil has no happy old men."—A. C. Morrow.

**Faith in God and Self.** Plenty of people have faith enough in self, and far too much. That makes a selfish, or self-proud person. Caleb had faith in himself, but it was after his faith in God, and because of it. He was an "I Can" man, because he knew that God can and will work for him and through him. You remember that when he said that they could go in and conquer the land it was because they "wholly followed the Lord," and on condition of such obedience. And now he is strong, and boasts in his strength, for he knows that God is with him as in earlier life. God does not grow old, or tired, or weak, and if he chooses to work through an old man he can do so. Caleb's faith was strong forty-five years before, but it was even stronger now. He had seen the power of God in wondrous ways and on many occasions. One will be strong just as his faith is strong. Caleb has kept his faith in God and in himself, so that he is able to bear burdens and master his enemies, as the pictures show. Such a faith is a splendid winning quality.

**An All Heart Faith.** Caleb means "all heart." Break a piece of red glass painted some four hundred years since, and it will be found as red in the middle as on the outside; the color is not only on it, but in it and through it. Whereas, now (A. D. 1660) all art can perform is only to fix the red on one side of the glass, and that ofttime so faint and fading that within a few years it falleth off, and looketh piebald to the eye. I suspect a more important mystery is much lost in our age; viz., the transmuting of piety clean through the heart, that a man become inside and outside alike. Heart perfect: oh, the finest of wares! All his days: oh, the largest of measures!—Fuller.

**Watching For Another Opportunity.** Caleb did not sit down and mope when the people refused to go in and possess the land. He said to himself, "I'll have another chance

some time, and I'll win that Mount Hebron yet." So he waited and waited, and waited, and at last he made the opportunity himself. He just pushed in, and told Joshua what he would like, and what he could do. This was right, for it was what God had planned and promised. There are two kinds of acts it is well to avoid. One should not give up too easily, nor should he push in rudely where he does not belong. Caleb avoided both these extremes. He does not want an opportunity for an easy time, though he was really entitled to it. Rather, he asks for a chance to show what he can actually do. Now Canaan had been conquered largely by the skill and courage of Joshua. But there were a few strongholds yet in the hands of the enemy. Hebron was one of them, and one of the most difficult to take. Caleb says, "Hebron is what I want. Let me have a chance to win it." He knew there were giants there, for he had seen them when he went there as a spy. But to him the giants were just like a challenge to fight. He wanted to measure strength with them, just as David wanted to go out against Goliath. Hebron, dear old Hebron, was where Abraham had lived and where the patriarch fathers were buried. I think Caleb dreamed of Hebron, thought of it, longed for it, lived in it, and for it, and kept saying, "Some day I'll have Hebron." At last he boldly makes his opportunity and wins it. See his eye flash and his hand wave as he drives out those wicked giants!

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many years since the Israelites entered Canaan? 2. What cities and kings had been captured? 3. What reasons can you give why God destroyed the Canaanites? 4. Give the names of the Canaanite tribes. 5. What had Caleb and Joshua done together as young men? 6. Who had lived at Hebron, and who was buried there? 7. Name a few modern men, strong and hopeful in old age. 8. Give modern instances of courage and faith. 9. What other Bible characters were like Caleb? 10. Who is our Joshua to give us our inheritance?

**Challenge Text.** "I can do ——— through Christ who ——— me." Phil. 4:(?)

**Practical Lessons.** 1. The good young man does not always die. 2. Caleb did not sow wild oats as a youth; so now he is vigorous, happy, respected and ambitious. 3. Faith and fidelity always bring large returns in God's time and way. 4. The "big four" of character and life are Conscience, Courtesy, Conviction, Courage. 5. The Christian accepts God and refuses the devil; the sinner accepts the devil and refuses God. 6. A delayed blessing is often an enlarged blessing. 7. Positive and unyielding in matters of conscience; gracious and considerate in matters of judgment, make the ideal and enarming character. 8. Believe as if all depended on God, and fight as if all depended on you.

Dr. J. M. Coon.

# THE CITIES OF REFUGE

The Lord also spake unto Joshua, saying, Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint out for you



of refuge,  
whereof  
I spake  
unto you  
by the  
hand of  
Moses:  
That the  
slayer  
that



any person unawares and unwittingly may



thither: and they shall be your refuge from the

avenger  
of blood.  
And



when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall

and shall declare his cause in the ears of the



of that  
city,  
they  
shall



unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOSH. 20:1-9.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee that Thou art a sure refuge for the penitent sinner. Thy shed blood atones for all. Thy pierced hand invite all the sin-stained of earth. Thy heart of pity and love cries "Come unto me." Thy power is great to welcome, bless and keep. By Thy Spirit speed us to Thy saving grace, and help us on life's way. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Haste; for thy life escape; nor look behind. Ever in thrilling sounds like these. They check the wandering eye, severely kind, Nor let the sinner lose his soul at ease. Then onward yet a step, thou hard won soul, Though in the church, thou know thy place, The Refuge farther lies,—there seek thy goal, There breathe at large; o'erpast thy dangerous race."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 1445 B. C. Place, Shiloh, 17 miles northwest of Jerusalem. This was the religious capital of the nation. Persons, Joshua, elders, people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Refuge from Sin. A refuge needed, Rom. 5:1-21. A refuge sought, Psalms 142:1-7. A refuge in God, Psalms 91:1-16. Refuge through Christ, Heb. 9:12-28. Refuge conditional, Isa. 33:15-24. A refuge offered, Heb. 6:10-20. Invitation "Come," Matt. 11:25-30. Refuge sure and full, Rom. 8:1-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The city of refuge is a beautiful and striking picture of Christ as a Savior. Here are some of the analogies: 1. The city of refuge was appointed and equipped of God;

true of Christ. 2. The city of refuge was universally needed; true of Christ. 3. The city of refuge was a full protection to those who fled to it; true of Christ, and even more so. 4. The city of refuge also provided fellowship and support; true of Christ in larger degree. 5. The city of refuge was easily accessible; true of Christ, for He is immediately accessible. 6. The city of refuge was for all until the case could be looked into; Christ is a refuge for all, even the worst of sinners, and He is such forever if only they flee to him. 7. The city of refuge was for Jews and the accepted stranger; Christ receives all everywhere. "Whosoever will may come."

### A PICTURE OF HOW JESUS SAVED.

**Who Killed That Man?** This is the question that is asked continually. People are killed in many ways, and it has always been so. That second picture is an illustration of what is happening all the time. We call them accidents. Any morning you open the daily paper you can read of some such accident. Every once in a while and oftener we read of scores and hundreds being killed. And it is right to ask who is to blame, and to try to correct the bad system, and punish the bad people. Life is of great value. Even animal life is more and more protected. All good people are glad for the work of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. But still more valuable is human life. No one is allowed to take his own life. So it is right and just to ask, "Who killed that man?" It is right, too, to look up and hunt out and punish all who are guilty. But there is another kind of life, and another kind of guilt, and another kind of punishment. The soul life is of far greater value than the life of the body. It is a greater sin to sin against the soul life. It is even a commoner sin, and it kills the soul. God is asking, and asking sharply, "Who killed that soul?" Sin is killing souls, and many are killing their own souls. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." There is none good, no, not one.

"Thou Art the Man!" Every one knows Victor Hugo's beautiful poem, *La Conscience*, the story of Cain fleeing away before the eye of God. He walks thirty days and thirty nights, until he reaches the shores of the ocean. "Let us stop here," says he. But as he sits down his face turns pale; he has

seen "in the mournful skies the eye at the same place." His sons, full of awe, try to erect barriers between him and the eye: a tent, then a wall of iron, then a tower and a city; but all is in vain. "I see the eye still," cries the unhappy man. At last they dig a tomb; the father is put into it. But Though overhead they closed the awful vault, The Eye was in the tomb, and looked on Cain. • —Reuben Saillens.

**Some One Else Must Die.** If you had an expensive toy, or a beautiful pet animal, and someone destroyed it, you would feel that that person should be punished. That feeling exists in all people. It is what we call the sense of justice. It is stronger when the sin or wrong is greater. It is strongest of all against one who has killed another. What is that man running for, and so fast? It is because of this very principle of justice. The Jews had a rule that the man who killed another must be killed. The person who was the nearest relative to the one killed must avenge him. He was called the "avenger of blood," and it was his duty to kill the man who had killed his brother or relative. It was a disgrace for him to refuse to do it. This man running knows that the "avenger of blood" will be after him immediately. In the next picture you can see him with a dagger in his hand. He was carrying out this principle of justice. If someone is killed someone must die for it. Justice said that the man who did the killing is the one who should die. This was called a "balancing of the blood account." Now the same principle holds against one who takes the soul life. The "avenger of blood" is after him. His

own conscience is an avenger; God's holy law is an avenger; God Himself is an avenger, for He can not look upon sin to excuse it at all. The soul has sinned, and someone must die. Scripture says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

**Now He Is Safe.** We left the man running. But where was he going? The Jews had six cities which they called cities of refuge. If a man who had killed another could flee to one of these cities, he would be safe. The first picture shows us one of those cities. It was a quiet religious city that belonged to the Levites. The best people lived there, and a man would be sure to get justice and good treatment. In the third picture the man has just entered the gate, and he knows that he is safe. The "avenger of blood," with his drawn dagger, dare not come near the city wall. There were broad, open roads leading to these cities, and they were located in different parts of the nation, and on high hills. A man could usually run to one of them in a half day or so. Then there were signs up along the way which said, "Refuge," "Refuge," so there would be no danger of one missing the way. These cities sent out young men to meet the man running to try to keep the "avenger of blood" from killing the man. What a beautiful picture all this is of Jesus Christ, the city of refuge to one who has sinned against his soul! Someone must satisfy the avenger of blood, and Jesus Christ says, "I'll die for the sinner." The very names of these cities picture out Christ as holy, burden-bearer, friend, stronghold, lofty, bright, exceeding joy. These are just what one would need if he were running for safety. But he must run, and quickly, to escape the "avenger blood." God saves the sinner, but He can save him only in and through Jesus Christ; for Christ's death alone can satisfy a holy law. Can you think of the many roads that lead to Christ? There are the church, the Sunday School, the Lord's day, the Bible, every Christian, every good friend, every helpful providence, and in them all God is sending out His Holy Spirit to help by showing the way and urging one on.

**"This Is the Way."** God has done all he can to aid and draw men to Jesus. Now, beloved, I think this is a picture of the road to Christ Jesus. It is no roundabout road of the law; it is no obeying this, that, and the other; it is a straight road: "Believe and live." It is a road so hard that no self-righteous man can ever tread it; but it is a road so easy that every sinner who knows himself to be a sinner might by it find his way to Christ and Heaven. And, lest they should be mistaken, God has sent me and my brethren in the ministry to be

like hand posts in the way, to point poor sinners to Jesus; and we desire ever to have on our lips the cry, "Refuge, refuge, refuge." Sinner, that is the way; walk therein, and be thou saved.—Spurgeon.

**Welcome Home at Last.** Study those last three pictures. There is a trial going on in one of them. When the man reached the city he was safe at the time. But he must prove that he was innocent, and did not intend to kill anyone. If he could not prove that, he was turned over to the "avenger-of blood" after all. If he could show that he did not mean to kill, but that it was an accident, then he lived in the city of refuge until the death of the high priest. After that he could go home in safety. The last pictures show him coming to his home city, and to the family and friends who welcome him. How joyous they all seem, as well they may be! He is not only safe, but he is freed from the blame of killing his fellow man. Now we see how much better Christ is than the city of refuge. It is only a picture of Christ, but no picture can show fully Christ's work and help. The one who has sinned against the soul life is not only safe in the Christ refuge, but he is freed at once, and even though he sinned wilfully. Christ stands in his place, and Christ's perfect righteousness is His protection and defense. Nor does he need to wait until the death of the high priest, for Christ is the sinner's High Priest, and he has already died, and is now in Heaven praying for him. Then, too, our Christ-city of refuge is free for all the world. "Whosoever will may come." And He is right at hand, and one may "step over the line" and be in Christ in a moment. It is only "look and live." This is a beautiful picture of Christ, and it shows Him to be a wonderful, wonderful Saviour. He stands saying to all, "Come unto me—come, come, come."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What instructions had Moses given about the cities of refuge? Ex. 21:12-15. 2. In what three ways were these cities a picture of Christ? 3. In what three ways was Christ superior to the picture type? 4. Give the names of the six cities, with meaning of each. See Teacher's Bible.

**Challenge Text.** "Look unto me and be ye —, all the ends of — —." Isa. 45:(?)

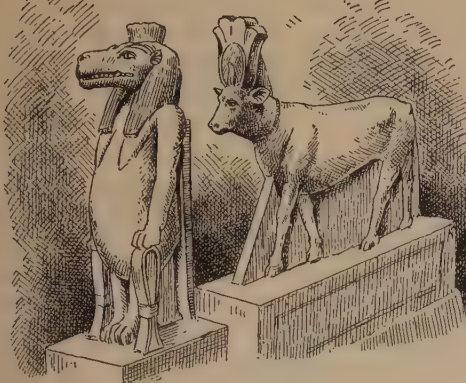
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Every sinner, and even every sin, has an avenger. 2. Here is a parable of conversion: (1) It implies a sense of danger and sin; (2) it supposes a knowledge of Christ; (3) it necessitates a fleeing to Christ; (4) it hinges vitally on a heart acceptance of Christ. 3. "Christ is not an arbitrary, but a necessary, city of refuge from sin." 4. God's day, God's book, God's house, God's people, God's gracious favoring providences, are all helpful forces to guide the sinner to the Christ refuge.



# JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT

Now therefore put away, said he, the strange

which are  
among you,  
and incline  
your heart  
unto the  
Lord God  
of Israel.  
And the  
people  
said unto



The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey. So Joshua made a covenant with the

that day,  
and set  
them a  
statute  
and an  
ordin-  
ance in  
Shech-  
em.  
And  
Joshua



these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great

and set  
it up  
there  
under  
an



that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God. So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOSH. 24:14-29.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We rejoice in Thy covenant of grace. When Thou couldst swear by no greater Thou didst swear by Thyself. Now we are invited into this covenant in and by Thyself. Help us to be willing to receive from Thee and work for Thee. May we also be able to persuade others to begin or renew this covenant relation to God through Christ. May Thy Holy Spirit give guidance and strength. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"As due by many titles, I resign  
Myself to Thee, O God! First I was made  
By Thee and for Thee; and when I decayed,  
Thy blood bought that, the which before was thine;  
I am Thy son, made with Thyself to shine."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1426. Place, Shechem, between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim. Persons, Joshua and the people.

**Scripture Setting:** Serving God. First things first, Matt. 6:19-34. Source of power, Ezek. 37:1-14. The right spirit, 1 Cor. 13. Some true laws, Phil. 3:1-17. Complete consecration, Rom. 12. Living for Christ, Phil. 1:8-21. The Holy Spirit helping, Rom. 8:15-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In his farewell address Joshua urges many reasons why the Israelites should worship and serve God. 1. Because God commands it. This command is not only in

the Bible, but in conscience and nature. 2. Because man must worship some god, and no other is equal to the God of Israel. 3. Because of the many great deliverances, providences and blessings. 4. Because of the holy character of God—commanding and deserving man's best. 5. Because fellowship with God and all righteous people inspires and fosters worship. 6. Because of the covenant of grace, assuming all needed help to man. 7. The successes of all the past inspire to service and even the failures of the past show the necessity of service and worship.

### HELPING OTHERS DO RIGHT.

**First, Do Right Yourself.** The true general says to his soldiers, "Come on boys." He chooses to be and do what he seeks to persuade them to be and do. Joshua was that kind of a general. Hear him: "As for me and my house we will serve the Lord." That has the ring of the true general in it. Study that second picture and notice how good and brave Joshua looks. He is an old man now, but he has a young and courageous spirit. And he wants to be helpful to his own family and to the whole nation. He can do it best by being true and good himself. This is very important in all our soldier life for God. You would not think much of good advice if it is not first obeyed by him who gives it. The parent or Sunday School teacher who lives right can more easily influence others to be and do right. The boy or girl who has chosen God to worship can urge others to choose the same God. In such matters it is right for one to say "I," and to write "I," and it is not selfish or proud. The next time you see the pledge of your young people's society put "I" in at every place the society is mentioned. You are the one to live up to that pledge. Here's a good motto for each of us: "As for me, and my class, my friends, my school mates, we will love Jesus Christ and serve Him."

**"I Must Keep My Pledge."** A tiny boy was having such a good time with his blocks when his mother said, "Come, dear, it is time to put the blocks away and get ready for bed." "Oh, mamma," begged the child, "let me stay a little longer—just till the clock strikes again." It only wanted fifteen minutes of seven, so the mother said, "If you will stop cheerfully when the clock

strikes I will let you play on." He promised. It seemed only a minute to the busy block builder when the clock on the mantel told the hour of seven. The dear child looked up in surprise, shut his lips tight, drew a long breath, and then said as cheerfully as he could, "I didn't think it would strike so soon, but I must keep my pledge."—A. C. Morrow.

**Which God Shall It Be?** Why, you ask, is it a choice between gods? It should not be, but it is. Look at that first picture and ask yourself if you want to worship something like that. Those are idols of the olden time, and the shapes and forms suited their ideas. If you were to picture out some of the modern idols, one would be a silver dollar, another would be a pleasure party, another a wine glass, another just a picture of one's self. Do you know that more people worship self than any other false god? But whatever or whoever has one's love before God, that thing, or person, or act, is his idol. He worships it rather than God. If one thinks more of a friend, or even of a father or mother, than he does of God, that, too, is just like idol worship. Not to choose the true God, is to choose some false God. Satan tries to show people that this is not so, but Satan is a deceiver and a liar, as the Bible tells us. Therefore, each one must decide for himself which god it shall be. One cannot choose God and other gods. God will not have any rival or partner god. He alone is the true God, and He alone must be worshiped. And the choice must be a deep and strong one, reaching to the whole heart.

**A Good Test.** Take a blank sheet of paper. Rule



it. Write God's name above one column and Satan's name above the other. Weigh deliberately, impartially, each service. Write honestly in one column the reasons why you should serve God and in the other all the reasons why you should serve Satan. Then deliberately determine to serve God. Write your name to it and stand by it. I knew of a young lady who did that and she was surprised at the result. She filled the God column full and did not find a single reason for the Satan column. Then she began to love and serve the Savior.

**Come and Go With Us.** Joshua was a good leader and so he was a good pleader. In that third picture he shows that. If we could see the faces of the people I am sure we should see that they were interested.

The very way they stand, and their lifted hands show that they are. The one man whose face we can see has hardly made up his mind, but he will do so pretty soon, for he will not want to be left alone. One reason God gets His people together and keeps them together is that they may more easily win others. The same reason holds for having a young people's society. If there are ten to twenty members in a society it is just like so many voices saying "Come." It is easy for a boy or girl to come and join a good live society and also join Christ by choosing to love and serve Him. By the way, if you belong to a young people's society try to make yourself count one by voice and life and influence. Be a Joshua kind of member. Don't let yourself get lost in a society.

And remember this, that the more you do for Christ and others, the more you are helping and blessing yourself. It is the great law of the new life. What often seems the greatest sacrifice, to carry out the covenant of grace, may result in greatest personal enjoyment and satisfaction. We may not understand how it is, but we know that God has ordered it so. That which seemed a cross is found to be a crown; that which seemed a yoke about the neck is a garland of beauty or a chain of pearls.

**A Self-Help Covenant.** When a weary, selfish heart comes to the Saviour, the Saviour meets his need by saying: "Take my yoke upon you." "But, Lord, he is tired and weary already; another yoke will crush him." No, no; he has just been carrying himself, and himself only, and that is the heaviest of all loads, heavier than any one man can bear. But strange it is, that if he adds another burden, his own burden will become light. That is the mystery of grace, that the burdens of a selfish man are lightened by adding more. "Take my yoke upon you." And what yoke is that, Lord? "The yoke of other people's needs—the burdens of the blind, and the deaf, and the lame, and the lepers—the burdens of other folks' sor-

rows; put them on to thy shoulders—take my yoke upon thee—increase thy burden, and thy burden shall become light, and instead of weariness thou shalt find rest."—J. H. Jowett, M. A.

**Choose Christ Now.** Joshua persuades the people to choose God, and they say, "We will, we will." This was not only because Joshua was a good man, but also because he gave good reasons. He gives at least ten good reasons why they should cast away the false gods and choose the true one. He looks back over the past twenty-five years and shows what God has done. No wonder they were quick to choose such a God! He wants the choice to get into their heart, mind, conscience and will, and so he speaks of it again and again. Then he wants to bind them to their choice. This is the reason he writes it in a book, and sets up a stone memorial. These stones would remind them of their vow. All this helps to make them thoughtful and choose right and stay firm in the right. We have all the reasons they had for a right choice and many which they did not have. As you think of Christ the Son of God, of His work and teachings, and how He died for us you will be reminded that we have even greater reasons why our choices should be right ones.

**Christ Is All and in All.** A king once said to a particular favorite, "Ask what thou wilt, and I will give it to thee." He thought to himself, if I ask to be made general I shall obtain it; and if for half the kingdom he will give it to me. But I will ask for something which will bring all these other things. So he said to the king, "Give me thy daughter to be my wife." This made him heir to all the king had. So by choosing Christ we become heirs to all the wealth and houses of the Father's Kingdom.—Sayles' Scriptural Anecdotes.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name six great miracles God had wrought for the Israelites. 2. What three stone memorials have been erected? 3. Mention three traits of character in Joshua. 4. What are some of the ten reasons for loving and serving God? 5. What other special reasons because of Christ and His work?

**Challenge Text.** Choose you ——— whom ye will ———, Josh. 24: (?)

**Practical Lessons.** 1. True worship is a matter of choice, not force; conscious and decisive choice is its sign, seal, life, power. 2. Blessings and curses, here and hereafter, are according to our choices. 3. Man is a worshipping being and to fail to choose the true God is to choose a false god. 4. Choose God today, for it may be your last day; you will never have a better time; it is God's now. 5. Remember that not to choose to do right is to choose not to do right. 6. Choice may seem a little thing, but our whole future may turn on it. 7. Abraham, David, Daniel, Paul are notable examples of choosing and serving God.

DR. J. M. COON.



And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and



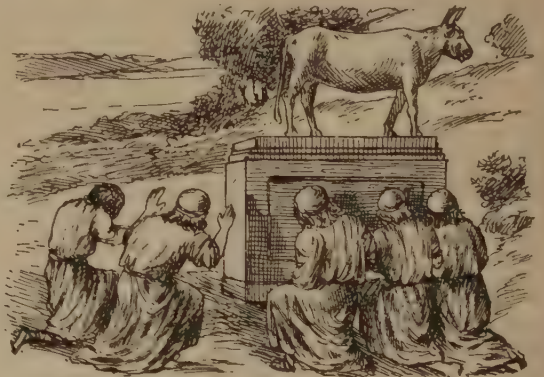
Baalim:  
And they  
forsook  
the Lord  
God of  
their  
fathers,  
which  
brought  
them



and followed other gods, of the



of the  
people  
that  
were  
round  
about  
them, and



themselves unto  
them, and  
provoked the  
Lord to anger.  
And they  
forsook the Lord,  
and served



And the anger  
of the Lord  
was hot against  
Israel, and he  
delivered them  
into the hands  
of spoilers that



And  
he sold  
them  
into  
the  
hands  
of their



round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JUDGES 2:1-23.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We confess our sin and weakness. We break from Thy covenant, and give ourselves to the power of Satan. Rescue us, we pray Thee, by Thy providence and grace. We rejoice that Thou dost follow us, even unto the land of the enemy. Free us again from the taskmaster of sin. For Christ's sake. Amen.

### SIN.

Who lie with me, no rest may find;  
Who eat with me, no nourishment.  
They flee; I follow close behind,  
Till soon their way to mine is bent.

Both Love and Hate are slaves to me,  
Shame is my diadem, Death my rod;  
And this my task, while worlds shall be—  
To ruin man and frustrate God.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, from 1426 to 1095 B. C. Places, Joshua died at Timnath-serah, and Shiloh was the religious capital. Persons, there were fifteen judges, beginning with Othniel and ending with Samuel. The one woman, Deborah, served with Barak.

**Scripture Setting:** Backsliding and Repentance. Presumptuous sins, Psa. 19:7-14. Proud and vain, Rom. 11:11-20. Defiant wickedness, Isa. 5:18-24. Moving towards Sodom, Gen. 13:1-13. Repent, repent, Ezek. 14:6-11. Return, return, Jer. 2:14-19. Confess, confess, Jer. 7:1-9. He will heal, Hos. 14:1-9. He will save, Matt. 14:22-33. He will welcome, Luke 15:11-24.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The whole period of the judges suggests some of the difficulties and helps

in a life of godliness. 1. Such a life has many and constant temptations from the true and the good. Evil companions, worldly surroundings and innate tendencies keep drawing from God. 2. Afflictions and judgments are a merciful provision to check, arrest and restore those who have wandered. 3. Special leaders are raised up from time to time, to help and deliver the godly. 4. The worship of snakes, stones and animals has its succession in the modern forms of idolatry, and both are equally foolish, futile and sinful. 5. The worst form of idolatry is that which claims the form of genuine worship, without its essence and power. 6. Persistence in sin demands and receives persistence of the Divine judgments.

### SIN'S HARD TASKMASTERS.

**Breaking a Solemn Promise.** Did you ever make a promise, and then break it? You felt mean over it. Have you pledged to help in the Young People's Society, or in the church, and yet failed to live up to it? That follows you, and haunts you continually, and seems to say, "There's that boy, that girl, who broke the pledge." Did you ever hear a person say that such a one's note was protested at the bank? That means that he promised by note, in writing, to pay money, and then failed to have enough in the bank to meet the note. All these are bad enough, and no one wants to be guilty of any of them. But here is something worse. What is that first picture about? The people of God serving false gods! And yet they had promised solemnly to Joshua and to God that they would be true and loyal. Just think of it, they are in the "promised land," and yet breaking the promise! God was true to His promise, but they forgot and neglect theirs. Can you tell how this happened? It is partly because they were once slaves in a land of idolatry, and so the old spirit and teachings kept influencing them. It is less than seventy years since they were delivered from that Egyptian bondage. Then they had been careless about teaching their children. The new lot of boys and girls had come to be men and women. They are described as "another generation that knew not God." I expect they looked on the worship of their fathers as "old foggy" religion, and they

decided they would be "up to date" and modern in their worship. And, worst of all, they had let the idol worshipers stay in the land when God had told them to destroy them. Idolatry is the worship of anything else except the true God; and it is a bad root which grows all kinds of sin. Well, they decided to change gods, and to follow the common worldly motto, "When in Rome do as Rome does." I think this is a better way to put it: "When in Rome, show Rome how to do that which is right."

**To Stop Is To Drop.** This is true of a pledge or promise, just as it is of a top or a bicycle. The top that spins stands erect. The bicycle that keeps going also keeps standing. Just so, to keep a resolution at work is to keep it alive and bright. To stand still in the doing of right, is to go backward. Keep going forward and you will keep growing stronger.

**The God Who Never Failed.** In this period of over 300 years, there were at least fifteen times when the nation broke their promise to God. But God never broke His even once. And during all the previous history God never failed. Think of the many, many wonders He did in fulfilment of His promises. Think of all which that second picture suggests. And even when the people went over to false gods, God would try to win them back. He was even better than His promise. He raised up these fifteen judges to deliver the people from their enemies. This story is a sort of bird's eye

view of the whole period. God had said by an angel, "I will never break my covenant with you," and He never did. Do you know why? Because God made the covenant with His Son, Jesus Christ, on behalf of the people. "When He could swear by no greater He swore by Himself, saying, surely blessing I will bless thee," etc. This was His great covenant with and for Abraham. It is very wonderful, and this it is which makes absolutely certain the salvation of all who accept this covenant of grace. Jesus Christ performs our part of the covenant for us. Read about it in Hebrews, sixth chapter. Therefore it is said, "Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges," etc. That "nevertheless" is a gracious, golden word, and illustrates how God finds ways and times and leaders to help His people even when they are rebellious and sinful. Some of our stories will tell about the wonderful things these judges did. How ungrateful, foolish and wicked for these people to rebel against a God who had never, never failed in His promise to them. God never fails to keep His promise. Do you know any people nowadays who break their promises to Him? And is it not even more ungrateful and foolish and sinful? Even the sins and idolatry of the Israelites were made to be teachers to them. Their enemies were as "thorns" to drive them to the right way.

**Gods that Lead to Sin.** The true God is holy, and seeks to make man holy. The false gods are really no gods, and they make their worshipers even more sinful than they are. The people did not realize that fully, when they changed from the true God to the false gods. To look at those three pictures showing the false gods, one might think only of how foolish they are. If that were all, we might pass it with a laugh, and as a joke on those who worship them. Think of bowing down to a calf, or an image! But the great trouble is that one grows to be like the thing or person he worships. And as these false gods were wrong in fact, and represented that which was wrong and sinful, so their worshipers became sinful. Some people say it does not make any difference what you believe—that is, what you worship—just so you live right. True enough, but if one's belief is wrong, and his worship is wrong, his life will be wrong, and he can't help it. It is also true that if one does not have a right belief, and the right God, he will have a wrong belief and a false god. The very worship of these false gods in-

cluded some of the worst sins. This helped to make every worshiper sinful.

**The Devil as a Paymaster.** Do you remember the old taskmaster, in the Egyptian bondage? Well, sin's taskmasters are even worse. Satan promises many pleasant things to those who serve him, but he never lives up to his promise. God never fails, but Satan always fails. "The way of the transgressor is hard." Those two last pictures give an idea of the troubles, disappointments and defeats which come to those who leave the true God and go after false gods. It is said that God's anger was hot against them. This was because He controls even the acts of wicked men. When God ceases to restrain the wicked, then they become as "thorns" and "snares." When His people forsake Him, God withdraws His protection. The very fact of worshipping false gods would be apt to separate and divide the tribes. The single true God, and the one place of worship, helped to unite the people and inspire them with sympathy for each other. We can hardly think of any misfortune so great as for the wicked to be turned loose to spoil and defile those who have cast off the true God. They are like so many dogs, or wild animals, springing on them to bite and devour. We must remember that while "God is love," He is also "a consuming fire" to those who are rebellious and wicked. It is terrible to think of the heart of God hot against one, and the mind of God, and His hand, His power, His providences, all against one. But this is the case when the devil is taskmaster and paymaster. "The wages of sin is death."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many judges were there in all? Who was the one woman judge? 2. Name some of the enemies who fought against the Israelites. 3. What judge pulled down a big heathen temple with his hands? 4. What judge used pitchers and lamps in battle, and won a victory? 5. Who was the last judge and the first prophet?

**Challenge Text.** "Take heed — lest there be in any of you an — of unbelief, in departing from the — —," Heb. 3: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. To cease to fight the enemy is the first step towards surrender to him. 2. The Christian should be in the world, and go into it, but not be of it. 3. Evil will not tempt him who is in the path of duty and in the performance of duty. 4. The very sins we commit are apt to furnish the punishments suitable. 5. All God's dealing with man is to bring him to penitence and salvation. 6. The journey from earth to Heaven is seldom in a straight line, but usually by zig-zag advances. 7. In the times of greatest decline God finds someone to be a nation's leader and helper. 8. God's gracious "nevertheless" comes to every man and nation again and again. (See pages 15 and 21.)

DR. J. M. COON.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JUDGES 4 AND 5.

**Prayer:** Keep us, our Father, loyal to Thee. Let not the world have dominion over us. If need be, send the discipline of trial and sorrow that we may be made to feel our dependence upon Thee. And with hurt send healing that the bones which Thou has broken may rejoice. In the name of Him who was ever loyal to Thee, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For Right is Right since God is God,  
And Right the day must win.  
To doubt would be disloyalty;  
To falter would be sin.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Twelfth century probably 1344 B. C. Place, Northern Israel. The camp of Israel on Mount Tabor; the camp of Jabin on the bank of the Kishon. Persons, Deborah, a prophetess; Barak a soldier; Jabin, King of Canaan and Sisera his commander in chief. Joel a Kenite who slew Sisera.

**Scriptural Setting:** Israel oppressed, Judges 2:11-23. Delivered by Othniel, Judges 3:8-11; delivered by Ehud, Judges 3:12-30; delivered by Deborah and Barak, Judges 4 and 5; delivered by Gideon, Judges 6-8; delivered by Jephthah, Judges 11 and 12; delivered by Samson, Judges 13 to 16.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** 1. Disloyalty to God insures a heavy penalty. There is no peace, saith

my God, to the wicked. 2. This is as true of the nation as of the individual. They are turned to destruction, all those who forget or forsake God. 3. But grace is ever offered to the contrite and repentant. His name was called Jesus because He was to save people from their sins. 4. God can still work deliverance for his people. Humanly speaking, Barak and Deborah had no chance against Jabin. But God made the heavens an ally of Israel and Jabin was defeated. 5. God helps men by means of men and women who will work with him for the redemption of the world. Barak and Deborah were not of much account in the eyes of the Canaanites, but they changed the history of the world.

### WOMAN IN THE NATIONAL LIFE.

**A Disloyal Nation.** Israel was fickle in her allegiance to Jehovah. By turns she had bursts of loyalty and then long seasons of indifference and disregard. The insistent refrain of the book of Judges is, "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord." Well, that is not so unlike the rest of human nature.

**Our Own Case.** The American Church, like the Jewish Church, has its periods of indifference and disloyalty, followed by an outburst of revivals and of flaming enthusiasm.

Israel was tempted just as every nation has been tempted by the love of pleasure, of soft living, of self-indulgence. She yielded just as every other nation has yielded. "They forsook the Lord God of their fathers—they followed other gods—they served Baal and Ashtaroah (deities of the native tribes)—they ceased not from their own doings nor from their stubborn ways—they took the daughters (of the heathen) to be their wives and gave their own daughters to the sons (of the heathen) and served their gods." In short, they abandoned the peculiar straitness of living which was to be their unique contribution to the civilization of the world and conformed to the wickedness of the people they were to improve.

**A Distressed Nation.** God, however, was not easily discouraged. As often as Israel departed from Him he sent judgments upon them to bring them back. In the words of the historian, "He delivered them into the hands of spoilers, and he sold them into the

hands of their enemies, and they were greatly distressed." Even the judgments of God are kind, just as they are true and righteous altogether. We should remember this.

**The Common Experience.** The prodigal son was brought back to the father's home and heart by the bitter experience of the "far country;" and many another who has wandered in the labyrinth of sin has found direction and deliverance by the sharp experiences of want, of trial, or of sorrow.

Israel was in a bad way. Her enemies were bitter and merciless; they were also numerous and strong. Israel had weakened herself until she was practically helpless. The different tribes were jealous of each other. Apparently they could not unite to resist a common enemy. They had no strong figure to whom they could look for leadership. And as for equipment, there was not a shield or a spear to be found among them.

**A Delivered Nation.** God sent judgment upon Israel, but He also sent help in view of their possible repentance. "When the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer." That is God's way. He calls to the sinner to return; He sends help to make the return possible and easier. That is the mission of Jesus. In the case of the oppression of Israel by the Canaanites, God made use of four widely different agencies: (1) Deborah, a fearless and devout woman, who had already made reputation for herself as a court of final resort in settling family and neighborhood disputes; (2) Barak, a soldier, brave and energetic, but

without much faith in his people's patriotism; (3) Jael, a zealous and fierce partisan who put Israel's welfare above the rites of hospitality, and (4) the elements—wind and rain, lightning and thunder, confusion on the earth and terror in the sky. It was apparent to Canaan, as to Germany in the world war, that God was not always on the side of the heavy battalions.

**The Battle.** It was a religious war. This was the secret of Deborah's success in appeal. She said nothing about warriors or chariots or military discipline or strategy. She summoned Israel in the name of Jehovah—the Jehovah in whom Moses had triumphed, by whom Joshua had brought down the mighty, who had given victory to Othniel and Ehud. It was just the appeal to quicken glorious memories, and out of glorious memories to inspire courage, hope, daring, and unconquerable zeal. Barak, himself a soldier, saw that this was the place, not for the soldier, but for the prophet. It was good sense, not fear, that made him say to Deborah, "If thou wilt go with me then I will go, but if thou wilt not go with me then I will not go." The outcome justified his judgment. Israel was aroused, the fainthearted were made strong, the doubtful were made enthusiastic, the cry of "God with us" put a new spirit into the nation and the Canaanites were routed. "The Lord discomfited Sisera and all his chariots and all his host—there was not a man left."

**The Hymn of Victory.** A graphic account of the whole incident is given in the Song of Deborah (Judges 5), which displays not only "a highly developed poetic art but poetic inspiration of the highest kind." In vigorous strains blessing is invoked upon "The governors of Israel who gave themselves willingly," and judgment announced upon Meroz because "she came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

**Seeking Their Own.** What a vivid picture is that of the Reubenites debating the part they should play in the struggle and finally deciding to stay by their sheepfolds and contentedly listen to the bleating of the flocks! And what can surpass the tragic intensity of the two passages with which the song closes—the murder of Sisera by Jael and the anxious waiting of Sisera's mother for her son's return!

**Jael and Sisera.** When the tide of battle turned against him, Sisera sought safety in the land of Jael, the Kenite, a partisan for Israel with a bitter hatred of the God-defying Canaanites. It is true she urged upon him the shelter of her home; it is true she took advantage of his necessity; it is true she drugged him before killing him; it is true

her act was a betrayal of the most sacred and most treasured conventions of Oriental hospitality. What is to be thought of her and her conduct? Are we to judge her by the standards of our twentieth century Christian morality, or by those of her own time, twelve hundred long years before Christ came? Or is it, after all, to be a question of the terms we employ? Our own day makes the distinction between "treachery," the meanest of sins, and "strategy of war," justified and approved by the strictest of moralists. Let Jael have the benefit of the doubt and leave her to the judgment of God and of her contemporaries. Deborah and Israel thought well of her, and it is very certain that even the Canaanites would have regarded her as a resourceful and determined foe.

**Value of Co-operation.** The prime condition of social and national progress is co-operation. There is a familiar legend among the Persians of a bird *Juftak* which has only one wing. On the wingless side the male has a hook and the female a ring. Only when joined together can they fly at their best. We are members one of another. When Israel fought together she was victorious.

**The Anxious Mother.** For a beautiful interpretation of the passage in Deborah's song depicting Sisera's mother looking out at the window and crying through the lattice "Why is his chariot so long in coming?" see the poem by Helen Coale Crew in her "Aegean Echoes":

O mighty Baal! Route his enemies  
And sweep them all into the Kishon's wave!  
O set the sun and stars to guide his course  
And send him safely home to Harosheth,  
With song triumphant for his mother's ear.

Long at the lattice have I kept my watch.  
My women, wearied by the vigil's length,  
Are half asleep, their heads upon their knees.  
Why is his chariot long in coming home?  
Why tarries still my son so late, so late?

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How did Israel come to be in trouble? 2. Does disobedience to God always bring trouble? 3. Was Israel justified in subduing Canaan by force of arms? 4. Is there such a thing as gain from affliction? 5. Does it always mean that God is displeased when poverty, sickness and death are visited upon people? 6. What did Jael do and what is to be thought about her conduct?

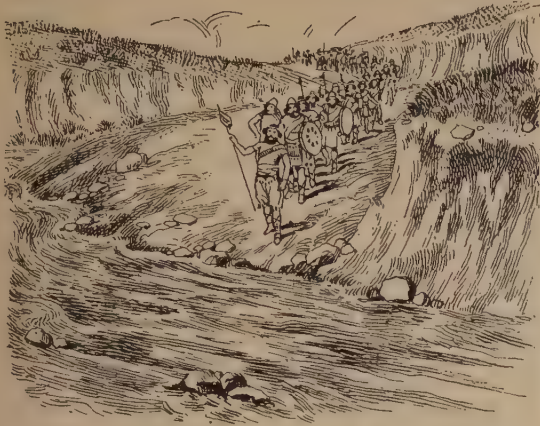
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God keeps watch over America as he did over Israel. 2. God does not "play favorites." When Israel sinned she suffered. 3. Suffering accompanies sin as the shadow follows the sun. 4. But God furnishes men to help not to harm them. 5. Some things excusable in Israel in the twelfth century B. C. are inexcusable in the United States in the twentieth century A. D. 6. Happy the man and the people who take God's correction cheerfully and become the better for it.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.



# GIDEON'S ARMY

So he brought down the people



and the  
Lord said  
unto Gideon,  
Every one  
that lapped  
of the water  
with his  
tongue, as



him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down



And the  
number of  
them that  
lapped,  
putting



were three hundred men: but all the rest of the people bowed down



water.  
And the  
Lord said  
unto



By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into thine hand: and let all the other people go every man unto his place.



# THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JUDGES 7:1-23.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the conquering One, and Thou dost inspire Thy followers with a victorious faith. Enable us to see Thy signal and hear Thy call in any battle of life. By the cross and by Thy Holy Spirit may we enter into abiding victory. For Christ's sake, Amen.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1222. Places, Gideon's home was at Ophrah, his army was gathered at the foot of Mt. Gilboa. **Persons,** Gideon and his three hundred soldiers.

**Scripture Setting:** The Christians' Fight. The faith principle, Heb. 11:17-45. The weapons, Eph. 6:10-20. Prayer and sword, Isa. 37:21-38. The Divine order, Psa. 37:23-40. Triumph through weakness, 1 Cor. 1:18-31. Certain victory, 1 John 5:1-21. Final reward, Rev. 3:11-22. Power from God, Zech. 4:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** From this acted parable we learn important conditions of spiritual warfare. 1. The Divine call and commission. Conversion is one's enlistment in the army of the

"When flits this cross from man to man,  
Vich Alpine's summons to his clan,  
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!  
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!"

Lord. 2. Divine guidance. As with Gideon, so with the believer there must be the Divine presence. 3. Learning from the enemy. So the believer learns much from the world, the flesh and the devil. 4. Assurance of victory. However great the enemies, Christ is greater and will prevail. 5. Personal interest and action. The picture is full of God, and also full of Gideon. The believer is under call to use his powers to the fullest extent. 6. Wise leadership and co-operation. Much depends on this in all spiritual battling. 7. Boldness and daring. These gave Gideon his name. So the name Christian implies every trait possessed by Christ. The believer is an outspoken and out-acting enemy of Satan and his forces.

## A SMALL ARMY WINS A GREAT VICTORY.

**A Queer Soldier Test.** Did you ever visit an enlisting camp when they take in soldiers or sailors? One important thing is the testing process. The men are measured, weighed and examined to see if they will make good soldiers. Just so God was testing the army for Gideon. A great host has come against the Israelites "as grasshoppers for multitude." The Israelites prayed to God for help, and God answered their prayer by calling Gideon to be their general. Gideon gathered a large army of 32,000 soldiers. This he thought was small enough, for the Midianite army numbered 135,000. First, Gideon tested himself to be sure that he was fit to be the leader. You can read about the sacrifice test and the double test by the fleece in Judges, chapter six. It is an interesting story by itself.

The Lord also encouraged Gideon. He said to him, "Go down to the Midianite camp at night and take your servant with you." In the darkness Gideon came near the outside of the camp and heard one soldier telling another of a strange dream he had. He said, "I saw a cake of barley bread come tumbling into the camp of Midian and it overturned a tent." And the other soldier said, "This is nothing save the sword of Gideon. God has delivered Midian into his hand." Then Gideon was assured that the victory would be his. Then the Lord tested the army.

The first thing God said was, "You are too many. Let all go back home who wish to." Twenty-two thousand went; there were 10,000 left. God said these were still too many. So he told Gideon to bring them all down to the river to drink. Those who lapped up

the water with the hand, as a dog would lap with his tongue, they should be put by themselves. There were just 300 that drank water that way, and God said that these 300 should be his army. The first pictures show all this—the dog lapping, the man on his knees, the men lapping with their hands, and the men on their knees, drinking with their hands.

"Speed You!" An eastern courier, hastening across the country, growing thirsty for water, will stop beside the stream and stand with one leg stiff and the other slightly bent and with head thrown back, dash the water quickly into his open mouth and hasten on. So the three hundred drank; all eager, earnest, prudent, watchful, self-forgetful. They could not lie down in self-indulgence. The body craved water, but the soul cared only for the battle. Thus was the body "kept under" (1 Cor. 9:27). So were the three hundred proven.—Exchange.

**Taking God at His Word.** Now we see what that queer test meant. It showed that men who drank that way, almost drinking as they ran, were men in dead earnest; men who had faith and consecration; men who would obey God and Gideon. Then in it all, God wanted to teach His people again that He could save them by a few soldiers against even the largest army of enemies.

In all work for God, in small things as well as great, the most important thing is the spirit of the worker. God wants man, more than He wants men. Of course He wants all to come if they will, but each must come with his whole heart and whole life. God never wants half-hearted people, nor half-time people. Gideon, standing there by the burning altar is a picture of the whole 300 men. They are all men who will take God at His word and do what God commands. The seventh and eighth pictures



show the difficult task God gave them to do. The tents show the great army of the Midianites. That soldier is one of the guards that watched before the tents. The guards are all just fresh from sleep and ready to do their best work. But God is leading the Israelites, and the Midianites are surprised and terrified by the wonderful thing which now happens.

**"Bring the Company to the Colors."** During our civil war a brave ensign got in advance of the faltering line. The flag was in danger of being captured. The captain called out, "Bring the colors back to the company." Then a brave soldier dashed forward shouting, "Bring the company up to the colors." And soon that flag was surrounded by a hundred fearless hearts. "So we may lower God's standard and bring it down to the level of our unbelief. Or we may bring our faith up to the great and glorious standard of his mighty promises. Let us follow the example of the faithful Gideon and his three hundred and have the faith of God."

**Trumpets, Pitchers and Lamps.** What strange weapons for soldiers! God had instructed Gideon what to do, and Gideon had told his men about it. Their business was to obey and it was God who would make the enemy fear and flee. Gideon had divided the 300 men into companies of 100 each. He led one company and he told the others to watch him and do exactly as he did. If a single soldier failed now it would spoil the whole plan. It needed men who were obedient and quick. We see, too, how important now was faith in God and in Gideon. If they had not had strong faith they might have said that those weapons would amount to nothing against swords and spears and shields. But God was teaching them and He could win victories with strange weapons as well as by few men when His people were loyal, obedient and consecrated.

The three pictures next to the last show how these weapons did the work. The trumpets are sounding loud and shrill, and on all sides suddenly the pitchers are broken to bits. You can see the pieces falling to the ground there. Then the 300 bright lights that had been concealed in the pitchers flash out in the midnight darkness. The men had been separated, so that each trumpet and torch seems to the Midianites to represent a whole large company, or band. The sight of seemingly overwhelming numbers terrifies and frightens them into a panic, which results in utter defeat.

**Faith and God Did It.** No exploits are so illustrious as those which have been achieved by the heroes of faith. More wonderful, I dare say, is it that Gideon with three hundred unarmed men should discomfit a much more numerous host, than that Alexander, with a well-appointed army of ex-

pert soldiers, should overturn the Persian empire. —J. Barrow.

**The Secret of Victory.** It was truly wonderful the way Gideon conquered that great host. But the important lesson for us to learn is how we may conquer the enemies we meet. The Gideon name and achievement have been an inspiration to God's people in all ages. The organization known as "The Gideons" is an illustration of the influence of this inspiring chapter in Jewish history. We, too, may win in life's battles if we have a winning faith in the God of battles. From the time the angel called Gideon to be the deliverer of Israel he was careful to follow the orders God gave him. Again and again he might have been tempted to try some other way or wait until some other time, but he felt that his one work was to obey. He trusted God to give such results as might be pleasing to Him. The name and fame of Gideon are growing more and more illustrious, and scarcely any picture in the whole Bible is more stirring and thrilling than that of Gideon standing in the night before a great army waiting for the moment when he should blow his trumpet and shout.

**Need of Careful Obedience.** "In obedience to God's will, follow Him universally without dividing; uprightly without dissembling; cheerfully without disputing, and constantly without declining; this is following the Lord fully." Two gentlemen were walking together one dark night. One said to the other, who knew the way, "I shall follow you so as to be right." He soon fell into a ditch and reproached his friend that he had fallen. "You did not follow me exactly, for I kept free," was the answer. Then the man realized that it was a side step that had caused his fall.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What kind of weapons did Joshua use to conquer Jericho? 2. What did Moses use to open the Red Sea with? 3. What ever instrument may be used, who is the real power? 4. How large was Gideon's army at first, and what two tests were used to reduce it? 5. Who is famous in secular history with an army of 300? 6. Why did God choose only three hundred?

**Challenge Text.** "Not by might, nor by ———, but by my ———, saith the Lord, Zech. 4: (1)."

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Little things often test the character, life, courage, discipleship. 2. "A good cause, a good calling, a good conscience will make a good courage." 3. Faith turns prophecy into history and outmatches the armies of the world. 4. By fidelity in the lower station we are fitted and called to the larger work. 5. God graciously strengthens the faith of His people by special providences and by answers to prayer. 6. God's people are to be measured rather than counted. 7. One man by prayer and faith may inspire a whole church.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE DEATH OF SAMSON

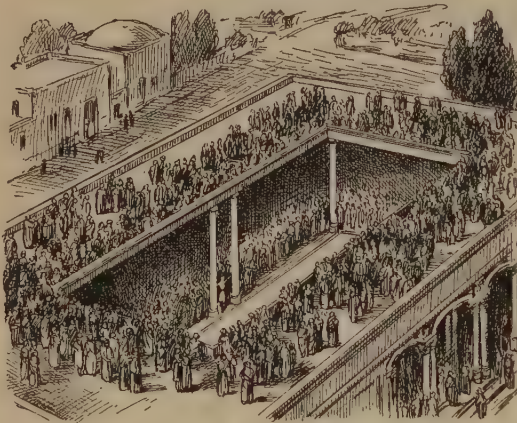
And Samson said unto the



Suffer me that  
I may feel  
the pillars  
whereupon  
the house  
standeth, that  
I may lean  
upon them.  
Now the house  
was full of



and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the



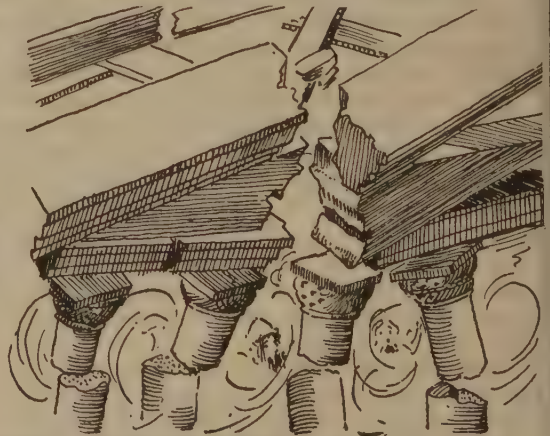
about three thousand men and women, that beheld  
while Samson made sport. And Samson called unto the  
Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee,  
and strengthen me, I pray thee, only  
this once,  
O God, that  
I may be at  
once avenged  
of the  
Philistines  
for my two  
eyes. And  
Samson



of the two middle pillars upon which the house  
stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his  
right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he



with  
all his  
might;  
and the



upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein. So the dead which he slew at his death  
were more than they which he slew in his life.



## THE SCRIPTURAL LESSON IS JUDGES 16:21-31.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Keep us from pride of strength and of life. Make us to seek after Thy strength and do Thy will. May we not run into temptation or dally with the tempter. When we fall wilt Thou lift us up, and enable us to get the victory over self and Satan. For Christ's sake. Amen.

One vast effort, and 'tis done.  
Prayer is answered, victory won;  
Samson wears the martyr's crown,  
Dagon's temple tumbles down;  
Priests and people, lords and all,  
Buried in that mighty fall.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1224 or 1096. Places, Samson was born at Zorah, and died at Gaza. Persons, Samson, Philistines, lad, lords and people.

**Scripture Setting:** Life Contrasts. Secret of failure, Judges 16:4-20. Secret of strength, Psa. 68:17-35. Counsel of fools, Eccl. 7:1-12. Counsel of wisdom, Prov. 4:1-8. Avoiding temptation, Jas. 1:1-15. Overcoming temptation, 2 Pet. 1:1-8. A Christian at all times, Tit. 3:1-9. Warning against pride, Matt. 23:1-12. Overruling human action, Job 12:12-19. True strength, Eph. 6:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Some very instructive life lessons come to us from a study of Sam-

son. 1. His early successes and promise. Few had better equipment and opportunity. 2. His fatal weaknesses—distrust of God and trust in self. 3. His shame and humiliation—led away by a wicked woman into most foolish sin. 4. His coming to himself like the poor prodigal, whipped into conviction by chagrin, repentance and suffering. 5. His punishment for sin really from God, but instrumentally by the Philistines. 6. His opportunity to redeem himself—graciously given by God's Spirit prompting to prayer. 7. His glorious triumph in death—"snatching victory from defeat."

### TRUSTING SELF OR TRUSTING GOD.

**Selling One's Self to Do Evil.** What a strong looking man that is in the first picture. He might have been as good as he was strong, for it is said of him, four times "the spirit of the Lord came upon him." But he sold himself to do evil. And do you know, I think it was partly because he knew he was so strong. He felt that he could do anything he pleased. He pleased to toy and dally with temptation, and at last he fell. Read the wonderful story of his birth, his many exploits and fatal mistake (Judges, Chap. 13 to 16). You have heard of Hercules, the strong man, but Samson was stronger, the strongest man that ever lived. The first three pictures show how he was punished for his foolish sin. They show three things which always follow a sinful life. You will remember them if we call them in order blinding, binding, grinding. Sin always blinds first, then binds as a slave, and then both grinds the sinner and makes him grind for his cruel master, Satan. How much better and easier and more blessed is the service for Christ, the rightful Master. Samson means "sun hero," and he started out as a real hero for God, fighting the Philistines, who had been the dreaded enemies of the Israelites for forty years. He was intended for great things all his life, but he played foolishly with temptation, and so was snared as in a net. The fourth picture shows how he is made weak. He was to be strong by taking a solemn vow called the Nazarite vow, to abstain from wine drinking, and from touching any dead body, and specially by never being shaven. God was his real strength, but these were to be signs that he obeyed God. He sold himself

to a cunning and crafty woman, and she had his locks cut off. Then his enemies tortured him.

**Watch and Run.** In the ancient Grecian stadium stood three pillars, one at the starting point of the race, one midway, and one at the goal. On the first was carved the inscription: "Show thyself a man." On the middle pillar were cut the words: "Speed you." On the goal pillar were the words: "Stop here." The most important pillar was the midway pillar. The head runner very often became overconfident. A glance at the inscription on the middle pillar would show the racer or the contestant that the race did not depend upon fortune. Life's great race, the goal for which we are striving, is not to be reached through chance.—Exchange.

**A Battle of the Gods.** Isn't that a queer looking thing for a god? It is half man and half fish, and so it is called Dagon, which means "fish god." Now when the Philistines caught Samson they boasted that their god was mightier than Jehovah, the God of the Israelites. They made a great feast to their god, and brought Samson there to make sport with him. Samson had always been "jolly and joking," giving riddles for the people to guess; so now they will joke and jest with him. They treat him as they would an animal to do tricks for them. They remembered, too, how he had killed many of their people, as in the picture when he is slaying thousands with the jaw-bone of an ass. They want to take revenge now by torturing and mocking him. But don't you see it was really a test of gods, and a battle between their Dagon and the true God? Now we will see which is the mightier of the two gods.

**Gold or God.** A gentleman said to another with whom he was riding, as they passed a fine mansion

surrounded by beautiful fields, "What is the value of this estate?" "I don't know what it is valued at," his friend replied, "but I know what it cost its late owner." "How much?" "His soul." Then he continued: "The owner was once a Christian man. But as business increased, he gave less attention to religion and more to business. The cares of the world gradually choked the word. He began to neglect the Bible. Secret prayer was given up. The family altar was forgotten, as they did not have time to pray, owing to the rush of work. The owner ceased going to prayer-meeting. As he grew older, he loved money more, became more miserly, and began to hoard up his savings. He bought this large estate, built this mansion, which he never finished, sickened, and died. Just before he died, he mournfully said: 'My prosperity has been my ruin.'"

**Blind and Yet Seeing.** There are two kinds of eyes, the natural eyes for seeing things outside, and the spiritual eyes for seeing things as God sees them. When Samson lost his natural eyes his spiritual eyes began to see clearly again. He had been letting those inward eyes get weak and blind. We may also say now that he sees because he is blind. That sounds queer, but you see what I mean. We may be sure that Samson was thinking, and thinking hard, while sin was blinding, binding and grinding him. It is a good thing when one wakes up enough to think away down deep in his soul. A sinful person loses himself and is thoughtless; and when he begins to think he finds himself, and we say he comes to himself. So Samson began to come to himself. He saw how foolish he had been, and now he repented. What was God doing? He was making his hair grow and he was giving Samson new strength. How good God is to give us another chance, and another, and so many new chances if only we are sorry for our mistakes and our sins. Even the hard punishments for sins are meant to be as God's whips to bring us back to Him, just as in the case of Samson here. As he stands there in the temple court where the main columns must be that support the great building, he keeps thinking, and at last a plan flashes into his mind. I think God flashed it, for He does that often. The plan was to pull over the two main pillars and so destroy the building and kill many people. He says to himself, "I feel as if I could do it. I can do it, if God will help." Then he prays to God, "O Lord God, remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me I pray thee, only this once, O God." Isn't that a pleading prayer, and with the true ring to it? When one prays like that you may expect something will happen. Surely now Samson's spiritual eyes are open and he sees God.

**Time for One More Battle.** History records that, at the battle of Marengo, the French troops were beaten and flying from the field, when Napoleon rode up to the head of the army, crying out, "There's time for one more battle." By the magic of his enthusiasm and courage he changed defeat into magnificent victory. So did Samson; and so may every follower of Christ, the Commander who has never lost a battle. Then, face about, and take your place where you belong. Whatever the failure or defeat you can yet win a victory.—J. H. Batten.

**Praying and Pushing.** Samson had been doing what he could to carry out his plan. After the Philistines had sported with him awhile he asked the boy who led him around to take him to the strong pillars of the house, as if he wanted to rest by leaning against them. You see the boy there, leading him, and in the next pictures are various scenes of what followed. There is a group of the lords and ladies rejoicing over the capture of Samson, their great enemy. There is a picture of a large roof where thousands were gathered. Then the three pictures of Samson and the two main columns. How strong he looks, as he bows with his great shoulders and pushes with all his might! God comes into him and the great building falls and thousands of Philistines are killed. This was according to the purpose of God that these wicked people should be destroyed. If they were left alone they would destroy God's people. After this great victory in answer to prayer, it was many years before the Philistines tried to rule over the Israelites again. Do you notice the two words "Prayer and Push?" They ought always to go together. To pray without pushing or to push without praying does not do much good. Samson prayed and pushed with all his might. All great and good enterprises have been successful by earnest prayer and sacrificing effort.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who sold his birthright and tell about it? 2. When did a lad help Christ feed a large crowd? 3. What parable is the story of a young man "who came to himself"? 4. What other kinds of false gods are there? 5. What other Bible women tempted others to do wrong? 6. Tell what you can of the Nazarite vow and life.

**Challenge Text.** "Be strong in the ——— and in the ——— of His might," Eph. 6: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Samson was more blind when he saw than when he lost his eyes. 2. The lad was the unconscious actor in this tragedy of life. 3. The dying prayer of Christ and Samson contrasted. 4. Trouble is often a means and a motive to repentance. 5. The true believer may stumble and fall, but always rises again. 6. The greatest privilege of the believer (prayer) may be exercised in his greatest extremity and weakness. 7. Samson's fall was due to a heathen wife and wicked companions.



And Ruth said,



me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee:

for  
whither  
thou  
goest,  
I will  
go; and  
where  
thou  
lodgest,  
I will



thy people shall be my



and thy God my God. Where thou diest, will I die, and

there  
will  
I be



the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was steadfastly minded



then she left speaking unto her. So they two went until

they  
came to  
Beth -  
lehem.



And it came to pass, when they were come to

that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS RUTH 1:14-22.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for Thy providences which meet us at life's crossroads. We thank Thee for the impulses Thou dost stir within us by Thy Holy Spirit. May we be ready to choose as Thou wouldst have us do. Lead thou us into the blissful future, by the gateways of right choices. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"I see not a step before me as I tread the days of the year,  
But the past is still in God's keeping, the future His mercy shall clear;  
And what looks dark in the distance may brighten as I draw near.  
"So I go on not knowing. I would not if I might;  
I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light;  
I would rather walk with Him by faith than walk alone by sight."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B.C. 1222-1182. Places, Moab, east of the Dead Sea, and Bethlehem, in Judah. Persons, Naomi, Ruth, Orpah, people of Bethlehem.

**Scripture Setting:** Right Choices. The true wisdom, Prov. 3:1-18. Mary's choice, Luke 10:38-42. Necessity of choice, Matt. 6:19-34. Choose now, Heb. 3. Choosing for service, Josh. 24:1-16. Choice of the disciples, John 6:53-69. Difficulty of choice, Matt. 19:16-22. Why halt ye? 1 Kings 18:19-39. Moses' choice, Heb. 11:25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This picture of the three women is the thrilling heart of the book of Ruth. The great truth taught is the importance of choosing the people of God, or the importance of right choices in life. 1. Opportunity is given for

right choices. Again and again this opportunity comes; now a last time. 2. Sacrifices are needed in order to right choices. A choice is a most choice thing, and one must pay the price for it. 3. Right motives must be back of right choices. Ruth was won by the beautiful character of Naomi, and she is led to choose her religion also. 4. Earnest purpose is necessary for right choices. Notice that Orpah chose also, but she did not have purpose to be true to it. 5. The masterful power of a right choice. Any choice is strong if it really roots in the will; but a right choice has the very power of God in it. 6. Blessed results in right choices. Ruth lost some things but gained some better things. This is true in every right choice. 7. The greater unexpected blessings. By marriage with Boaz, Ruth is put in the ancestral line of David and Christ.

### POWER OF A LOVING CHOICE.

**Mother Makes the Home.** Mother, home, and Heaven are three queen words in human life. Of these "mother" is very important, for "home is where mother is," and the true mother leads to Heaven. In order to understand that first picture you should read the beautiful story in the book of Ruth. There are only 85 verses in the whole book, and it can be read in a few minutes. This and Esther are the two book-stories of the Bible,—wonderful stories of two splendid girls, Ruth and Esther. Ruth is one of the ancestors of king David, and also of David's greater King, the Lord Jesus Christ. Esther is the saviour of the nation that God chose as His peculiar people. Each book is rightly named for its heroine. Be sure to read both of these charming stories in the Bible.

As you read Ruth, you will find how true it is that mother makes the home. The mother's name is Naomi, which means "the lovable." That is a good start towards making a home, for love is the power that makes all good persons and things. Naomi was true to her name. When the father said we must go to Moab to make a living, Naomi goes. When the father dies, and her two sons die, the mother still makes the home for her daughters-in-law. During the ten years' stay in Moab, Naomi had been true to her God and to her religion. Her godly char-

acter and beautiful life were shining constantly through her love, and her daughters-in-law had come to love her. God has been watching over her all this time, and when she learns that there are good harvests again in the land of Judah she longs to get back to her Bethlehem home.

**Right Choices for Life.** A choice may sometimes seem to be a little thing; but the whole life may turn on it, as a door swings on the hinge, or as a boat is guided by a rudder. That was true of Ruth's choice. In that first picture we can see Orpah going away to her Moab home and friends. She loved Naomi, but she loved her heathen gods better. She kisses Naomi and leaves her. Naomi has been a true missionary of the true religion in that heathen land, but the best missionary cannot influence everyone to make right choices. Even Christ could not persuade all to believe in Him, and follow Him.

Ruth made great sacrifices in order to this right choice and she did not know then how much better it was for her to choose thus. She chose because she felt it was right, and that the God of Naomi was leading her. So she not only chooses Naomi, but she chooses her religion and her God. All her future is decided by that one choice and how much it meant to her, you will see a little farther on in the



story. The four pictures all show how deep and strong and lasting her choice was. She decides everything and casts in her lot with Naomi. Her home, her people, her God, even her burial place are chosen by Ruth. You see how hard this was for Ruth, but she sees it to be right and so she does it. Then she is glad she has chosen.

**Who Is your Friend?** You have been wondering why Naomi said to Orpah and Ruth, "Go back my daughters, to your own mothers and home land, and may the Lord deal kindly with you." I think she wanted them to be sure, very sure, that they really chose to go with her, and especially she wanted them to choose between gods and between religions. When it came to that, you see Orpah could not do it. If Orpah had come without this real deep choice, she never would have been satisfied and Naomi never would have felt happy and free with her. A real friend must be a friend of one's Christ and a believer in one's religion.

Ruth is such a friend to Naomi, and so we see them going on the way together. How happy they seem each with an arm around the other! You can hardly tell which is mother and which is daughter, for love like that keeps people young and makes them look quite alike. If you will look up the "Challenge text" you will see how important it is for true friends to be agreed.

Now we are choosing friends all the time. God has given good mothers to many of us, and good homes, good Sunday schools, churches and young peoples' societies; yes, and many good people about us. This is to make it easy for us to choose good friends. Be sure you go arm in arm with those who are good, that is those who love God and follow him. Paul said to the Corinthian Christians, "Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ." A boy or girl is soon known by the company he or she is with. See to it that you choose right friends, for this will mean much to you in life.

**Choose Only the Best.** A famous artist said he would never allow himself to look at an inferior drawing or painting, to do anything that was low or demoralizing, lest familiarity with it should taint his own idea, and thus be communicated to his brush.

There is everything in holding a high ideal of your work. Hold the idea of excellence constantly in your mind, for whatever model the mind holds the life copies. What we think, that we become. Never allow yourself for an instant to harbor the thought of deficiency, inferiority.

Reach to the highest; cling to it. Take no chances with anything that is inferior, whether it be as to your work or your friends.

**What Came of One Choice.** Poor Orpah! we never hear of her again. The last we saw was her back as she went away to her false gods and her heathen friends. But Ruth! How beautiful her face and life and all her future! This is because she let God shine into her heart, and shine out through her life. That one choice of hers was the best thing she ever did. It was a hard thing, when she thought of sister, and mother, and friends and native land. But she knew that it was the right thing to do. And God so worked all things that he made it to bring great joy and happiness and friends and a new home and a chance to be of use in life. Just think of the life companionship with Naomi, and think, too, of what joy she brought to Naomi. True friends both give and receive blessings. Ruth could never have found such a friend in her Moab home. When they came to Bethlehem, God guided them so that they found a way at once to get a living, by Ruth gleaning in the fields. This led to Ruth's meeting Boaz, a relation of Naomi. Boaz was a godly man, and he was pleased to see how this heathen girl had chosen the true God. Soon he found that he loved her. Then he married her, according to the laws governing relatives. Naomi lived with them and was happier than ever. Boaz and Ruth had a son whom they named Obed. This Obed was the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, the shepherd boy, who became king. So Ruth, the Moabite girl, became the mother of kings and and one of the ancestors of Jesus Christ, the King of kings; and all because she made that one right choice! The last picture makes us think of all these things, for Bethlehem was where Jesus was born hundreds of years afterward.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why had Naomi gone to Moab, and what had happened to her there? 2. Why did she now wish to return to Canaan? 3. What two young men in the Old Testament chose each other as friends? 4. What two in the New Testament?

**Challenge Text.** "If the Lord be God ——— Him, but if Baal then ——— him." 1 Kings 18: 9

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The same pleas influence some to accept Christ, and some to reject him. 2. Important that we choose right companions and a right home. 3. Naomi an unconscious foreign missionary. 4. The Christian life in its fellowships, providences, principles, destiny. 5. Decided choice of Christ is the gateway into the kingdom of life and Heaven. 6. Your fidelity and love will win another and another to Christ. 7. Providence works for Ruth, and Ruth works with Providence. 8. Homes and human relationships are God-given opportunities. 9. Fit into God's plan, and all the wheels of life will run smoothly.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE PRAYING MOTHER

And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with



and  
one  
ephah  
of  
flour,  
and a



of wine, and brought him unto the



of the  
Lord in  
Shiloh;  
and the  
child  
was  
young.  
And they



and brought the child to Eli. And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here,



unto  
the  
Lord.  
For this



I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there.





## RUTH AND NAOMI

BY P. H. CALDERON

There was an Israelite of Judea and Naomi his wife, living in the country of Moab; whither they had gone because of the famine in Judea. Naomi's husband died, and his sons married women of Moab; the one named Orpah, the other Ruth. In the course of time, the husbands of these two also died in Moab, leaving Naomi and the two daughters-in-law alone.

The famine in Judea being ended, Naomi, the Jewess, resolved to return to her own country. She had urged the two daughters-in-law to stay in Moab, their native land. So Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and returned to Moab. But Ruth clung to her Jewish relative, saying the words which have become to many races through many ages an expression of tenderness and love:

"Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go \* \* \* Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God \* \* \* where thou diest there will I die and there will I be buried."

The painter, Calderon, who lived in England, has painted this scene very beautifully, showing the mountainous country of Moab, with its nearly naked hills. In the immediate foreground stands tall Naomi, the Jewess, and young Ruth, embracing her older friend, and uttering her vows of attachment. Beside them is a massive rock to which clings the cactus, suggestive of the dry, hot land where they have been living. The artists who paint oriental subjects are fortunate in being able to arrange flowing draperies in a graceful way. Naomi wears a dark scarf about her head and her garment is heavy and solid looking, whereas Ruth's is of much lighter material with more ornamentation. The tenderness of the young woman's face, full of pleading, and the kindly expression of the Jewish woman are beautifully expressed.

A short distance away waits Orpah, the other daughter-in-law, her little package of personal property rolled up ready for departure. She has her veil drawn over her head, darkening her face, as if the artist would give the impression that she was in a somewhat sinister position and not an example of exaltation of feeling. The lonesomeness of the locality is in keeping with the lonesomeness of Orpah and contrasting with the exaltation of Ruth.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





RUTH AND NAOMI  
RUTH AND NAOMI

## PHILIPPE HERMOGENE CALDERON. 1833-1898.

In the literary and ecclesiastical history of Spain, the name of Calderon is a prominent one. In turn, borne by witty men of letters, able and statesmanlike clergy, princes of the church or humble cures, alike able in their respective places, there was handed down with it, to a humble Spanish clergyman temporarily stationed at Poitiers, in France, a great tradition of achievement and romance from Spain.

When at last, a son came to the Rev. Juan Calderon and his wife, what more natural than the lad should take from his father, a love for all manner of old world histories, and rather more than a merely scholarly regard for the great themes of the Bible.

Determined that his son should have his chance, and perceiving that the boy held no special affection for letters or the church, the father brought Philippe Hermogene to London, and placed him in the art school of Mr. J. M. Leigh, in Newman Street.

In the late Georgian and the early Victorian era, the Leigh school under many names, has figured in more than one great novel of the Victorian period and from it have come some notable painters.

It is rarely that an artist deems the incidents of his life to be of such importance as to consent to make a first hand, direct record of them. The following self-revelation, from a letter written by Calderon to a friend, bears the keener interest therefore.

He writes:

"I was very fond of drawing from my earliest years, but I did not begin studying till 1850, when I was sent to Mr. Leigh's in Newman Street. After painting from life for some time, there, I went to Paris, and was admitted to the studio of M. Picot, where I studied for a year. Before that time I had scarcely ever 'drawn' from life, but always painted (often by gaslight). At Picot's, I was not allowed to use my brush at all, and was rigidly kept to drawing from a model from the head down to the toes. On my return to London I painted my first picture, 'By the Waters of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept,' which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1852. After this, I painted chiefly portraits for some time, and only began exhibiting regularly in 1857."

Mr. Calderon's greatest strength and most splendid conceptions have been mainly imaginative historical pieces. Among the most famous of these are "Her Most High, Noble, and Puissant Grace" (1866); "The British Embassy at Paris During the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew" (1863); "Joan of Arc" (1877); "The Renunciation of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" (1891). "Ruth and Naomi," is one of his important biblical pictures.

It has been wittily said of Calderon's work that he thought like an Englishman and painted like a Frenchman.

JAMES BEALINGS



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 1.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for godly parents, and homes consecrated by prayer. We rejoice at all the holy influences and agencies which have gone out from the home and the Church. Let Thy peace and blessing ever abide upon the homes of our land. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"The bravest battle that ever was fought—

Shall I tell you where and when?

On the maps of the world you will find it not;

'Twas fought by the mothers of men."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about B. C. 1142. Place, Shiloh; Samuel was born at Ramah. Persons, Hannah, Eli, Samuel.

**Scripture Setting: Prayer and Home Life.** Faith and prayer, Matt. 28:18-22. Obedience and prayer, 1 John 3:13-24. Boldness in prayer, Heb. 4:1-16. Wholeheartedness, Jer. 29:1-13. Importunity, Luke 11:1-12. Without fainting, Luke 18:1-8. Beyond what we ask, Eph. 3:14-21. Not in our way, 2 Cor. 12:7-10. Prayer answered, Acts 4:23-31. The promise sent, Isa. 30:19-26.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We have here a beautiful picture of a Christian home: 1. The whole family faithful at the services of God's house.

Their fidelity is suggested by the words "sacrifice," "vow," and "yearly." 2. The mother's dominant religious influence planning the future of her boy. 3. Training the young by persuasive authority so that a religious habit is formed. 4. Remembering the prayer and vow and answering the one and honoring the other. 5. The home shown to be the basis of the church, and of the state. 6. The mother projecting herself into all the future by her consecration of her boy. 7. The double Divine purpose in the establishment of the home, the glory of God and the good of the world.

### POWER OF A PRAYING MOTHER.

**A Child of Prayer.** We all know that mother can do almost anything. This is because she loves, and lives for those she loves. When she loves God also and prays to Him she can accomplish far more. Love and prayer go together easily, and it was so in the case of this good woman. Her name was Hannah, and she was the wife of a Levite whose name was Elkanah. This man had two wives. His other wife had children and made sport of Hannah because she had no child. Hannah was sorely grieved, but she was as patient as she could be. She showed a good spirit, very different from that of the other wife, and told the Lord her troubles. One day she was moved to ask the Lord to give her a baby boy, and she promised to let him live in the temple, and serve there when he grew up. Children were considered a great honor and a gift from God. God heard Hannah's prayer and sent her a little boy. She called him Samuel, which means "asked of the Lord." God gave her several other children, but Samuel was the best, and was the best known of all. Our next story will tell about his early life in the tabernacle. All the pictures in this story are given just because of this one prayer of Hannah. The fifth one shows her praying.

**A Thankful and Joyous Heart.** What do those first two pictures mean? They tell us that Hannah was grateful because God answered her prayer. Sometimes people pray and do not watch to see if the prayer is answered. Others may see the answer, and forget to thank God for it. Hannah did not

belong to either of these classes. Why, she was thankful even before the answer really came, for it is said that, after she prayed so earnestly, "she went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad." That was because she believed that God would answer her prayer in His own time and way. That kind of faith is true praise and thanksgiving. Every child of God may have it, too, for he can know beforehand that God will do the very best for him. He will either answer the prayer exactly or he will give something better. Hannah knew this, and so she was thankful, and these first pictures show the offerings of praise she brings to the tabernacle.

The second chapter of 1 Samuel gives the beautiful song of praise that Hannah sang about this time. The Holy Spirit must have whispered it to her, for it is full of great truths about salvation. That fifth picture might be as she looked when she sang this song. She seems so beautiful and joyous, and Eli the high priest sits and listens to her. The Holy Spirit can make the heart that loves God just like a harp to send out the music of praise. That second picture looks like a dead animal. Well, it is the skin of one, and is the way they made bottles in those days. The skin was cleaned and dried, and all the openings tied except one, which was the mouth of the bottle.

The "Morning-Glory" of the Home. The finest compliment we have ever heard told to a woman was by her husband, who said in speaking of her: "We always think of her as a morning-glory, because she looks so bright and cheery and pretty at

the breakfast table." How many breakfast tables are presided over by women who make an effort to be dainty? And there are a great number who are at once untidy and even uncleanly to look at. The many devices of science in these days, make it more and more possible for the wife to be as the beautiful "morning-glory" even in the kitchen and dining room.—Exchange.

**The Worship of God's House.** We worship by going to the house of God, for the preaching service on Sunday or for the Sunday School, or for the prayer meeting. In those days they came to the tabernacle with their offerings. Here the priests are killing the bullock, getting it ready for a sacrifice. We have already learned that when the blood was shed it was usually a picture of Christ shedding His blood for sinful man. When the animal was burned, it pictured the willing consecration of the one who brought the sacrifice. Every part of service pointed to Christ, and was intended to teach that Christ would some time come to save and bless. Now that Christ has come, we bring our praise and prayer and worship directly to Him in His house. Sometimes we come confessing our sin, which is like the sacrifice for sins; and sometimes we bring praise and thanksgiving, which is like the other offerings without blood.

The place of worship was first an altar of earth or stones piled up. This was what Adam had, and Noah, and Abraham and others. Then the tabernacle was given by God to Moses, and that was used during the wilderness life. The ark in the tabernacle represented God Himself. After the Israelites came into the land of Canaan they had a holy house built where all men and boys could come once a year for sacrifices. Later the beautiful temple of Solomon was built. In the time of Christ there were also many places called synagogues, where the people came together for worship. Now we have meeting houses or churches for our services.

**How She Did It.** The mother of a large family, all of whom were eminent in church work, was asked to tell the secret of her influence over her children. "I have none," she said, "only that I never allowed my children to get away from religious influences. I do not scold or preach,—I simply expected them to be at Sunday-school and at church as I expected them to be at school on week days. I took it for granted that the child has a religious side, as he has a mind capable of development, and I kept him from the very start under the influences most likely to bring his soul to its best."

**The Boy in the House of God.** In the last picture we see Hannah bringing little Samuel to Eli the high priest. Hannah is pointing to Samuel and saying to Eli, "For this child I prayed, and therefore also I have

lent him unto the Lord." That shows how very grateful Hannah was. She thanked God for Samuel, and then gave him back to God, just as she had promised. How old would you guess Samuel to be? We can not know exactly and so have to guess at it. Some say he was about three years old, the age when the mother ceased nursing the child. Others think the "weaning" refers to the time when the lad could go alone, and could safely be committed to the care of others. This would be at the age of seven years. Still others believe he was eleven or twelve years old when he was brought to stay with the high priest. Anyhow, he was only a young boy, and now by his pious, praying mother he is to be taught specially in all that has to do with God's house and worship. This was a great sacrifice for a loving mother to make; but Hannah did it because she loved God more than her child. It is something like the missionaries who go to foreign lands and leave their children in their own home land to be educated. People can do that only when they love God and desire to obey Him. God can and does take care of such children, just as He took care of Samuel here. Every year when the family came to the house of God to worship Hannah brought a linen coat for Samuel. This was called an ephod, and Samuel wore it when he was helping about in the temple.

**Who Calls Ministers and Missionaries.** Certainly it is God by His Spirit, but He uses fathers and mothers in Christian homes. The home is the place where the largest number of boys and young men decide to become ministers. Of 410 candidates in our churches one year, 287 decided to study for the ministry before they entered college, 85 while they were in college, and 35 after leaving college. Religion in the home is the surest and strongest influence to turn our boys and young men into the ministry. The probabilities of a young man's deciding to enter the ministry decrease as he leaves parental influences for college, and decrease still more as he leaves college for contact with the world. What a responsibility is thus laid on the home!—Christian Observer.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What New Testament mother prayed for her sick daughter? 2. What widow's son was raised to life by Christ? 3. What did a fond mother ask Christ to give to her two boys?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Children are among God's best gifts. 2. The mother is the most potent force in training the child. 3. We should early influence the child for religion and the house of God. 4. Every child of a Christian home should be dedicated to God. 5. The child may be consecrated even in early youth. 6. The child imbibes religious truth by the very surroundings and atmosphere of the home. 7. Religious influence may be exerted before the child is born. Our Christian development ought to be of immense advantage to our children.



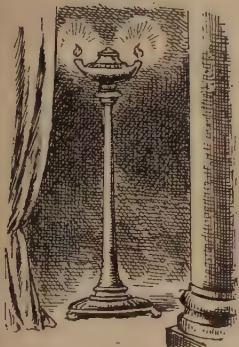
And the child



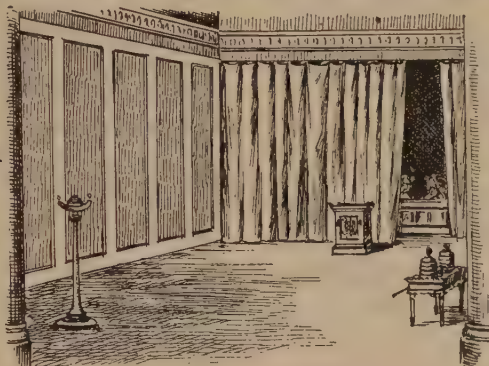
ministered unto the  
Lord before Eli.  
And the word of the  
Lord was precious  
in those days; there  
was no open vision.  
And it came to  
pass at that time,  
when Eli was



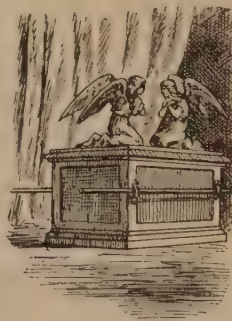
in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; And ere



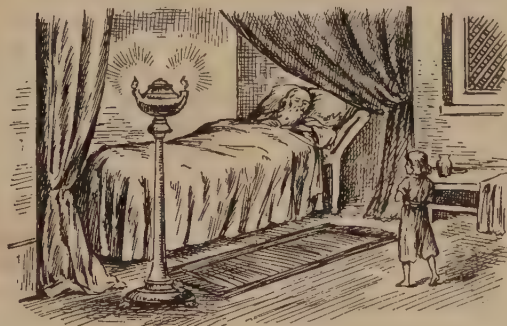
of God  
went  
out in  
the



of the  
Lord,  
where  
the



of God was, and Samuel  
was laid down to sleep;  
That the Lord called  
Samuel: and he answered,  
Here am I.  
And he ran unto



and said, Here am I; for  
thou calledst me.  
And he said, I called  
not; lie down again.  
And he went and



And the  
Lord called  
yet again,  
Samuel.  
And Samuel



and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son;  
lie down again.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I SAM. 3:1-20.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, As a little child Thou didst come to our earth, and take on our human nature. May we ever have the child-like spirit, by which alone we can fully apprehend Thee, and enter into Thy Kingdom. May we all be children of the light and wilt Thou call us by name that we may become members of Thy household, here and hereafter. Teach us the value and opportunity of childhood, and stir us to earnest care and love for the child. By Thy Holy Spirit move upon the hearts of many young men and young women, calling them to be

consecrated workers for Thee and for the world. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

“Wanted! Young feet to follow  
Where Jesus leads the way,  
Into the fields where harvest  
Is rip'ning day by day;  
Now while the breath of morning  
Scents all the dewy air,  
Now, in the fresh, sweet dawning,  
O follow Jesus there!”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1134. Place, Shiloh, the religious capital of Israel. Persons, Samuel, 12 years of age, and Eli, high priest and judge, now 78 years of age.

**Scripture Setting:** Boys of the Bible. Boy of promise—Isaac, Gen. 21:1-5. Boy of providence—Joseph, Gen. 39:1-6. Boy of prayer—Samuel, 1 Sam. 1:24-28. Boy of destiny—David, 1 Sam. 17:40-51. Boy of the captivity—Daniel, Dan. 1:8-20. The boy king—Josiah, 2 Kings 22:1-7. The boy preacher—Timothy, 2 Tim. 1:1-11. The boy deity—Jesus Christ, Luke 2:40-52.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The believer's vision of God will be according to his faith and obedience. 2. The Lord is constantly calling unto men by providences, judgments, blessings, by par-

ents, churches, ministers, by His Word, His Holy Spirit, His work. 3. Those only can live the true life, who, like Samuel, respond to the Divine call and surrender all to the Lord. 4. Our dull human nature often fails to discern the Lord's call and presence. 5. God calls some to a mission of mercy and blessing, and others to a mission of judgment and wrath. 6. A single boy or girl may be the making or unmaking of a nation or of a generation. 7. Parent and teacher should remember that the child needs repeated calls to enable it to hear and understand. 8. Men still demand the Divine credentials in those who seek to be spiritual teachers and leaders. 9. As is the boy, so usually will be the man.

### THE MAKING OF A TRUE MAN.

**The Voice and Touch of God.** At the first, God tenderly took Adam, the clay man He had formed, and breathed into him the breath of life. In some such sense He deals with every human soul as He starts it on the road to manhood. He, as it were, breathes Himself into every individual, at the very beginning of life. If we could realize it, we should see that God graciously surrounds each living soul with influences and agencies for good. The fancy that each soul has its good angel, is true so far as God's interest in us is concerned. But this interest is for a purpose, calling the soul to the performance of duty. This is true in the case of Samuel. He is to be the mouthpiece of God to reprove Eli for not punishing his wicked sons. By the way, these same sons of Eli had favorable conditions which apparently Samuel did not have, for they were in the line of the priesthood, and their father was himself the high priest. We shall see why they failed, but it was not because God had not surrounded them with good influences. Samuel, too, had pious parents, but he was in constant danger of being led astray by these bad boys of the high priest. But he was held and guided by the voice and touch of God.

**The “Here-am-I” Spirit.** Samuel had it, and the sons of Eli did not have it; and this made all the difference in their destiny. In

order to the making of a true man, there must be the touch and voice of God, and there must be the readiness of soul to respond. As God comes to the soul, so the soul must come to God. It is not true that the sons of ministers usually go wrong, but just the opposite is the rule. When they are bad there is some other reason for it, as in this case the laxness of control by the father.

Samuel seems to have been a young people's society of one member. He was a good pupil and an earnest worker, as the record shows. One night when Eli was asleep, and Samuel lay in his own bed not far away, Samuel heard a voice calling him, “Samuel, Samuel.” He thought it was Eli, and he sprang out of bed and ran to his master. Eli said he had not called him and told him to go back to bed. Again he heard that voice calling, and yet a third time. Each time he was quick to respond, as a right kind of a boy should be. He did not murmur, nor sulk, nor argue, nor ask why, but was prompt and obedient. The third time he came to Eli; the priest told him it was God calling him, and that he should reply, “Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.” So Samuel did, and the Lord told him how Eli's sons had done wickedly, and that He would punish both the sons and the father. In the morning Eli urged Samuel to tell him what the Lord had said, and Samuel told



him all, for the Lord had not said that he should keep it secret. In all this Samuel was a true "here-am-I" boy, ready, alert, obedient, faithful.

**How We Can Help God.** George Macdonald tells the story of a little child, who one evening, gazing at the red, the green and the gold of the sunset sky, said he wished he were a painter, so he could help God paint the sky. God asks no help in the painting of His clouds and sunsets, but He does ask help in putting touches of beauty and grace into immortal lives—lives which shall shine when the brightest colors in the glowing west have faded away.—J. E. Hicks, D. D.

**Strength In Weakness.** Poor Eli! How he is made to suffer for his fatherly weakness. His failure to reprove and punish his sons was due to his kindly nature perhaps; but it brought sorrow to his life; and was the worst thing for the sons. In another story you will learn how they were all punished many years later. But let us remember the many good qualities of this great and good man. Let us not judge him by the speck in his character, but rather by the perspective of his whole life. The real test of a character is shown by its spirit when reproved. The bad character defends and excuses itself, and accuses others—seeking to throw the blame on someone else. The really good character will confess the sin, and submit to the punishment. Here Eli says, "It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good." Was that not a beautiful spirit to show, even when it was a mere boy who has reproved him. But he knew that the Lord had used the boy to bring the message.

**Faithful in Many Things.**—Eli had many good qualities. He was amiable and kind. "You cannot find one vulgar sin in the venerable high priest." "We find in Eli's treatment of Samuel not rivalry, but nobleness, magnanimity." "He was not self-obtrusive; he was no self-seeker." "Look at his interest in the ark of the Lord! Look at his submission to God!" Eli placed the honor of God and His Kingdom beyond his own most precious interests, as is shown by his supreme care for the ark in the day of his calamity (1 Sam. 4: 13, 18). "The Bible holds him up as a great man of God."—Joseph Parker.

**"The Boy Is Father of the Man."** You may have heard that remark, and it seems strange; but there is great truth in it. It means that the boy will grow and show the same qualities in his manhood that he had in his boyhood. Sometimes people say of a boy, "You will hear of him some day," which means about the same thing. Well, this was true of Samuel, and all the people said that Samuel "was established to be a prophet of

the Lord." "Established" means that he was faithful enough to be worthy of being a prophet. "Samuel" means "asked of God," for his mother had prayed that she might have a son. He was true to his early training and to his mother's prayers. One remarkable thing about him is that he was the last of the fifteen judges, and the first of the prophets. It looks, too, as if he was the very best of the judges and one of the best of the prophets. It was largely because he was so good and true and faithful as a boy. He was ready for the task and duty which each day and each hour brought to him. When a boy does that, he is training himself for all the duties of life.

**Culture of the Daily Task.** Beyond all books, beyond all class-work at the school, beyond all special opportunities of what I call my "education," it is this drill and pressure of my daily task that is my great schoolmaster. My daily task, whatever it be, that is what mainly educates me. All other culture is mere luxury compared with what that gives. That gives the indispensables.

Yet, fool that I am, this pressure of my daily task is the very thing I so growl at as my "drudgery"!

Our prime elements are due to our drudgery,—I mean that literally; the fundamentals that underlie all fineness, and without which no other culture worth the winning is even possible.

These, for instance,—and what names are more familiar? Power of attention; power of industry; promptitude in beginning work; method and accuracy and despatch in doing work; perseverance; courage before difficulties; cheer under straining burdens; self-control and self-denial and temperance,—these are the prime qualities; these the fundamentals.—W. C. Gannett.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name as many of the judges as you can (see page 15). 2. How many in all, and who was the first and who the last? 3. What woman was a judge, and what did she do? 4. What seven good qualities in the boy Samuel? 5. What New Testament boy had a praying mother and grandmother?

**Practical Truths.** 1. God knows each person by name, and even the hairs of the head are numbered. 2. The careful training of a child is the best culture and training for a parent. 3. The parent and the home are the greatest factors in the making of good and true men. 4. Even a child may be of great service to God. 5. Of 120 clergymen, 100 ascribed their conversion to their mothers. 6. One may seem good in many ways, but really be bad at heart; another may make serious mistakes but really be good at heart. 7. Youth is the time to choose Christ, and childhood is the most fruitful field for Christian work, for the largest number of conversions occur between the ages of 11 and 16. 8. If we sin, we should submit to the reproof of God, even though it is voiced by the lips of a child. 9. The calls of God are almost countless—as by the conscience, by His providences, by His day and book and church and people, by His constant love and by His Holy Spirit.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE DEATH OF ELI

And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult?  
And the man came in hastily, and



Now Eli was ninety and eight years old, and his eyes

were dim,  
that he  
could not see



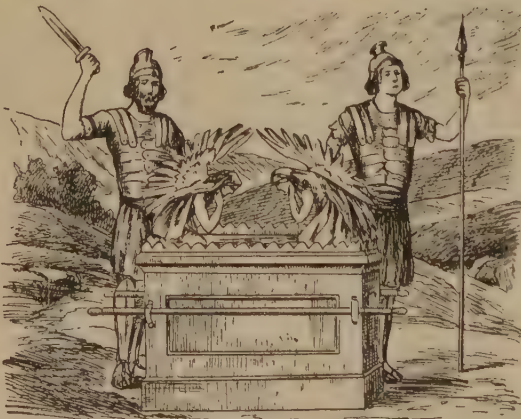
And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the  
and I fled today out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son?  
And the messenger answered and said, Israel is



before  
the  
Philis-  
tines,  
and  
there  
hath  
been  
also a  
great



among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the



of  
God is  
taken.  
And it  
came  
to pass,  
when he  
made  
mention  
of the  
ark of  
God,  
that he



backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and  
heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 4:1-18.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast set the pattern for life. May we strive to follow the copy. May we be not merely good, but better; may we be not merely better, but best. Thy grace and love are given to make us grow better and better unto the perfection that is promised in Jesus Christ. As parents and teachers make us wise and true and strong. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Let me but find it in my heart to say,  
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray,  
'This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;  
Of all who live, I am the one by whom  
This work can best be done in the right way.'"  
—Van Dyke.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1141. Place, Shiloh. The battle was fought not far away. **Persons,** Eli, the messenger; Hophni and Phineas, people of Israel, Philistines.

**Scripture Setting:** Parents and Children. God in the home, Eph. 6:1-9. Faithful to trusts, Luke 12:35-40. Helping by example, Phil. 3:14-19. By encouragement, Isa. 35:3-10. Helping by prayer, John 17:13-19. Making a Christian, Eph. 4:1-6. Helpful conversation, Phil. 1:22-30. Holy adornings, 1 Tim. 2:8-15. Vices to shun, Eph. 5:1-14. Graces to cultivate, Rom. 8:1-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** An awe-stricken company is this that is gathered at the city gate, around the lifeless body of Israel's judge and priest. What are some of the solemn teachings of the occasion: 1. God will certainly and severely punish

for sin. The fact of faith, nor the holding of high position, will protect none. 2. Punishment is of two kinds—in wrath against the impenitent, in mercy against the penitent. 3. God may allow even His own cause and Kingdom to suffer on account of sin. 4. God will hold the parent responsible for the religious training of the children. 5. The immense and deplorable result from a single sinful act and a mere omission of duty. 6. The believer is never sin-proof, though there should be an increasing aversion to the sinful habit and tendency. 7. The punishment for sin does not imply that the sin is unforgiven. Eli's neck was broken, and his heart was broken, but his soul was saved. Any believer may be temporarily punished but no true believer can be finally lost.

### HOW A FOOLISH FATHER WAS PUNISHED.

**Two Bad Sons.** "Whose boy was it?" This is the question that is often asked when some crime is committed by a boy or young man. Some people like to say that the boys of good parents and even of ministers are apt to turn out bad. It has been shown, again and again, that this is not true. The rule is that good parents have good children. God intended it to be so, and His plan does not fail in the main. If there are exceptions it must be that the parents were not so good as they should be. That was the case here. These two bad men were sons of a minister. The minister's name was Eli, and he was called a priest then; but his work was like that of a minister of today. It may surprise us that both of his sons were bad, but we find the reason in the poor and weak way in which Eli trained them. When he learned of their wickedness he did not punish, or even rebuke them. So at last, as we shall see, he himself was punished with them. Someone must suffer always when sin is committed. If we might prevent the sin, and do not, then we are partly to blame, and must share in the penalty. Eli had been warned by a prophet, and also by Samuel, so he had no excuse. You can read about it in 1 Sam., chapters 2 and 3.

**Is This Your Home?** We have in this country today something like nineteen million Protestant church members, and, counting five persons to every home, some four million Christian homes. It is estimated that only one Christian home in eight

has a family altar, and most of us will agree from observation that that estimate is sufficiently high. Place these Christian homes in a row that do not have a family altar and we would pass through three million five hundred thousand homes before we would hear the sound of a father's voice at a family altar, and from these homes one hundred and fifty thousand young men, having reached twenty-one, go out annually, never having heard a parent's voice in prayer at a family altar. Is your home in that row?—Exchange.

**A Disastrous Battle.** The Israelites had many enemies in the land, as you know. One of the strongest nations was the Philistines. They had fought them many times. God had helped His people against them often. He always did unless their sin prevented. But when they sinned He could not do otherwise than punish them. Still He tried to make even the punishment keep them from sinning more and more. One battle had been fought, and the Israelites lost 4,000 men. They fought again, and this time their loss was 30,000 soldiers. That would make quite a big army itself. What do you think was the trouble? The first two pictures show the Israelites defeated and fleeing from their enemy. The third picture is of the ark, and they had that with them.

You remember how they were able at times to overcome in battle when they had the ark. Ah, that was just the one reason why they failed this time. They had taken the ark without asking God. It is always dangerous to begin a battle, or to begin any

work, without first finding how God wants it done. Then the wickedness of Eli's sons is partly the reason of their weakness and failure. They were priests and their wickedness was all the more a national sin. Probably the taking the ark to battle was because these wicked priests suggested it, or at least allowed it. But the bad example of anyone may influence and weaken many others.

**She Killed the Meeting.** "There isn't any use in my going to meeting any more," said a young girl. So she stayed at home. Soon her mother and brother quit going. Her example made several other young people feel the same way about it; their influence in bringing others ceased; and the result was that the older workers who regularly went to prayer meeting found it harder and harder to keep a young element in the meeting, though they tried their best. With so many links loosening and falling away, the chain became weak. Every link counted. The girl did not think so; but she was wrong, as her own case proved by its results.—Selected.

**An Anxious Watcher.** That man running is hurrying to bring the news of the battle. The man sitting on the stone bench is Eli, and he is waiting for someone to bring the news. He has feared the worst all the time. He did not like it when the people rushed off with the ark. He knew that God had not commanded it. Then he knew of the wickedness of his sons, and this troubled him. Also, in his own conscience, he must have felt that he was responsible for much that was taking place. It is said that "his heart trembled," and surely there was enough to make him trouble at the center of his being. But when sin begins it always makes one weak at the center. It hurts conscience and heart and will, and these are the forces that are needed in every battle of life. Doesn't he look pitiful, as he sits there thinking and fearing? If he had been real sure that he had done all he could he need not have looked so worried and troubled.

For forty years Eli had been judge, and for a good many years now his wicked sons had continued as priests. The lax habits have weakened him and he cannot change now, for he is nearly one hundred years old.

**Two Ways of Dying.** "My work is done," said the Countess of Huntington, at eighty-four. "I have nothing to do but to go to my Father." It was remarked to one, "I fear you are near the other world." "Fear it, sir?" was the quick reply. "I know I am; but blessed be God, I do not fear it, I hope it." In sad contrast to these was the remark of a man of the world, when one ob-

served that his hair was sprinkled with gray. "I wish you would not make that remark," he said, "it puts me in mind of growing old, a subject of which I cannot bear to think. I would rather be the most miserable pack-horse in this world than to be an angel in heaven."—Selected.

**The Fatal News.** The runner has reached the city now, and he finds Eli. He is telling him all that happened. That splendid army that you have seen in one picture is all broken and scattered. The ground is covered with the dead, as shown in another picture. Thirty thousand lay killed in heaps and singly just as they fell. I wonder if two of those dead bodies we see are the bodies of Hophni and Phinehas, for the runner has just told Eli that his two sons are dead. Eli is greatly grieved over that, we know. The runner tells him also that there was a great slaughter, and the army was destroyed. This, too, is very sorrowful news to Eli, but he is waiting to hear about something else. Can you think what it is? Yes, he is wondering what has happened to the ark of God, and he is waiting for news about that. Eli was a good man at heart, and was most anxious for the honor of God. All else is as nothing compared to that. The mistake he made was in not being more concerned for the glory of God earlier. So it is a very sad ending of a long life that is shown in the last picture. When the runner told him that the ark was taken, Eli fell from his seat backward and died at once. He felt that "the glory had departed from Israel." The news is indeed fatal both in the terrible tidings it brings and the dreadful result to Eli, the judge of the nation. Eli was a good father, but not good enough. Shiloh also suffered, for the ark, which the tribe of Ephraim held for 340 years, was set up in another place. We will hear about it later.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What famous Bible king had a bad son and watched for news of him? 2. When was the ark—the means of victory in battle? 3. How do we send important messages today? 4. Give other cases of good parents having bad sons. 5. Give instances of bad parents having good sons.

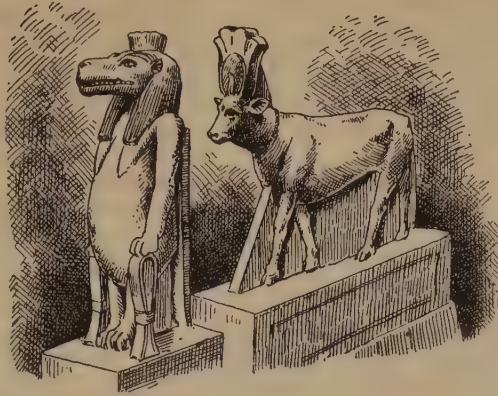
**Challenge Text.** "His ——— made themselves ——— and he ——— them not." 1 Sam. 3:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. A child neglected is a sorrow started for the parent. 2. The boy who sows "wild oats" will reap the harvest of a wicked manhood. 3. A child has no greater heritage than godly parents. 4. One's goodness should be strong enough to influence others. 5. The parent's responsibility is specially important and constant. 6. Even the most solemn services of God's house are useless unless God Himself be in them. 7. When God withdraws his care and guidance even the best people run into sin and trouble.

DR. J. M. COON.



And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange



and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and



and served the Lord only. And Samuel said,



Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will



for you unto the Lord. And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and



and



before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 7:1-17.

**Prayer:** We thank Thee for the great and good men Thou hast given to the world. They have been strong to do Thy will because they have been obedient and have had Thy Spirit in them. May we seek to follow them in our life and influence. May we, too, be obedient to the Divine will in Christ and be filled with the Holy Spirit. In Christ's name. Amen.

"Do thou but sow;  
God sendeth sun and rain to bless the land;  
The seed thou scatterest with patient hand  
Shall spring and grow.  
Do thou but sow;  
In faithfulness our God His word will keep;  
His promise is of old that thou shalt reap  
If thou shalt sow."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1114. Places, Samuel's home was at Ramah. The gathering of the people was at Mizpah, near Jerusalem. **Persons,** Samuel, all the people.

**Scripture Setting:** The Man and the Nation. Moses, Aaron, Samuel, Psa. 99:1-9. The just judge, Deut. 16:16-22. Asa as reformer, 2 Chron. 15:1-15. Jehosaphat's rule, 2 Chron. 19:4-11. Gather the people, Joel 2:12-32. Blessing of the upright, Prov. 11:1-12. The Lord's help, Isa. 44:1-8. The Lord's deliverance, Psa. 85:1-13. Power of prayer, Rom. 8:26-39. Prayer for rulers, Psa. 72:1-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The real teaching of this passage is the benefits of right relations with God. Repentance is the keyword, and here is the fine cluster of blessings: 1. Repentance enables one

to see and know himself. When one finds God, he finds himself. 2. Repentance challenges and quickens all one's powers; he thus gets himself at his best. 3. Repentance secures renewed Divine fellowship, which sin had broken up. 4. Repentance invites and obtains the Divine interposition. God waits, and waits, in order that He may help. 5. Repentance is followed by an infusion of new courage and all the martial graces. 6. Repentance inspires to hearty and sincere thanksgiving. Only the penitent can see God's hand in the blessings they receive. 7. Repentance is the condition, yes, the very gateway of all kinds of benefits—personal, social, domestic, national. True repentance is about equivalent to true religion; at least it is fundamental and vital in all religions.

### HOW A GOOD MAN SAVED A NATION.

**What Became of the Ark.** The Philistines who captured the ark in battle were a wicked people, and worshiped false gods. One of their gods was Dagon, the fish god. They had a temple in which it was kept. One day, when they came in to worship, they found their god fallen down on its face. They set it up in place but the next morning it had fallen again. This time both its head and hands were cut off. Then they knew that it was because of the ark of God, which they had placed in Dagon's temple. Soon after this a great sickness came upon the people of Ashdod, where the ark was, and many died. The ark was taken to Gath, another Philistine city, and the people there were made sick. So for seven months the ark was kept by the Philistines, but all that time the Lord sent trouble upon them. Their wise men said they had better send the ark away.

They told them to make a new cart and put the ark on it and hitch two cows to the cart but shut up their calves at home. They said that if the cows should go away from their own calves to the land of Israel that would be a sign that the Lord made them go that way. They did this, and the cows took the ark straight into the land of

**The Only Safety.** Having presented the vivid contrast between good and evil, having set up the danger signals, the writer points us to the guide post that leads to safety, and from the remainder of the chapter we learn that the only security is in the diligent keeping of ears, eyes, heart, lips, feet and hands from evil. Companionship extends not only to persons. The ear should not keep company

with coarse jest; impure pictures are imaged by the eye, until they become a man's lifelong companion. Unclean thoughts may be entertained by the heart until they gain permanent dwelling; the lips are soiled by association with lewd and profane words; the feet make acquaintance with the public dance hall and are lured to destruction, while the hands touch many an unclean thing until familiarity with the evil makes them close companions.

Israel, to a city called Beth-shemesh. The people were glad to get the ark back, and the Levites took it from the cart. Some men who wanted to see the ark came and looked into it, and many of them died for their sin. Then the ark was taken into the house of a man named Abinadab, where it stayed for many years.

**The Greatest Foreign Missionary.** The Bible is our ark today, and it brings salvation and blessing wherever it goes. In a single year one society sent out nearly seven millions of Bibles or parts of Bibles. More than 1,500,000 copies of the Scriptures went out to China, and of these nearly 99 per cent were sold, while 356,000 Bibles were circulated in Korea and 305,000 in Japan. In India, including Burma and Ceylon, the circulation rose to 780,000. Multiply this by ten and we get somewhat near the enormous output of the Word of God in the world. It blesses nations, homes, individuals wherever it goes.—Selected.

**Strange Gods.** In these first pictures we see some more of the strange gods of the Philistines. Their chief gods were Baal and Ashtoreth, but they had many others. By little and little the Israelites began to get used to seeing such gods. Then they began to think that they might be real gods. After some time a few Israelites chose to worship idols instead of the true God. That



was very strange, when we know how they had been warned against it, and when they knew how much God had done for them. But more and more of the Israelites went over to idol worship. At last nearly the whole nation had become idolaters. Was God forgetting them? By no means; He is always true to His people. He tries to keep them from evil ways, and seeks to win them back when they sin. In this case He let the Philistines oppress them for many years. At last they could stand it no longer, and they cried to God for help. Then He helped them.

**God Engrafting Goodness in Man.** If you will walk with me into the garden, I will show you a Mountain Ash in full bloom; but on the top of it you will see a strange little cluster of pear blossoms. A twig from a Seckel pear tree was, two or three years since, engrafted there. Up to a certain point of a certain bough, the rising fluids came, under the law of the Mountain Ash, and there they found a gateway guarded by an angel that gave them a new commandment, "Thus far Mountain Ash, beyond Seckel pear," and if in October you will walk in the garden with me, I will show you among the scarlet berries bending heavily toward you, the clustered sweetness of the Seckel pear.

Just so God, by the death of Christ, engrafts his goodness in man, and He guards it and helps it to bear fruit.—Selected.

**A Praying Judge.** All these years Samuel had been trying to lead the people back to the worship of the true God. They would not listen to him until God had punished them severely. Now they are willing to leave the idols, and God sends Samuel to tell them what to do. He wants to be sure that they are sincere, and He wants to teach them also that all their trouble is because they had left the true God, and were worshiping gods who were false. He said to them, "If you will return unto the Lord with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtoreth."

It was fortunate, or rather providential, that they had such a man to counsel them at this time. God was keeping Samuel for just this work; keeping him from getting discouraged, and fitting him more and more for the work. Samuel was like a Luther as a reformer, or like our Lincoln, who saved our nation.

**Power of a Godly Life.** A missionary in India was so feeble mentally that he could not learn the language. After some years he asked to be recalled, frankly saying that he had not sufficient intellect for the work. A dozen missionaries, however, petitioned his Board not to grant his request, saying that his goodness gave him a wider influence among the heathen than any other missionary at the station. A convert, when asked, "What is it to be a Christian?" replied, "It is to be like Mr. —," naming the good missionary. He was kept in India. He never preached a sermon; but when he died,

hundreds of heathen, as well as many Christians, mourned him.—Jennie L. Noble.

**The Best Standing Army.** Those two last pictures do not look much like an army, but they mean a better power and a mightier power than any army. They showed the people in their worship of God, and in their public confessions and vows. The taking up of water and pouring it out on the ground was a very solemn act, and full of meaning. It meant that they would have nothing more to do with the idol gods, for their vows were "as water spilled on the ground, which should not be gathered up." It meant that they poured out their souls to God, as they poured out this water. It meant that they fully confessed their sins and entirely forsook them. It meant their entire dependence on God, and trust in Him. Now can you see anything like a standing army in all this? Well, we have the promise that if we honor God He will honor us. We know also that God rules among the nations. He can keep and protect those who trust Him. But in this chapter we are told how God destroyed their old enemy, the Philistines. It was while the Israelites were sacrificing at this very time. The Philistines thought they would steal up on them and gain a victory, but "the Lord thundered with a great thunder," and so scared the Philistines that they were easily driven away in a panic. It is said also that "the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel." Isn't that a pretty good standing army? The very best way for a nation, as for a person, is to serve God and do right, and then we may be sure God will do right, and give protection and blessing.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other memorials do you remember in Scripture? 2. Describe the ark and tell what it means. 3. What "strange gods" do people have in these days? 4. What other instances of intercessory prayer do you remember? 5. Who is the Great Intercessor, and where is He? 6. Mention four qualities in the character of Samuel. 7. What two great offices did Samuel hold?

**Challenge Text.** "Righteousness exalteth a —, but sin is a — to any people." Prov. 14: ( ).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God punishes His people, but does not forsake them. 2. God not only pardons those who confess sin, but mercifully helps them to confession. 3. Good rulers, judges and men are the bulwark of a nation. 4. The steps toward God are confession of sin: forsaking sin, prayer, obedience. 5. National prosperity is conditioned on the sincere reform of the people. 6. Real success of man or nation, is in character, justice, purity, usefulness. 7. Prayer as a power and a defense moving the hand that moves the world. 8. Cumulative influence of a godly life. 9. God works for His people, and through them. 10. Repentance and confession must go before reformation and prosperity.

DR. J. M. COON.



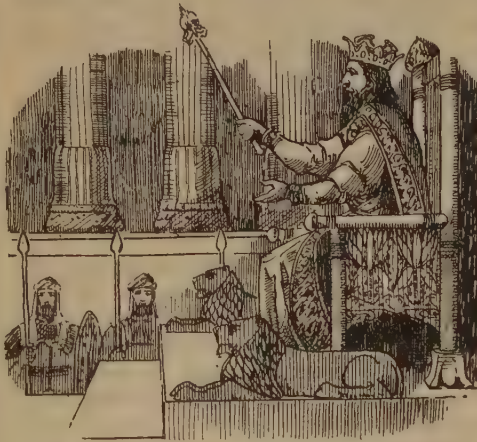
Then all the



of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Hamah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy



walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a



to judge us. And Samuel, prayed unto the Lord. And the Lord said unto Samuel Hearken unto the voice of the



in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up



even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other



so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 8:1-22.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Teach us to be content with our lot in life. May we know that thus Thou canst do the best for us, and the most for us. Keep us from envy and jealousy and foster in us faith and trust. Above all, may we be kept from aping the world, and longing after worldly things and ways. May we rather set our affections on things above. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Fret not; 'tis wasteful, for it lets thy work;  
And selfish, for it doth thy neighbor irk;  
And faithless: did not God thy lot prepare?  
But chiefly, needless, being healed by prayer."  
—Langbridge.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1075. Place, Ramah, birthplace, residence and burial place of Samuel. Persons, Samuel, his two sons, and elders of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** An Earthly King. Forsaking God, Jer. 2:4-19. Confidence in princes, Psa. 118:1-9. Weary of God, Isa. 43:20-28. My people rebel, Psa. 81:1-16. A king desired, Acts 13:16-24. Authority of rulers, Rom. 13:1-10. The divine King, Psa. 2:1-12. The king of kings, Rev. 4:1-11. Result of forsaking God, Jer. 18:1-17. Self-destruction, Hos. 13:9-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Cover it up as they may, and perhaps persuade themselves to believe otherwise, the real essence of this popular unrest

was a rejection of God. Some of the reasons, then as now, are given: 1. It was provoked by Samuel's weakness and ambition in appointing his sons as judges and retaining them when unfit. 2. It was suggested and fostered by the customs of the people about them. 3. It was made easy by the sinful and selfish tendencies of their own hearts. 4. It was gradual, beginning in a decline of the worship of God and passing on to grosser acts. 5. It was divinely allowed in order to expose their sinfulness to themselves, and impress it upon them. 6. It was mercifully accompanied with one and possibly more, who was true to God, and who faithfully warned the people of the results that would follow their rejection of God.

### DOING AS THE WORLD DOES.

**Bad Sons Again.** Did anyone ever tell you what your name means? Names nearly always mean something good and right. Thus Beatrice means "to make happy"; Emily means "energetic"; Charles means "noble." Samuel had two sons with very good names. One was Joel, meaning "Jehovah is God"; the other was Abiah, meaning "Jehovah is my father." Boys who had such names ought to have been good, but they were not good men. I think they started right as boys, for Samuel remembered the mistakes Eli made, and he not only gave his boys good names but also gave them good training. We are not told that Samuel was to blame, as was true in the case of Eli. Anyhow, these boys grew to be bad men, for after Samuel appointed them assistant judges they proved to be wicked. When a case came before them they decided it for the one who had money to pay. That was bribery and it is the worst kind of sin, in a judge, and is wrong in anybody.

We hear of bribes nowadays and sometimes it is called "graft." No good person has any respect for one who commits a sin of that kind. Say, they do not look like bad young men, do they? Well, you can't always tell just by the looks and that picture may have been taken before the bad lives showed in the face. They are sure to show in time, though, for "be sure your sin will find you out." Now find out what your name means, and see to it that you live up to it. Yes, and you can even live

beyond it, and put some good new traits in it. This will be a call to others who may be given your name. Your parents have given you a good name, but you, only, can give yourself a good character.

**"They All Do It."** Those are fine looking men in that first picture, and you would think they would do only what was right. But just think what they are asking Samuel! The third picture shows what it is. They want a king. They forget that they have the very best King even now—One who is the King of kings. They give two sham reasons why they want a king, and the real reason slips out while they are talking. One of the sham reasons is that Samuel is getting old. That was the poorest kind of a reason, especially when thinking of a judge. Samuel was about sixty years old, just able to do his best work as a judge.

The other sham reason was that Samuel's sons took bribes. It was right for them to complain of this but wrong for them to make it a reason for rejecting God. They should have asked God what to do or asked Samuel to ask God. God had intended to give them a king; but this was the wrong time and way. Now the real reason slipped out when they used the words "like all the nations." They wanted to do as others did, the wicked nations around them. One's real reason for doing anything is apt to slip out as he talks, and so people often know a person better than he knows himself. It is a good habit, for a young person especially, not to talk too much. This habit

of doing because others do it is a dangerous habit.' Do right even if you have to stand alone.

**The American Boys at Oxford.** By the Cecil Rhodes scholarship fund, one American boy in each state can have a three-year course at Oxford if he can pass the tests. It is said that the first company that went over—at least some of them—decided they would not fall in with the custom of wine-drinking and tobacco smoking. They formed a group, or club, to oppose those customs. They did not believe in the silly maxim, "When in Rome do as Rome does." They preferred to be known as intelligent and independent and as taking the motto, "Wherever you are, do the right and be manly and true."

**A Choice of Gods.** When the people asked for a king they urged it chiefly so that they could have a leader in war, and to go out in battle. They forgot that God had done this very thing in a wonderful way. He had led them out from the strong hand of Pharaoh, He had taken Jericho for them, and they had never failed when they followed His directions.

They also forgot that in asking for a king they really rejected God as king. They may have thought that they could have a king and yet keep God, for they asked Samuel to name someone for king. This would be like some people who fancy they can worship God through idols, through nature, or in other ways.

But this is to break the second commandment, which forbids idols, and so also the asking for a king was really to put God in second place. So you see that it was really a choice between gods. The Bible says, "Choose you this day whom ye will serve," which shows that one cannot serve both. And Christ said in the great Sermon on the Mount, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." When Samuel told God what the people wanted, God said that they were committing the same sin their fathers had committed again and again. And now He decided to cure them in the same way as He had once or twice before.

**He Chose His God.** In the Tate Gallery, London, hangs a magnificent painting by the late George Frederick Watts, R. A. So beautiful is it that it has been selected as one of the few to be photographed and placed in the rotunda as a masterpiece. It represents a young man, life size, elegantly attired in the flowing robes of the Orient, adorned with gold chain and embroidery, but having his face turned away, his head bowed low and an inexpressible look of sadness and sorrow characterizing the whole figure, even the long, delicate jeweled fingers hanging listlessly at his side. Below are the words, "For he had great possessions."

**A Wicked Prayer Answered.** Do you remember what God did when the people were

tired of the manna, and prayed for flesh? Yes, God sent a flock of quails, and the people ate until they were sick; and besides that, the very answer to the prayer brought blindness and leanness of soul. So here, God tells Samuel to grant their request. Samuel was much worried when he went to ask God about it, and he was still troubled at this strange answer. But he did as God commanded, for Samuel had kept true to God in all his ways. Even while the ark was kept hidden for years, so there was no service in the tabernacle, yet Samuel built an altar at Ramah, and sacrificed there.

You can't keep a good man from worshipping God even if he is not near enough to go to some church. He will have a little service of his own. It was a good thing this was so, for Samuel now is the only one to counsel and help the people. God told him to warn the people by giving them full notice of what a king would do. Among other things he would make their sons drive his chariots and work in his fields and make their daughters his cooks and bakers.

He would take the best of their land for himself, and their cattle and sheep also; and at last they would cry out for the trouble and bondage that would come upon them. Did this change their minds at all? No, but they cried out the more, "We want a king! We will have a king!" "All right," said Samuel, "you shall have a king." The next story will tell us how a king was chosen.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other judge had bad sons, and why? 2. What famous king had a very bad boy, and why? 3. Had God planned a king for the Israelites? Deut. 17:14. 4. When before this did the Israelites want to do like other nations? 5. What kind of government did the people now have? What did they have at first? 6. Who really governed them all the time? 7. What is it safe to do when one is displeased or troubled? 1 Pet. 5:7. 8. How do people reject God now?

**Challenge Text.** "It is better to trust in the ——— than to put confidence in ———." Psa. 118: (9).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The best men, and the best counsel are often rejected. 2. A right thing may be asked for at a wrong time and in a wrong way. 3. The voice of the people is not always the voice of God. 4. The worst punishment may be an answer to one's prayers. 5. The dangerous power of worldly example. 6. A good father may have bad sons. 7. An excuse for a given course is not always a reason. 8. The only sure protection against a selfish and wilful prayer is the clause, "Thy will be done." 9. "They all do it" is a common excuse for conduct, but it is unworthy of a Christian, who has already promised to do as God does or as He orders. 10. One may plead custom, pleasure, convenience, necessity, hypocrisy in others, or what not; but the real reason for sin is one's own sinful heart.



## SAUL CHOSEN KING

And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore they enquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he hath



him-  
self  
among  
the  
stuff.  
And  
they



and



thence:  
and  
when  
he  
stood  
among  
the  
people,  
he was



from his shoulders and upward. And



said to all  
the people,  
See ye him  
whom the  
Lord hath  
chosen, that  
there is none  
like him  
among all  
the people?  
And all the  
people



and said, God save the king.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 10:17-27.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the wonderful way in which Thou comest into our lives. Wherever we go, whatever we do, lo! Thou art there. And Thou art there to guide and help and bless. May we be able even to see Thee in all of life, interpreting life's happenings as providences. Thus may we choose Thee, and do Thy work and glorify Thee. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Only so much of power each day—  
So much nerve-force brought into play;  
If it goes for politics or trade,  
Ambitions gained or money made,  
You have it not for the soul and God—  
The choice is yours, to soar or plod.  
—E. R. Sill.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about 1075 B. C. Place, Mizpeh, where the people were assembled. Persons, Samuel, Saul, and the people.

**Scripture Setting:** God Ruling and Overruling. The Lord reigneth, Psa. 97:1-12. The throne of kings, Prov. 16:1-15. Gives human government, Rom. 13:1-7. A king in anger, Hos. 13:4-11. Granting man's request, Psa. 106:1-15. The King of glory, Psa. 24:1-10. The King of kings, Psa. 2. Gifts to the king, Matt. 2:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The scripture lesson presents a striking instance of God's hand in hu-

man government. 1. This nation God has formed and led, up to this time. 2. In its rejection of Him, He is yet present in their counsels and plans for them. 3. He controls in the selection of a king and constitution. 4. When the best is declined and rejected He supplies the next best. 5. He secures the largest possible efficiency and prosperity in spite of national sins and mistakes. 6. He overrules the period of their indifference and wandering to discipline them in righteousness and for usefulness.

### FROM THE FARM TO THE THRONE.

**How God Guides Us.** The way God brought a king to Samuel's notice is quite a story in itself. It also shows how God can make even a little or unusual thing be the connecting link in working out His purposes. You remember that the Israelites kept crying for a king until God told Samuel to grant their request. They acted like spoiled children that will have their own way. If they had proposed to do right with just as strong a will, how much better it would have been for them! There was a young man named Saul, son of a rich farmer by the name of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. His asses had strayed away, and Saul, with one of the servants, was sent to find them. When they were over near Ramah, where Samuel lived, the servant said to Saul, "There's a man of God living here, who can tell hidden things. Let's go and ask him about the asses." So they did, and Samuel saw them coming.

Now, the day before, God had told Samuel that such and such a man would come to see him, and that he was to be the new king. To make it sure, God whispered to Samuel again just now, "That's the man I told you about yesterday." So Samuel told Saul that the asses were found, and asked him into his home. Saul and the servant stayed all night, and in the morning Samuel delivered God's message to Saul and anointed him as king, by pouring oil on his head. Then Samuel called the people together to elect a king by lot. He knew, and Saul knew, who it would be, but Samuel wanted the people to see and know that God had really chosen Saul. The lot selected the tribe and the

family and the man. And note this—he was a busy, faithful man.

**God Calls Workers, Not Shirkers.** God never goes to the lazy or the idle when He needs men for His service. When God wants a worker, He calls a worker.

Moses was busy with his flocks at Horeb. Saul was busy searching for his father's asses. David was busy caring for his father's sheep. Elisha was busy plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. Nehemiah was busy bearing the king's wine cup. Amos was busy following the flock. Peter and Andrew were busy casting a net into the sea. James and John were busy mending their nets. Matthew was busy collecting customs.—Christian Observer.

**A Good Sign in Youth.** When they began casting lots, Saul hid away, for he knew the lot would fall on him. There was a large pile of baggage belonging to the people who had come up to this assembly, and Saul hid in there, as you see by the first picture. He was a big man, and he could not quite cover himself up. When it was known that the lot pointed to Saul, they began to look for him. I suppose they wondered why he was not seen at once, for he always stood head and shoulders above everybody. Was Saul shirking and unwilling to be king? No; but he felt that he was unworthy, for he was only a farmer youth, and belonged to the very smallest tribe. It was a good thing he was from the tribe of Benjamin, for the two strong tribes would not be so apt to be jealous.

Saul's modesty and humility were good signs, also, for such people always do the best work. But it must be true modesty and humility, not the false kind, which refuses to do what God asks. Some people are really unworthy, and yet push themselves



forward. That is wrong, we all know. Some people say they are unworthy, and refuse to do what God asks. That also is wrong. Some people feel that they are unworthy, but are willing to try to do what God asks. That is the kind of persons who do the best work.

**Two Good Signs in a Boy.** "Sir," said a lad, coming down to one of the wharves in Boston, and addressing a well-known merchant, "have you any berth on your ship? I want to earn something."

"What can you do?"

"I can try my best to do whatever I am put to," answered the boy.

"What have you done?"

"Chopped wood for nigh on two years."

"What have you not done?"

"Well, sir," answered the boy, after a moment's pause, "I have not whispered in school once for a whole year."

"That's enough," said the gentleman. "I hope to see you master of it some day. A boy who can master a woodpile and bridle his tongue must be made out of good stuff."—Selected.

**How God Helps Those Who Try.** At last some one spies Saul in the pile of baggage, and two men run to bring him. Even two men could scarcely have brought him unless he had been willing. But when he knows the people want him, because God has chosen him, then he comes. Now see how God helps him to undertake this great work. God gave him a fine, large body, and that meant a good deal more those days than law. See him stand among the others! He must be nearly seven feet high. He has a good face, too, and his very looks show him to be modest and humble.

But God did something better for him. He gave him "another heart." This does not mean a "new heart" in the sense of loving God, but a mind and purpose fitted to his new work. God changed him from a farmer to a man who was able to lead others and so keep the nation united and strong. While all the people insisted on having a king, yet God kept control of all things, and even appointed the king and made him able to do the work. God helped again by giving the new king a good counsellor in Samuel. He drew up a constitution for Saul, and helped him in every way. Then the people are rejoicing over the new king, as the last picture shows. This was because God influenced them to approve the decision by lot. Altogether it looks as if everything was coming Saul's way. It was a splendid start in life.

**Will He Make Good?** While nearly everything was favorable to Saul, a few people found fault. Almost always there are some

who will grumble at the best plans and best men. These people said, in a sneering way, "Can such a man as this save us?" I suppose they meant this farmer from the little tribe of Benjamin. Do you know how Saul answered that? In two ways: In the first place, he was silent; "he held his peace." That is a fine answer on many occasions. The good thing about it is that it gives one a chance to think out what he really ought to say. And nearly always one finds that silence is the very best thing, and he is glad of it. Then when one is silent his enemy hardly knows what to think, or how to act further. So the silent man or boy has his enemy in his power in a measure.

But Saul answered that sneer in another way. He made good by actually saving the nation in time of battle. The Israelites were attacked by the Amorites, and Saul raised an army of 330,000 soldiers and gained a great victory over them. We do not hear of any more sneers against Saul. He has made good, and has come to his kingdom. In the larger and higher sense, did he make good? That will be seen in another story.

**Built to Make Good.** Jack had been sent on an errand, runs the story, and he came to a fence across the lane that he traveled. "I am put here to stop boys," said the fence, "you must turn back or go around." "But I am built to climb fences," responded Jack, and he went over the fence and on his way.

Are there difficulties in the way of your church work, of your Christian life? Certainly; but you were built to overcome them.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who was discovered by lot and stoned, and for what? 2. How did God help Moses to lead his people from Egypt? 3. How did God help Solomon to be a king? 4. What humble men have come to high positions in our land? 5. How did a prophet try to hide when God told him to preach against a wicked city? 6. What boy sent to find his brothers was sold by them, and how did God overrule it? 7. Tell what these persons were doing when God called them—Moses, David, Elisha, Nehemiah, Peter, James, John, and Matthew?

**Challenge Text.** "Give therefore, Thy servant an understanding \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ Thy people." I King 3:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Good men may have bad children, but the rule is good children. 2. God may yield to our low or wrong request, because we are not fitted for anything better. 3. A man is measured not by his size or family, or outward conditions, but by his inward spirit. 4. God is preparing workers for His work in all departments of life. 5. The power of a good man's influence and prayer. (v. 22.) 6. God is the God of nations as well as of individuals. 7. The best rulers are found by prayer and search. 8. Man may cast God off, but God does not cast man off, unless he persists against Him till death.

DR. J. M. COON.



# SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS

And Samuel said unto the people, It is the Lord that advanced



and  
Aaron,  
and that  
brought  
your  
fathers  
up out  
of the



Now therefore stand and see this great thing, which the Lord will do before your eyes. Is it not wheat



to day?  
I will  
call  
unto the  
Lord,  
and  
he shall  
send  
thunder  
and



that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a



So Samuel  
called unto  
the Lord,  
and the  
Lord sent  
thunder  
and rain  
that day:  
and all the



greatly feared the Lord and Samuel.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 12:1-25.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We are often amazed and rejoiced at what Thou canst do by one man—a Moses, a Samuel, a David, a Paul. Help us to see that it is Thy power and grace and Spirit working in the heart and life. May we each be able to say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ." For His sake. Amen.

"I count this thing to be grandly true,  
That a noble deed is a step toward God,  
Lifting the soul from the common clod  
To a purer air and a broader view.  
We rise by the things that are under our feet  
By what we have mastered of good or gain,  
By the pride deposed and the passion slain  
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1095. Place, Gilgal, in the Jordan valley. Persons, Samuel and the people.

**Scripture Setting:** True Service of God. Service described, Matt. 6:16-29. Service reasonable, Deut. 10:12-22. Service commanded, Josh. 24:14-28. True spirit's service, Hos. 6:6. The true motive, Rom. 11:21-36. The true laws, Phil. 3:1-17. The true consecration, Acts 20:17-38. The supreme qualification, 1 Cor. 13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This is a great lesson on the true service of God; like the farewell address of Joshua (Josh. 24:14-29). About the same truths are emphasized in each address. 1. Nature of the

service required. It is (1) positive and uncompromising; (2) humble and reverent; (3) with confession and contrition; (4) sincere and hearty. 2. Duty of serving God a privilege, but more; it is a duty, a high and holy obligation, that cannot be waived or ignored. 3. Motives for serving God. We mention (1) the command of God, (2) gratitude for blessings, (3) fear of punishment, (4) prospect of self-interest, (5) character of God. 4. Helps in serving God. (1) Help from fellow Christians; (2) help from past successes and failures; (3) Divine love and many favoring providences, which enable the believer to overcome obstacles, difficulties and enemies.

### PLEADING WITH AND FOR A NATION.

**Heroes of the Past.** It is a great thing to have heard a great speech by a great man on a great occasion. The last words of any friend are very impressive. But they are made much more so if specially significant for any reason; the last words of Moses, for example, or of Joshua, or of the Apostle Paul, or of Jesus Christ. These are practically the last words of Samuel, who was perhaps the greatest man next to Moses in the history of the Israelitish nation. It is true he was active for some time after this, both by word and work, but this was his last public utterance. That first picture shows to us the one man who is greatest in all Jewish history; and greatest we may believe in all history. We except Christ, for He was both God and man. Moses and Aaron are associated together in the work of delivering the people from bondage. Moses was the Washington of the new nation. Yes, he was more than the Washington; he was also the Lincoln, and the Grant and the Webster. Moses was so inspiringly great because God was with him and in him, and because he was willing that God should use him as He wished.

**What God Can Do With One Man.** It is said that D. L. Moody once heard a man say that the Lord had never yet had a chance to show what He could do with one man. No one had been found with sufficient consecration, energy and self-sacrifice. Mr. Moody was stirred by the remark, and was prompted to resolve in his own mind that he would try to supply this lack. He sought and prayed for some time that he might be fully submissive to the Lord's will. At last he surrendered to God, and the glorious work of his life was the result.

**It Is the Life That Counts.** Samuel is

speaking with his lips, but he is also speaking with his life. Indeed, his word would not have had much weight unless the people believed in his character and conduct. He himself knows this, and so he says to them, "Behold, here I am; witness against me before the Lord, if I have done wrong in any way." They replied, "Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us." Now they are ready to listen attentively to all he has to say. Do you know where Samuel's good life and character began? It was when his godly mother dedicated him to God and His service. Then it was when he heard the call of God in the tabernacle, and said, "Here am I." He did not know what God intended to do with him as a man; but he did know what God wanted him to do as a boy. He did that faithfully, and then kept doing more and more as God opened the way. That is what God asks of us all.

**The True Life Must Have a New Heart.** We may teach and train and discipline men, and succeed in restraining them from gross improprieties of conduct, and may develop in them a commendable morality; this is important, but it is not religion. A man may be moral and upright in life, and may even observe the forms of religion, and do many things required of Christians, without possessing the spirit of the Master. Christ said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." This is as true now as when Christ uttered it. This is the starting point in all true Christian character and life; without this everything else will be in vain. Be careful that you do not build on the sand.—Exchange.

**Calling God to Witness.** This is a wonderful thing Samuel does now. Look at the whole picture, and see if you do not think so. There is a harvest scene and the men

busy gathering in the grain. The next picture a great rain storm. This was a very unusual thing, almost unknown in harvest. Samuel tells them it is coming and that it is because he asks the Lord to send it. Then he tells them that this will be the sign that they did wickedly in asking for a king. That wickedness was in the sight of the Lord, as all wrong acts are, for He sees and knows all things. But if the rain comes as Samuel says, the people will be convinced that they have sinned. That picture of the king shows something of what the ruler will be. But even if he is a fairly good ruler he cannot be equal to God. Besides, when they demanded another king it was really rejecting God and saying that they wanted another kind of king. Samuel had warned the people when they first asked for a king and now he warns them again. He tried to keep them from the sin altogether; but failing in that, he now tries to keep them from other and worse sins. He was like Moses in his love and care for the people. A good leader and one who fears God is the very best safeguard a nation has. That is very much better than armies and battleships, for a good leader has God with him and for him.

**All Can Have This.** It was said of a saintly brother in a certain church: "When he prays, I know he sees God." It may be given to each of us to have a similar realization of God's presence—that He is, and is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. There is a beautiful modern theory which tells us that the Christ in every man is shown in his good acts. If we have a kind and loving impulse, it is the Christ in us which gives it. If we thirst after righteousness; if we long and labor to correct the wrong; if we bear patiently persecution for principle; these indicate that Christ is present within us.—Exchange.

**Ready for a New Consecration.** The witness of God was clear and strong, both as to the character of Samuel and the warning he brought. It is said that "all the people greatly feared the Lord and Samuel." This means a fear which prompted them to a true desire to worship God and obey Him, in all that Samuel told them to do. This is partly shown in the last picture. Then in the very next verses we are told that the people asked Samuel to pray for them, that this sin might not be their sin. He promised to do so, and he also told them that God would forgive them and bless them, provided they followed Him. So this new consecration was a kind of "declaration of independence" from this old life and old sins, and a pledge to be true to God, and let Him rule in every part of their life and work.

Samuel knew that such a new consecration

would mean hard fighting, and that many things would hinder and tempt them. This is always the case. Our forefathers had to fight eight long years after they had declared their independence. So with these people, they had to battle with the old life which kept clinging to them in the habits they had formed. The people about them were idolators, and by them they would be tempted away from the true God. Other temptations and obstacles would arise constantly. All this would require courage and devotion. Like Joshua before him (Josh. 24) Samuel sought to spur the people to definite resolution and action by presenting the difficulties in the way. But it is also true that there were many ways by which the people would be encouraged to be loyal to their new consecration. The very fact of the dedication would help to hold them steadily in the right way.

Samuel, too, was a great help to them. Even when he became too old to lead them in person, yet his life and influence helped greatly to inspire and strengthen them. The consciousness that their consecration meant blessing and benefit to themselves and others would be a constant spur to fidelity; like the spirit of that woman missionary who chose a certain section of the city as her field because it was so dirty, needy and sinful. But best of all, God was present to aid them in their new consecration. The blessings He bestowed would of themselves stir them to gratitude and service. The old slave who was freed by her new owner preferred to stay and work for her new master, for she said, "He saved me." And God helps also directly. Here we see His warning voice lifted against the dangers that are near. Here, too, is His promise of future good: the declaration that He will not forsake His chosen people. In view of all these things, some of which they either knew or felt, they are persuaded to enter into this new consecration.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why was it sinful for the Israelites to ask for a king? 2. Why did Samuel grant their demand? 3. What two farewell addresses in the Bible before this? 4. What was Christ's farewell message? 5. What five conditions of success in verses 14, 15?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God is the God of nature and of nations, as well as of individuals. 2. Man is urged to fidelity by mercies received, by the judgments threatened, and by the covenant pledge of God. 3. The peace and prosperity of God's people rest on the Divine name, honor, and purpose. 4. There is no true worship and service without the heart. 5. To exalt God is to exalt one's self. The people feared the Lord and Samuel.



## THE LESSON TEXT IS I SAM. 14:1-23.

**Prayer:** Help us, our Father, to rise against the enemies which seek the destruction of what is dear and precious and godlike in us and in ours; and may we, in a perfect trust in Thee, fight the good fight with all our might, knowing that those that be with us are more than those that be with them. Through Jesus our Captain and our Lord. Amen.

O Jesus, I have promised  
To serve Thee to the end.  
Be Thou forever near me,  
My Saviour and my Friend.

I shall not fear the battle  
If Thou art by my side,  
Nor wander from the pathway  
If Thou wilt be my guide.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tenth Century (Probably 1087) B. C. Place, Valley of Michmash, north of Jerusalem, in the territory of Benjamin. **Contesting Parties,** Israel under Saul; and the Philistines, a coast tribe of warlike characters. **Persons,** Saul, King of Israel; Jonathan, his son; An armor bearer, unknown.

**Scripture Setting:** The Philistine Oppression, 1 Sam. 13:16-23. Jonathan's Strategy, 1 Sam. 14:1-10. Surprising the Philistines, 1 Sam. 14:11-15; The Philistines in Panic, 1 Sam. 14:16-23. Saul's Superstition, 1 Sam. 14:24-30. Greediness and Its Penalty, 1 Sam. 14:31-41. Saul's Magnanimity, 1 Sam. 14:42-45.

## FIGHTING TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE.

**The Hour.** It was an unhappy hour for Israel. Saul had not yet established himself in the confidence of the people. The tribes had established among themselves only a loose and uncertain federation, quite as likely to array themselves against each other as against the common enemy, and more than likely, when evil threatened, to put their own interests above the common good. The Philistines, on the other hand, were united in an earnest and even desperate defense of their land from the encroachments of an alien and aggressive people and were bringing to bear upon the enemy all the resources of an ingenious and warlike training. They were measurably successful, too. They had disarmed Israel and taken the iron workers captive, so that there was no smith found throughout the land. The Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, his coulter, his ax and his mattock. As in the days of Deborah, there was neither sword nor spear found in the hands of any of the people save the rude equipment which Saul had managed to scrape together for a small band of specially selected warriors.

**Is Might Right?** The Philistines believed in the supremacy of might. "God," is an old saying, "is on the side of the strongest battalions." The symbol of Germany is a feeble figure of heroic size bearing a sword. The symbol of America is a female figure bearing a torch. Germany proposed to rule the world by force, America proposes to rule the world by ideas.

**The Man.** In this company was Jonathan, eldest son of Saul, and at this time in the ripeness of young manhood. Already he was famous for his strength, his swiftness of foot, his skill in the use of arms, and his daring. He was dear alike to his father, who confided to him his plans and cares; and to his

people, who stood between him and harm when by lot he was set apart for death for transgression of the ceremonial law. There is no more attractive personality in Old Testament history, uniting in himself the dauntlessness of the warrior and the gentle kindness and shrinking modesty of the woman. From the time of his first appearance to his death in battle, he is presented as the paragon of friendship, the devoted and loyal son, the intrepid soldier, the loving and generous prince, the high minded patriot, and the darling of the nation.

**The Adventure.** Jonathan was restless. He thought something should be started, and he was willing to start it himself. At all events, he would experiment. Anything was better than doing nothing. Summoning his armor bearer, he said: "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be the Lord will work for us, for there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or by few." What a comfort these words have been to the faithful in all succeeding generations! They are of the very essence of religious faith.

The reply of the armor bearer is indicative of a brave and loyal heart, "Do all that is in thine heart; turn thee and behold I am with thee according to thy heart." With a spirit of that kind one could chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. The two succeeded in their adventure beyond even reasonable expectation. As they showed themselves in the open the Philistine guard began to banter them. "Look here," they cried to one another, "the Hebrews are coming out of the holes where they have been hiding themselves." Then to the two adventurers they cry in derision: "Come up,

won't you? We should like to make your acquaintance." Singularly enough, this was the sign Jonathan had decided upon as Jehovah's warrant for further advance. So in splendid and contagious confidence, Jonathan said to his armor bearer, "Come up after me, for the Lord hath delivered them into the hand of Israel."

**God in Human Affairs.** Jonathan was undaunted because God was at his right hand. God still has a care for the world. A great soldier said it was not the French, nor the British nor the Americans, nor bread, nor munitions. It was God who won the war. The Germans had "God with us" on their belts and caps, but not in their hearts.

**The Rout.** The outcome was, to us, astonishing, some would say miraculous. In old time fighting by a people who were more than ordinarily superstitious, anything was likely to happen. Anyway the record states briefly and vividly that Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and upon his feet, and his armor bearer after him: and before the Philistines really knew what was happening twenty of their men were killed before their eyes and stones and arrows were being poured upon them as from a host. The panic which followed is not difficult to account for. Thinking themselves secure in the rocky fastness, the Philistines might easily conjecture that nothing but supernatural agencies could have enabled the Hebrews to overcome the difficulties of the passage. And who could war against the gods? This of itself would be sufficient to demoralize them and make their hearts as water. But if two could make the ascent, might there not be others with them? And what could a small outpost do in the face of numbers? "There was trembling in the host and in the field among all the people—and it was a very great trembling—And behold the multitude melted away and they went on beating down one another."

**What One Man May Do.** The recent world war saw quite as marvelous things happen. Single handed an American soldier terrorized a group of German soldiers and because he was unable to walk he compelled them at the point of his automatic to construct a litter and carry him into camp.

**God and War.** War is not God's way of furthering human progress. But God makes plain his love for man by using war to further human progress. No one can read the history of the recent world war without feeling that though God did not prevent the war—perhaps could not, speaking morally—yet He directed the outcome for the welfare of the world if only the world will learn its lesson and do its duty. Men did not win the war; neither did bread, nor coffee, nor sugar,

nor doughboy, nor Britain, nor Frenchman, nor Italian. God won the war, and if the nations of the world can only be induced to be rightly exercised thereby it will be made clear that God can make the wrath of man to praise him and out of bitter experience bring greater glory and permanent blessing.

**The Opportunity of Youth.** Jonathan was young. The fate of the world lies with the young. Let no man despise youth. Jonathan was the human instrument by whom the Lord saved Israel. He was the first of his day to strike the blow for national freedom. He did it in a spirit of perfect trust in God. Nor did he say, "If God wants Israel free he will do it without my help." He said, "God wants Israel free and He wants me to help Him free Israel." That is the only proper temper for a man who wants to do a man's work for his fellows. Indeed, God will not work alone that way. If man will not work for men, then God can do nothing for them. But any man, young or old, rich or poor, wise or unwise, who, seeing something to be done that is worth doing and gives himself to it, will find God his indefeasible ally at once and always.

**Do the Next Thing.** Doing good work for the world is, in the main, doing the thing you are set to do with all your heart. Jonathan was a soldier. He perfected himself in the arts of the soldier. He disciplined the body to be the servant of his will; he cultivated surpassing skill in the use of the bow and of the sling; he pondered the problems of strategy, which, after all, is just acquiring a knowledge of the other man's ways of thinking and doing, and he taught himself to be afraid of nothing.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who were the Philistines? 2. To what condition of powerlessness had they reduced Israel? 3. Is victory always with the swift and with the strong? Give instances to the contrary. 4. Is war ever right and when? 5. Is there such a thing possible as "civilized" warfare? 6. What has one to say about the use of poison gas, unrestricted submarine warfare, and treachery? 7. Has war ever made any important contribution to the progress of civilization?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Life is a constant fight of the higher nature against the lower. Our hope of victory is in our alliance with God. 2. In a venture of difficulty it helps amazingly to have good company. For the Christian, Christ is always at hand. 3. The church membership might be to the minister what the armor bearer was to Jonathan. 4. What inspiration it would be to any leader if his followers should say, "Do all that is in thine heart, behold I am with thee according to thy heart." 5. Doubtless God could get the world saved without men, but he manifestly proposes to work through men.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.



# SAUL REJECTED AS KING

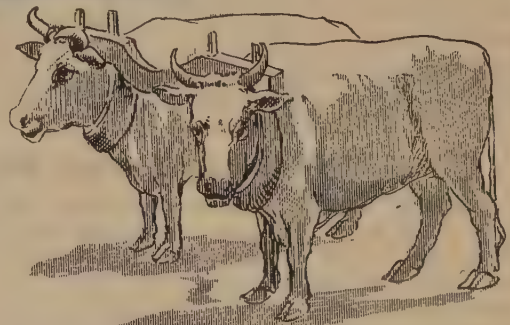
And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord. And



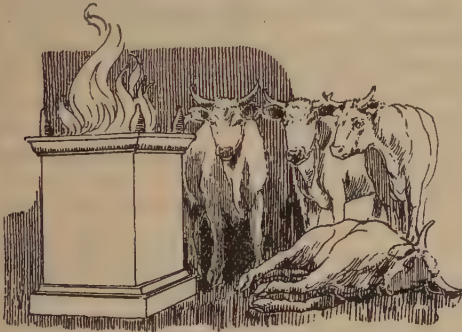
said, What meaneth then this bleating of the



in mine ears, and the lowing of



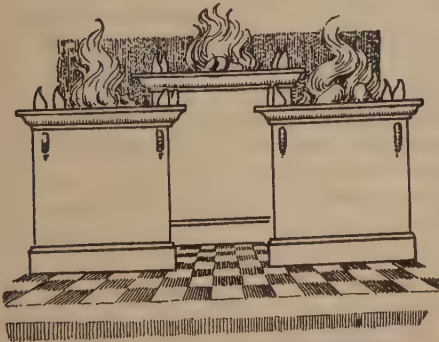
which I hear? And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to



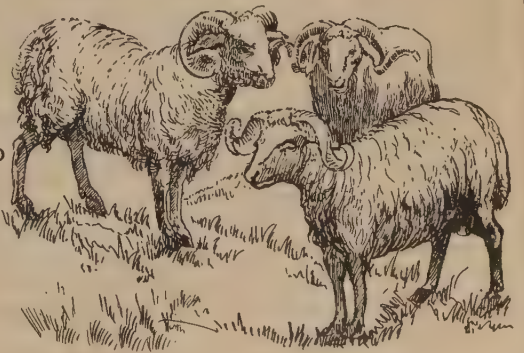
unto the Lord thy God; and the rest we have utterly



\* \* \* \* And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in



and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of



# SAUL REJECTED AS KING.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I SAM. 15:1-31.

**Prayer:** O, Lord, Thou who hast the power to lift up and to cast down, to receive and to reject, may I heed and be helped by so great a failure as Saul. It is a fearful thing for the humblest of us to forsake Thy Word and Thy way. Give us the attentive ear, the responsive mind, the obedient heart. Amen.

"The tumult and the shouting dies;  
The captains and the kings depart:  
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,  
An humble and a contrite heart.  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget!"  
—Kipling.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Much of the First Book of Samuel was drawn from early historical poems, such as Hannah's Song of Thanksgiving, The Song of the Bow, and David's Dirge (2 Sam. 3). Its title, Samuel, not only indicates he wrote, probably, the first twenty-four chapters, but is an admission that the soul of Samuel was the soul of the true kingdom of Israel during most of Saul's reign. Time, uncertain, 1079-1065 B. C. Place, Gilgal.

**Scripture Setting:** **Saul and the Sin of Self-Seeking.** Israel seeking a king, 1 Sam. 9:10-20. Seeking after Saul to proclaim him king, 1 Sam. 10:17-25. Saul seeking the death of David, 1 Sam. 19:1-10. Saul seeking death by suicide, 1 Sam. 31:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents life as the kingdom over which God calls the individual to rule. 1. We become true priests and kings unto God by taking and keeping the oath of obedience. 2. He who holds highest authority is least his own; must yield fullest obedience and largest service. 3. No one act brings rejection and disaster, but accumulations slowly pile and start the avalanche. 4. The royal registers hold many names of men who failed to rule a people, being ruled by their own pride. 5. The failure of one life carries down to ruin a whole family and greatly retards the progress of Christ's Kingdom.

### THE VICTOR IN BATTLE BECOMES THE VICTIM OF VANITY.

**Point of Contact:** How awful is that tragedy in which the hero turns out to be the villain. How dramatic are some of the scenes in real life when by the false turn of the hand the character that was supposed to be clothed with glory is pushed from the stage of action amid the hisses of the disappointed beholders.

King Saul was an heroic figure; he moved upon a broad stage; he was the favorite of an applauding people. But it was not a mere Samson that the times demanded. A moral and religious character was required, and here Saul failed. For a time Samuel supported him and David inspired him. But the very block out of which he was carved was defective. His call had come in middle life while he hunted his father's mules. He was anointed and suddenly became "another man." Yet not altogether. He was only half-converted, half-roused. He was still looking for stray animals, preferring a well-stocked farm to the Divine approval. It is a tragedy to find one's self a king in station, yet feel one's self a mule driver in spirit.

**Betrayed by the Bleating Behind the Bars.** "What meaneth this bleating of sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Something surely was the matter with Saul. On the day they were to announce him king he hid behind the stuff. The prophet Samuel was constantly hunting him up, dragging him into the light, summoning him to duty.

If Saul furnished the example of a sudden

conversion in middle life then Samuel is the example of a great saint who grew up from childhood to old age under the steadying influence of an early religious vow and a great moral purpose. Over the child Saul stood Kish his father, greedy for wealth. Over the child Samuel stood Hannah his mother presenting her child in prayer to God. Time only revealed which parent produced the stronger soul. It was Samuel who anointed Saul; who gave him the command, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have;" who said afterwards to the trembling, deceitful king, "God hath rejected thee."

Samuel knew no half measures, no half remedies. When the helpless Agag crouched at his feet and begged for mercy because Saul had spared him the prophet hewed him limb from limb, believing his heathen body was a better victim for the justice of God than the fat carcasses of the sheep Saul spared for sacrifice. The senseless bleating of sheep and lowing of cattle roused the indignation of a man like Samuel, for they revealed a weak king dallying and loitering in the face of God's explicit command.

**A Monarch's Motive Unmasked.** "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." Though to Saul belonged the credit of his own victory, yet God had forbidden him to retain the spoils. The king, who was a fine judge of cattle, noticed how sleek were the oxen, how fat the sheep, and to save them from slaughter he invented an excuse for disobey-



ing God. No doubt he intended to use some of them for a sacrificial thanksgiving, but since there were so many he reasoned that there would be little harm in keeping a few for himself. He wished to make a splendid show of his own triumph.

Josephus says Agag was saved because of his stature and beauty. The tall and beautiful Saul would enhance the attractiveness of his own beauty by dragging at his chariot wheel the mighty captive king. In his chariot at the head of a great procession he rides under a triumphal arch which Jerome says was made of olives, and myrtle, and palms. But a lone prophet with flowing robes halted the proud procession. The king argues and pleads, but the prophet pronounces a curse on his disobedience. God will find no delight in the burnt offerings of formal worship when the heart of the worshipper is full of disobedience and vanity.

Saul snatches at the prophet's mantle as Samuel turns to go. Saul would hold on to the empty form of religion when the spirit of religion was fleeing from the presence of his selfish greed. As Samuel went down the road alone he "mourned for Saul." His soul of honor was already gone; he might as well have been dead. Saul the once victor is Saul the rejected, defeated by his own vanity. How are the mighty fallen!

**The Neglected Word and the Rejected King.** "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king." God was now done with Saul. He had been weighed in the balance and found wanting. It is not well that men should fail, but having failed some good, no doubt, is gained by asking, Why did they fail? The very spring of Saul's public defeat and his private despair is indicated in his words to Samuel, "God is departed from me." But God would not have departed from him if he had not first departed from God. Too much did he leave God out of his estimate of the forces that bore upon his life. He wanted to preserve the best of the sheep since they had material value, but he neglected to preserve the best that was in his own life because he did not appreciate spiritual values. After him was to come a king who prayed and meditated upon God's Word. Hear David say, "Show me

Thy way, O Lord; teach me Thy paths. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all Thy commandments."

**The Fitness that Survives and Supplants Disobedience.** "The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou." This startling announcement that his reign is soon to end struck Saul into deadly earnestness. He seized the mantle of the prophet as if to retain him, and as Samuel parted from him the garment was rent. Thus was the kingdom to be rent from the hand of Saul. There was stamped upon him that day the mark of Cain, the visible expression of the Divine displeasure. Saul knew from that hour his successor was selected, a neighbor that was better than he was. His degradation and rejection made him the more bitter towards David who was to succeed him, as we will see.

In many ways David was more worthy of the royal honor and power. Though David also sinned, he did not attempt, like Saul, to deceive Samuel, but breathed forth his sorrow and penitence in a psalm of wonderful beauty. Through a genuine repentance David found both peace and pardon, while Saul, confronted by guilty facts, tried to shift the responsibility upon the people, and to his disobedience he added hypocrisy. All the sinner's plausible excuses will fail; God's hail will sweep away our refuge of lies. The record of the facts will be heard like the bleating of the hidden sheep. Whenever we disobey God's law, whether it be a law of health, of morality, of industry, or of honesty, we become incompetent for the best places; we are brushed aside to make way for some neighbor who is a better man.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why were the Amalekites so severely punished? Why did Saul save their king? What was the excuse Saul offered for saving their cattle? 2. When did Samuel condemn a priest for neglect towards his sons? Why did he slay Agag, though Saul had spared him? 3. What was lacking in Saul's preparation for sacrifice? How did he try to exalt himself through his victory? What did he lose? 4. In what ways was David a better man than Saul?

**Challenge Text.** "The — of the — is an —: how much — when he bringeth it with a — mind." Prov. 21:1(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Moral conduct means more to God than ceremonial form. 2. The four weak chariot wheels on which Saul tried to succeed were wilfulness, selfishness, passionateness, and jealousy. 4. Conscience calls louder than bleating sheep; God hears more keenly than Samuel. 5. Saul's head was hung in an idol's house, because his heart was idolatrous.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

Again, Jesse made



to pass  
before  
Samuel.  
And  
Samuel  
said unto  
Jesse,  
The Lord  
hath not  
chosen  
these.  
And



said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he



And  
Samuel  
said unto  
Jesse,  
Send and  
fetch  
him: for  
we will  
not sit  
down till  
he come  
hither.

And he sent, and



Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful



and goodly  
to look to.  
And the  
Lord said,  
Arise,  
anoint him:  
for this is  
he. Then  
Samuel  
took the  
horn of  
oil, and



him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 16:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We rejoice that Thou knowest where we are and what we are. Thou also canst bring us to our place and work, in Thine own time and way. Help us to be prepared in heart and life for all that Thou are planning for us. Above all, may we have the anointing of Thy Holy Spirit for our life work. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Like the star  
That shines afar,  
Without haste,  
And without rest,  
Let each man wheel with steady sway  
Round the task that rules the day,  
And do his best. —Goethe.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1065. Place, Samuel lived at Ramah. This anointing was at Bethlehem. Persons, Samuel, Jesse, and his seven sons.

**Scripture Setting:** God Calling to Service. Abraham called, Gen. 12:1-17. Moses called, Ex. 3:1-17. Joshua called, Num. 27:15-23. Samuel called, 1 Sam. 3. Elisha called, 2 Kings, 2:1-15. Nehemiah called, Neh. 1. Paul called, Acts, 9:3-16. Peter called, Matt. 16:13-20. The Apostles called, Matt. 10:5-24. Christ called, Isa. 42:1-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This wonderful incident is suggestive of life's kingdom, and the many gateways into our kingdom. Here are some of the ways in which God calls to service: 1. At critical

times in His Kingdom. The new work needs a new worker. 2. Through human agency. God may use man, angel or devil to notify the worker. 3. By overruling providences. A wicked king, straying asses, a service of sacrifice are all links in the chain. 4. Contrary to human expectation and choice, God alone knows how to fit the right man to the right place. 5. According to inward character and spirit. He seeks such to serve Him. 6. For a particular work. God is a spiritual economist, and is after a maximum of result from a minimum of means and effort. 7. By furnishing the needed grace and power. David had splendid natural abilities, but God adds other qualities and especially the endowment and equipment of the Holy Spirit.

### FOUR STEPS TO A KINGDOM.

**Testing the Applicants.** Did you ever apply for a position and stand in line till your turn came for you to be questioned? Or did you hear your big brother or sister tell about it? Well, that is what is meant by that first picture. Those boys had not exactly applied for a position, and yet by the turn things had taken they were really applicants. Can you think of any other way of saying "the turn things had taken"? I like to call it Providence, for really God is touching and turning things in all lives. A great preacher once preached a sermon on "Every Man's Life a Plan of God." He had a good text for it, too, for it was, "I have guided thee, though thou has not known Me." It was about Cyrus, the great heathen king and conqueror.

There they go—those boys—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven. And each time the man in the chair said, "This is not he." You can find the names of all the seven in the Bible. Who is that man in the chair? It is Samuel, the aged prophet of God. He came here to Bethlehem, to the family of Jesse, for God said he had provided a king for His people, from that family. Saul was still king in name, but God had said he should not continue long. Saul disobeyed God, and so he lost his throne and kingdom.

**First Step to Promotion.** "Do the duty which lies nearest thee, which thou knowest to be a duty. Thy second duty will already have become clearer." So wrote Thomas Carlyle to those who were perplexed about what they ought to do. His advice is fundamental and the very heart of wisdom. It is also a key to unlock doors of uncertainty in every direction. Young men often never discover what

their life work is to be until they begin at humble tasks near at hand. One of our most successful business men began work at a dollar and a quarter a day as a common laborer, after having graduated from a technical school. He found himself and his career while at this work.—Selected.

**The Right Kind of a Boy.** What was the matter with these seven boys? They were all present at the religious service, and they all look well in the picture. Samuel also was pleased with them. The real trouble was, not one of them was just right at heart. Any one of them might have made a king like Saul, but God now intended to get one who was right at heart. Samuel was surprised, but at last he asks Jesse, "Are these all the boys you have?" He replies, "No, there is one—the youngest—but he is keeping the sheep." "Send and bring him," said Samuel. He must have thought to himself at once that this was the very one God wants.

The third picture shows him as he watches the flock of sheep. Let us try to think what kind of a boy he is. For one thing, he is obedient and submissive. All the older boys are at the feast, and David—for we will now call him by name—has gone to the fields and to the work. He did not go pouting and frowning, either. Then, we see that he is faithful, with his eye on the sheep, his rod in his hand; he is ready to spring up if a bear or wolf came in sight. He killed a bear once and a lion at another time. But what is that by his side? Yes, a harp, and it shows that he was improving his odd moments to become skillful as a musician. In it all he is thinking of God and life and what

he would like to be and do. I expect he practiced with the sling also, and we shall find in another story that both the harp and the sling were used by him to good effect. See Phil. 4:8 for six good things to think about when you are alone.

**Your Duty and a Little More.** Mr. Andrew Carnegie, in an address before a graduating class in New York, gave some excellent advice to the young men on how to attain success in life. Among other good things he said:

"There are several classes of young men. There are those who do not do all their duty; there are those who profess to do their duty; and there is a third class, far better than the other two, that do their duty and a little more.

"No one can cheat a young man out of success in life. You young lads have begun well. Keep on. Don't bother about the future. Do your duty and a little more, and the future will take care of itself."

—The Brotherhood Star.

**"You Are Wanted at Once."** Suddenly, as David sits there, he sees a man coming towards him. David is wondering if anything has happened to his father or brothers. Now the man is up to him, and he says, "David, you are wanted at once," and he tells him of the visit of Samuel, and the prophet's request. There is so much of God in it all that we may be sure that God whispered to David to go. God works at both ends of the line in accomplishing His purposes. The story of Philip and the eunuch shows this in the 8th chapter of Acts; so also many other stories in the Bible. As you see him led along in the next picture, he seems thoughtful and serious, but obedient. Even then, only seventeen years old, he could have sung our hymn, "Where He leads me, I will follow."

Some of the beautiful hymns David wrote (we call them psalms) have just such thoughts of submission and joy in them. While they are going to see Samuel, we may remind ourselves that David is in the direct line of God's purposes for His people. Jesse, David's father, was the grandson of beautiful Ruth, the gleaner. Ruth was married to Boaz, and Obed was their son. So you see he had good parents and good training, and he was to be a king that God had provided. Then all these things are happening at and near Bethlehem, where Jesus was born a thousand years later. Jesus was the great-great-great-great-grandson of David. He was also called David's greater Son, because He was God Himself.

**A Strange New Power.** How early does a boy begin to feel that he is a man, and is to do a man's work? Certainly that is possible by the time he is as old as David

was. Jesus Christ felt this when He was only twelve years old, for He said to His mother, in the temple, "Wist ye not, that I must be about My Father's business?" Have you ever seen the picture called "The Soul's Awakening"? That fifth picture makes me think of the soul's awakening. David was a fine, manly boy, "of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." But he had also those inner qualities which show a good heart and spirit—like faith, hope, patience, humility, courage, joy. But in addition to all this he was specially helped of God. As soon as he was brought before Samuel, the Lord said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." Then it is also said that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward." This strange, new power on mind and heart and life made this shepherd boy grow up to be a hero, a statesman, a scholar, a poet, a wise and good king. The gift of the Holy Spirit is a wonderful, wonderful power—the greatest and best gift of God to anyone. And everyone may have this gift through Jesus Christ, by taking Christ as a personal Saviour and Friend. Remember two things: "God chooses fit men, and God fits chosen men."

**Why David Was Chosen.** David was chosen, not for the excellence of character he already possessed so much as for the possibilities of excellence to be developed by the grace of God, through his obedience. It is like the vision of the sculptor who sees the possible statue in the marble, as Michael Angelo once said of a piece of beautiful marble, outwardly defiled and thrown to one side, "I see an angel there and must get him out."—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How did Saul come to be king? 2. How did he lose his throne? 3. Tell the story of Joseph as a boy; of Daniel, as a boy; of Timothy, as a boy. 4. How was a famous heathen king tested and "found wanting"? 5. How did Elisha receive power for his work? 6. Tell about a woman who anointed Christ at a feast. 7. Tell about some women who anointed Christ for burial.

**Challenge Text.** "Man looketh on the \_\_\_\_\_, but the \_\_\_\_\_ looketh on the \_\_\_\_\_." 1 Sam. 16:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Uselessness, wastefulness and sinfulness of undue grief (v. 1). 2. Power of incarnated truth (v. 4). 3. Retirement and seclusion the training school for great service (vs. 11-12). 4. Danger of judging by the merely external—whether the personal appearance, the social qualities, the intellect or the life. 5. Divine command a stimulus and safeguard in Christian work. 6. The Holy Spirit the best equipment for service (v. 13). 7. Peril of abused privileges ("I have rejected him," v. 1). 8. Secret and conditions of promotion. The true way to first places. 9. God has complete knowledge of His kingdom, its needs, perils, opportunities. 10. The workers ripen and advance as the work advances. 11. We should not be hasty either in selecting or rejecting others, for God's choice is not as man's. 12. Neglect not the humble and lowly, for these may be God's choice.



# DAVID AND GOLIATH

And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and



toward  
the army  
to meet  
the  
Philistine.  
And David  
put his  
hand in  
his bag,  
and took  
thence a  
stone, and



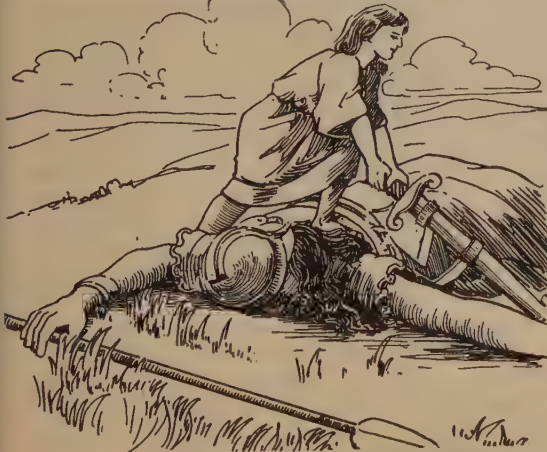
and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into



and  
he



to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but there was no sword in the hand of David. Therefore David ran, and



and  
drew it  
out of  
the  
sheath  
thereof,  
and slew  
him, and



therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 17:32-51.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We hail Thee as the strong Son of God, our Saviour. Thou art mighty to conquer all enemies. We thank Thee for the power Thou dost give those who love and trust Thee. With all confidence may we go forth to every battle, if Thou dost order, and lead. Grant us the victory over every sin and enemy. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"One struggle of might, and the giant of Gath,  
With a crash like the oak in the hurricane's path,  
And a clangor of arms, as of hosts in a fray,  
At the feet of the stripling of Ephratah lay."

"For the God of David still  
Guides the pebble at His will."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1063. Place, valley of Elah. Persons, Goliath, Saul, David, the two armies.

**Scripture Setting:** Battling for the Lord. Fight of faith, 2 Tim. 4:1-8. Power from God, Psa. 18:13-39. The battle spirit, Prov. 16:13-33. The battle call, Rev. 3. Strength in weakness, 1 Cor. 1:19-31. Enemies and weapons, Eph. 6:10-24. God with us, Rom. 8:31-39. Victory through Christ, Col. 3:1-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this contest between David and Goliath, we are shown some of the great facts and principles in all battling for the right. 1. Crisis times in every life and nation. Then the struggle for supremacy is on. 2. Remarkable special providences in the individual and na-

tion. "This shepherd boy rises to be the warrior prince. 3. Mistakes and delays in every conflict. This is almost unavoidable in view of man's ignorance and tendency to plan without God. 4. The weapons in the conflict. These are simple as the Divine plan. Man is apt to devise more complicated ways and means, forgetting that they do not represent power. The simple gospel is the sling and stone to bring victory. 5. True spirit in the conflict, chiefly trust in God and humility. 6. Victory in the conflict. The mightiest enemies go down before the power of God, manifested through his people. 7. Faithful use of means in the conflict. God is the power, but David and his sling are the agencies used.

### HOW A YOUTH CONQUERED A GIANT.

**Brave for the Right.** There is a great difference between bluster and bravery. A fussy and boastful person is apt to be a coward when the danger comes. There is a difference even between boldness and bravery. A person may be bold and yet not brave. David was quiet and humble, but he was brave, and brave for the right. It is now several years since he was anointed king. He has been keeping the sheep, and thinking much of the work which God might ask him to do. Saul had gloomy spells, since the Spirit of God left him, and David was called to the king's palace to play on his harp before Saul. This seemed to be the only thing that would quiet the king. At last the king was much improved, and David went back again to his sheep.

The Philistines about this time came up to battle with the Israelites. The armies were facing each other, and David's three brothers were in the Israelite army. One day Jesse sent David with provisions for the soldier brothers. In the Philistine army there was a big, blustering giant, ten feet high, who dared any one to fight him. In those days battles were often decided by single soldiers fighting for each side. The very day David came to the army that giant, named Goliath, was strutting before the Israelites, shouting, "Send a man to fight with me," as he had done for forty days. David was stirred and indignant. He asked, "Who is that man that defies the army of God? Why does not some one fight him? I can do it." David felt

this way because he knew what God could do through him.

**A Vision of God.** "Every fresh vision of God has brought with it tremendous world results, when men have been careful of the life to come. When they have laid hold on God; when Heaven became a daily reality, then society was laid hold upon by a wondrous redemptive power. Luther's vision of God changed the face of Europe. Wesley's vision of God changed the social life in England. Paul's fresh vision of God made him a messenger of a Gospel of life and hope. Job's vision of God set him upon his feet with a message for men through following centuries."

**The Best Way to Fight.** Saul heard that David was willing to fight the giant, but he tried to discourage him. David said, "I fought a lion and a bear and killed them, and I'm sure if God would help me to kill a lion and a bear, He'll help me to kill the Philistine." Then Saul put his own armor on David—a helmet and a coat of mail—and also gave him his sword. The first four pictures show how he is being rigged out as a soldier. His three elder brothers are standing there looking at him, and one of them made fun of him. David did not reply, but he was thinking of the best way to fight the giant. Very soon he said, "I am not used to these weapons, but prefer to fight in my own way." So the next picture shows him as he puts off the armor, and then takes his staff and sling. As he comes to the brook that flows between the armies, he selects five smooth stones for his sling. David's whole life has been a preparation for just such a battle as this.



**How to Win Victories.** What is it that will give victory to any army; that was the secret of Napoleon's victories; that enabled Admiral Togo to destroy the Russian fleet in the Straits of Korea; that made General Von Moltke victorious over the French? It is the same that will give success to any convention or prayer meeting, or Sunday school. It is that which will make any work successful, or any life a success, and insure even eternal life. It is all in the word readiness, preparation. God works along the lines of our earnest, honest endeavors.—Selected.

**Trusting in God and Self.** All this time Goliath was watching him with a sneer and a smile. As David comes from the brook, his sling is hidden under his coat. The giant sees only his staff, and he cries out, "Am I a dog, that this boy comes to me with a staff? I'll give his body to the birds." Then he cursed David by his gods. David replied, "I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel. This day the Lord will give you into my hand, and I will take off your head."

But David also planned the battle the very best he could. He knew God would expect him to do what he could. He reasoned that the giant would be off his guard when he saw how young David was, and that he had only a shepherd staff. Now is the time for his quick eye, and true aim, and clear brain, and brave heart. See him run right towards the giant! That is a part of his plan. This dazes the giant for a moment; and, as he runs, David quickly puts a stone in his sling. Round and round his head he swings it, and away goes the stone, straight to the giant's forehead. He reels and falls on his face, stunned. David hurled the stone, but God guided it to do its work.

**"Papa Take Hold of Me."** It makes a good deal of difference whether you take hold of God or God takes hold of you. Said a father: "My little girl today refused to let me take hold of her hand when we were walking together. She thought she could go alone. But when we came to a place which was slippery, she took hold, first of my little finger, and then, as it grew more icy, of my whole hand. As we went on and it was growing worse, she let go entirely and said: 'Papa, take hold of me.' She knew I was strong and that she could not fall unless I fell. If our hands are placed in His whose throne is in Heaven, we never can fall or fail."—D. L. Moody.

**Slay Your Giant.** The giant had armor from head to foot, and his spear was twice as long as a common man would carry. But

there was one spot in the forehead that was exposed, and David's true aim hit that. His practice with the sling had made him a crack shot. This stone may have killed him, but David wanted to be sure that he was dead; so he sprang forward, while the giant was stunned, and took Goliath's own sword and cut off his head. This was all done so quickly that both armies were amazed. Now the Philistines see that their leader has fallen, and is dead, they turn and flee to their own land. But the Israelites take courage and pursue them and kill thousands of them, even to the gates of Gath, their fortified city. Thus David helped the army to win a great victory. And he saved the people of God from their old-time enemies.

**Other Giants.** We have just room here to name some of the giants which boys and girls have to fight these days. There is giant Temper, a real blustering fellow, red-faced and loud-voiced; giant Selfishness, who cares for no one else and plans only for his own pleasures and ease; giant Envy, who always is growling because he cannot have what others have; giant Pride, giant Fashion, giant Laziness, giant Appetite, giant Vice, giant Intemperance, giant Cheat, giant Wilfulness, giant Wordliness, giant Falsehood, giant No-god. The spies brought back word that the land was full of giants. So the land of Self is full of giants. Any one who conquers these giants must have all the soldier qualities of David. Only when the head is off the giant is the job finished. You have the sling and the sword; see that you use them against your giant.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Mention four qualities or traits in Goliath and four in David. 2. Name some of the giants we have to fight today. 3. What two giants did Bunyan write about in *Pilgrim's Progress*? 4. What are the best weapons to use in fighting giants. 5. How did Joseph win victories; and Daniel? And what giants did they overcome?

**Challenge Text.** "Be strong in \_\_\_\_\_, and in the \_\_\_\_\_ of His might." Eph. 6: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. David is an example of the heroic element in Christianity. 2. Fidelity in little things and in obscure places is the preparation for the crisis. 3. The truth never lacks a champion; the right man emerges for the emergency. 4. The simple Gospel is the sling and stone to smite every giant of error and sin. 5. The lesson suggests the mistakes, methods, spirit, weapons and victory in Christianity's conflict with the world. 6. One may use the sword of a written argument and another the sling of ready speech. Each one's method is best—for himself. 7. Awake, be ready, for this may be the most important day of life. 8. All preceding life prepares or unfits, for the next enemy and battle. 9. God has some David preparing to meet and conquer every Goliath.

Dr. J. M. Coon.



And it came to pass as they came, when David was



from the slaughter of the Philistine that the women came out of all the cities of Israel,



to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick. And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And



was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto



ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands: and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David



with his hand, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul



for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it. And David avoided out of his presence twice.



# DAVID'S ENEMY—SAUL.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 18:1-16.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Keep us from the sin of envy, which slew the Lord of glory. Make us content in life and quick to do Thy will. May we avoid the hate and jealousy and murderous spirit of Saul, and imitate the love and forgiveness and helpful spirit of David. Do Thou grant Thy presence and Thy Holy Spirit that we may be able so to do. May we trust in the salvation secured to us by the Saviour from sin. In His name. Amen.

"O God, let me the power attain  
To love the good I may not gain;  
To own the rose is sweet, although  
No roses in my garden grow;  
Revere all lofty souls, and grand,  
Though far below their heights I stand;  
To praise with glad, unenvious speech  
The triumph I shall never reach;  
And to exult that others dare  
Great deeds in which I cannot share."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1063. Place, Gibeah, in the tribe of Benjamin. Persons, Saul, David, Jonathan, singing women.

**Scripture Setting:** Envy and Hate. Evil of envy, Jas. 4:1-12. Envy forbidden, Rom. 13:8-14. Freedom from envy, 1 Cor. 3:1-15. Enemies without cause, Psalms 69:1-18. Jesus envied and hated, John 7:1-13. True spirit to possess, Psalms 37:1-18. Joseph hated, Gen. 37:5-28. Care for the righteous, Psalms 33:1-22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson paints for us two life portraits, which really show two ways to work in life. One portrait is of Saul—or the wrong way to work. The picture shows him 1, full

of envy and hate; 2, working by a low and scheming policy; 3, incompetent and cowardly; 4, full of jealousy and suspicion; 5, unjust and treacherous in conduct; 6, selfish and departing from God.

The other portrait is of David—or the right way to work. The qualities seen in David are: 1, obedience and prudence; 2, fidelity and courage; 3, loyalty to his master and king; 4, guided and helped of God; 5, constant and consistent in public service; 6, humble in popularity; 7, successful because consecrated, and still more consecrated when successful. The way to work and win in life is to avoid the Saul elements of character and imitate the David elements.

### WHICH PORTRAIT IS YOURS?

**Another Victory.** Did you ever think of it, that there are really only two classes of people in the world? This is true when we divide them into the good and the bad. At the last great day Christ will divide all people into those two classes. They are called in Scripture the sheep and the goats. But all through life everyone is putting himself into one class or the other. We shall see that these two classes are represented by David and Saul, and each person should be deciding in his or her mind which is the better kind of person.

When David came to Saul, after he slew the giant, Saul asked him whose son he was, and David replied, "I am the son of Jesse the Bethlehemite." David had grown so that Saul did not know he was the boy who had played on the harp for him a few years before. Saul's son, Jonathan, was present, and he at once took a great liking to David, and David did to him. The next story will tell of these two fine young men, who were friends for life. Saul made David war captain to fight the Philistines. He won a great victory, and came back with many scalps of the Philistines, as you see by the first picture. Did David have any enemies among his own people? Yes; for even the best people, and the best acting people, sometimes have enemies. Their very goodness may make some people hate them. You will be surprised to know that Saul hated David. He was the very person who should have admired him for his heroism in slaying the

giant and afterwards fighting the Philistines and saving Saul's kingdom. It all came about because the women of the land praised David for his great and good work. As you see by the second picture, they danced and sang, crying, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." They were really praising them both, but Saul took offense and was envious of David, and then hated him.

**Play Fair and Win.** "Now, fellows," the captain said, "we have just got to win this game, and that's all there is to it. The other bunch know their business and play the game well, but we can win out if we only think so and do our best. No dirty work, remember. If they want to mix it up, just go right on and play the game. We cannot afford to have men decorating the fence when we need them in the field."—Onward.

**The Language of the Face.** Some people claim that they can tell much about a person by the lines in the hand and by the bumps on the head. A person can be known also by his face and actions. The eye and mouth, and even the way one holds his head, all tell tales about the character. As we study these faces of Saul and David, we can begin to answer the question of the story. At least we can say very soon which portrait we would prefer to be ours. It is not always safe to judge by appearance. Once a man was looking at a picture of the great and good Judson, and he said, "That man would have been a sea pirate, except for the grace of God." But usually the story in the face is the same as the real story in the heart.

It is so in this case. You can scarcely think of a greater contrast than that between these two faces. And the one thing for us to remember is that they both started about alike. But very soon Satan began to paint the one portrait, and the Holy Spirit began painting the other. Here you see the portraits well along towards completion. In the one you can see pride, suspicion, hate, envy, revenge—all ugly qualities. In the other it is easy to find humility, goodness, gentleness, forgiveness—all beautiful and noble qualities. Paul paints the finished pictures in seventeen dark strokes, and nine bright lines. See Gal. 5:19-23.

**Every One His Own Photographer.** Longfellow says in his "Hyperion" that "He who drinks beer, thinks beer; he who drinks wine, thinks wine; and he who drinks midnight, thinks midnight." Our thoughts are the outgrowth of our actions. The girl and boy who put heart into their work instead of into frivolity and foolishness, will find that they think of it with increasing clearness and pleasure. The result is that the face shows what one thinks and does.

**The Man with the Harp.** If people would always stay as pictures, the bad would not hurt much, and the good would not help. But the portraits mean life and conduct. You have read the poem, "The Man with the Hoe," and you have seen the picture of "The Angelus"; but in both cases they represent toil and sacrifice and worship. So these two portraits tell two different life stories. In the case of David, it is the man with the harp. He is also a man with a sling and a sword, when God had that kind of a work for him to do. But the harp tells the better kind of work—a work to soothe and help and comfort. This is a beautiful symbol, and most fitting for David. You know he wrote the most of those wonderful hymns in the book of Psalms. There is no other book like it in all the world. It is the music of a soul that has seen God, and has known of His goodness and forgiving love. And it is music—sweetest music—for the tired and troubled and tempted in all ages of all the world. Yes, David's sword and sling have been almost forgotten for centuries; but his harp goes on singing to millions and millions of people. The beautiful twenty-third psalm is called "The Nightingale Psalm," and nearly every one learns it by heart.

**The Oil of Kindness.** "I wanted to drive an iron bar through a piece of timber. I bored a hole of the right size, but the bar was rusty, and the hole was rough. I made slow progress and was begin-

ning to split the wood. Then I thought of the oil can. I oiled the bar; I poured oil into the hole; a few blows of the hammer sent the iron into its place. A few drops of oil were more effective than many blows of the hammer."—Dr. Babb.

**The Man with a Dagger.** That last picture shows a very different kind of a man. He is not only hurling javelins, but hurling them at one of the best of men, and one who was in the very act of doing a kindness to him! You can't think of anything meaner or more wicked. He is in a passion of rage, too. He makes you think of a tiger, or hyena, or wolf, in a bloodthirsty mood, springing on some innocent animal. Again and again he tried to kill David with the javelin. When he failed, then he tried to get the servants to kill him. Not one of them was willing to do it. Then he ordered David to battle, hoping he would be killed there; but God watched over him and kept him. He offered him his daughter in marriage if David would kill a hundred Philistines. He killed two hundred, and God protected and prospered him. At last Saul was afraid of David, but he tried again and again to trap him and kill him. Now, which do you want to be—a harp boy and man, or a dagger boy and man? And which portrait are you really painting, stroke by stroke, in your daily life and conduct?

**Wasps in the Home.** Into a happy home there came a selfish, quarrelsome person for a visit. In a few days the children began to find fault and quarrel. Their temper and disobedience, like the stings of the wasp, made the mother restless and unhappy. How glad they all were when the visit was over! How terrible it would be if some such wasp-spirit was born right in a home and all the other members of the family would have to feel its stings all the time!

**Quiz and Study.** 1. When did David learn to play on the harp and use the sling? 2. What traits of character can one see in the face usually? 3. Who else did Saul try to kill with his javelin? 4. How was this sin of envy shown in the case of Joseph's brethren? 5. How in the case of Christ's enemies?

**Challenge Text.** "Wrath is ———, and anger is ———, but who is able to stand before ———?" Prov. 27:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Faithful under difficulties is one great secret of popularity. 2. The evil spirit is both a cause of sin and because of sin. 3. Every one is a harp-type of life or a dagger type. 4. God preserves those who trust and love Him. 5. To fight against the good is to fight against God. 6. Wise action not only brings success, but it is success. 7. A fact or act may be right in itself, but wrong as to time, place or manner. 8. One should be jealous for the right without jealousy or envy of others. 9. God overrules and defeats the plans of the wicked.

DR. J. M. COON.



## DAVID AND JONATHAN

But the lad knew not anything: only Jonathan and David knew the matter. And Jonathan



unto  
his  
lad,  
and  
said  
unto  
him,  
Go,  
carry  
them  
to the



And as soon as the



David



out of a place toward the south, and



to the  
ground,  
and  
bowed  
himself  
three  
times:  
and they



and wept one with another, until David exceeded.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 20:1-42.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for friends—friends that love and lift and bless. Help us that we, too, may be friends to those about us that need our sympathy and aid. May we be unsparing in all those larger gifts of life, which guide to the Heavenly way. In every way in which Thou hast blessed us may we be a blessing to others. Above all may we lead our friends to the great Friend and Saviour. In His Name, Amen.

"I would be true, for there are those who trust me;  
I would be pure, for there are those who care;  
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all—the foe—the friendless;  
I would be giving and forget the gift;  
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;  
I would look up—and laugh—and love and lift."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1062. Place, The stone Ezel, near Gibeah. Persons, Saul, David, Jonathan, the lad.

**Scripture Setting:** True Friendship. A friend indeed, Prov. 18:10-24. Gospel friendship, 1 John 3:10-24. Blessedness of friendship, Psa. 133. Friends of Jesus, John 15:11-17. Friends as believers, Acts 4:24-37. Hints on friendship, Prov. 27:6-19. Friends and enemies, Mark 3:22-32. Portrait of a friend, Rom. 12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The friendship of David and Jonathan is a suggestive study to one who desires to make the most of his relations with others. 1. The conditions of true friendship. To stand out sharply. (1) A self-sacrificing spirit, yielding self to the good of another; and (2) possible worth to each other—the one lovable and worthy, the other worthy and lovable. (When these

two vital conditions are present, it is easy for the outward act to follow. Heart and hand have met.) 2. The characteristics of true friendship. In our picture we see (1) boldness as Jonathan defends David before the king; (2) the inventive device in which the king is outwitted and defeated; (3) loyalty, pledging perpetual service. 3. The blessedness of true friendship. (1) It enriches the life of each. Love gives all it has and lo! it receives all back and more. The paradox of friendship is that each party to the compact gives most and receives most. (2) It rejoices and cheers. The kiss and embrace are more than the lovlier gifts of robe and girdle and sword. (3) It guards and saves. Jonathan rescues David and David remembers and protects Jonathan's descendants. 4. The truest friend and friendship. This is Jesus Christ and personal choice of Him as Saviour. By His sacrifice and forgiving love He calls to all, "Come unto me."

### A TALE OF TWO FRIENDS.

**How to Choose a Friend.** A friend is really one who loves, for it comes from an old word meaning to love. Nearly everyone has had many persons that may be called friends. Some would stay friends for a long time, and many only for a short time. None of these could be real friends, for a real friend is for life. If it is one who loves, it must be one who is chosen by the heart. This is what Jonathan was to David. Each chose the other by heart choice, and so it was a lasting friendship. We have learned how they liked each other from the first, and every time they met they were more and more friendly. David's very troubles and difficulties made Jonathan love him all the more! As Saul was growing in hatred to David, so Jonathan was growing in love to him. And when Jonathan had to choose between his own father and David he chose David. He could not love them both, for they were so unlike. He could not help but love David, for he and David were so alike. Each was attracted by the frank and manly nature in the other, and by the spirit of charity and kindness. Jonathan's friendship for David was tested in many ways, but it stood every test.

David also was true to Jonathan, and in one of the stories later we shall see that this friendship brought kindness to Jonathan's descendants. So we see that those

who are friends by heart choice really grow stronger and better friends by the troubles and dangers of life.

**The Looks and the Heart.** Looks may lead to love, but character retains it. We love our friends for what they are, but in each one we find some superlative physical beauty. It may be the eyes; or the mouth; or the hands. It may be the voice; the smile; the laugh. It may be the poise; the walk; the carriage; but something we are sure to find. But those who have the heart qualities, and make the heart choices, endure forever.—Exchange.

**The Sign of the Arrows.** One has enemies as well as friends, as we see in the case of Jonathan and David. They both knew that Saul would try to keep them from seeing each other. Now David suspected that Saul intended to kill him. When he told Jonathan about it Jonathan said that he would find out by testing his father. The test was for David to stay away from his meals at the king's table and Jonathan was to explain why David was absent. If Saul passed it off that would mean that he would not kill David. But if he raged and stormed, as he really did, that would mean that he intended to kill him.

In this case Jonathan was to warn David by the sign of the arrows. It was a kind of code language, which they, but no one else, would understand. The sign was for Jonathan, when he was practicing shooting with his bow, to shoot three arrows near a



stone where David would be hiding. He would send a boy for the arrows, and if he cried out to the boy "Is not the arrow beyond thee?" David would know that he must flee for his life. This is all pictured out in those first drawings. There is David hiding, Jonathan and the lad, and the lad running for the arrows. Just as he gathers them up, David hears the cry of Jonathan, which warns him to flee. Even the boy did not know what these signs meant. Jonathan was very careful in the whole plan, for he knew his father meant to kill David if he had a chance. Why, he even threw a javelin at his own son, at the feast, when Jonathan pleaded for David. What a comfort to Jonathan to have a friend like David!

**A Friend in Need.** Two young men roomed together in college, and a very strong attachment was formed between them. Later they entered business in the same city, and their affection continued and deepened until they were both gray-haired. The hour came when one of them was waiting in agony at a telegraph station for news from a dying son. His friend of the years stood by his side. He spoke no word nor offered any sympathy, save that he returned the handclasp of the broken-hearted father. He did not need to speak. His was the silent comfort of love.—Exchange.

**"Just for Us Two."** Nearly everyone has said that to some dear friend. Each one feels that he would like no one else to know a certain thing, or go to a certain place. This is what Jonathan means when he sends the lad back to the city with his bow and arrows. The lad may wonder why he is to do this, but he is obedient, and there he goes. Now David comes out from his hiding place, and he and Jonathan meet for the last time except one. From this time David was to have no home and no safety or comfort until Saul's death. What a bright spot this was in his memory! During all the years afterwards Jonathan would be with him in spirit and he would never forget that brief visit and the parting kiss. This was worth far more to him than any money or gifts. Everyone may have some human friend he loves more than all others. Christ, too, had his special friends, like Peter and John. This does not prevent us from being friendly to many people. Then there is a Heavenly Friend that each one should choose, and of whom we might say "just for us two." That is Jesus Christ, who comes to be a Friend to everyone who will receive Him and choose Him. He is the "Friend that sticketh closer than a brother." To secure Him we may need to send away many others, just as Jonathan

sent the lad. He opened the way from earth to Heaven and comes to walk with each one, as Savior and Friend.

**Finding and Welcoming the Best.** All they needed was to renew the covenant already made. This they did by the cordial greeting and the kiss, and the tears. They had made this covenant when they first got acquainted (chapter 18:6); and they had renewed it by word when they were last together (20:14-17). Now Jonathan said, "Go in peace, for we have sworn together that the Lord shall be between you and me, and between your children and my children, forever." It was a double pledge and covenant—Jonathan to David and David to Jonathan. This was done because Jonathan knew that David was to be king some time. Jonathan was the son of the king and David was the coming king.

Was there a third person witnessing this covenant? The lad was gone, but the Lord saw it all, and was pleased. All the best friendships are known to Him, because they are prompted by Him. The pledge you sign in the Young People's Society, or the covenant in the Church, and even the pledge against liquor and tobacco, and other bad habits, are all known to God. He is pleased to have us make such pledges against false things and persons, and for and with the true and good.

**Inviting the Best.** Some one once wrote a great author asking what was the secret of true life and the author answered in this striking phrase: "Inviting into it the best things." Here we are placed in a world of infinite things. We are facing an unknown future full of many good and many evil things. A great many of these things will play upon our lives to determine them in ways over which we have no control and of which we can not tell the end. Therefore we should invite into our life only the best things and the best friends.

**Challenge Text.** "There is a ——— that sticketh closer than a ———." Prov. 18: (27).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. In true friendship, each one gives all and receives all. 2. True friendship grows stronger with every trial and trouble. 3. Importance of friendship with Jesus Christ: (a) It saves man from peril; (b) fits him for service; (c) counsels, guides and strengthens; (d) brings him to the abiding friendship of all the good; (e) makes him at last like the Christ friend. 4. Conditions of friendship with Christ: (a) Heart change; (b) love and friendship for Him; (c) unselfish and sacrificing for Him; (d) loving and saving others for His sake; (e) submissive to His will and obedient to His law. 5. Friendship with the good is desirable, to lead and keep in every right way; friendship with the bad is perilous.

DR. J. M. COON.

David also arose  
afterward,  
and went



and cried after Saul,  
saying, My lord the king.  
And when Saul

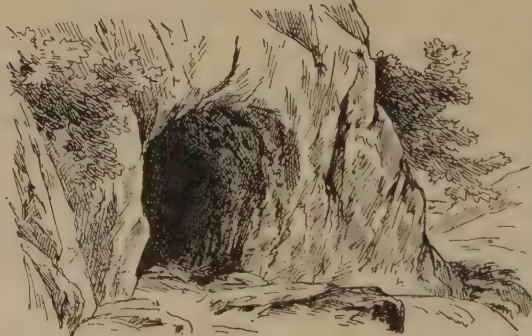


David  
stooped  
with his  
face to  
the earth,  
and



And David said to Saul  
Wherefore hearest thou  
men's words, saying,  
Behold, David seeketh  
thy hurt?

Behold, this day thine  
eyes have seen how that  
the Lord had delivered  
thee today into mine  
hand in the



and some bade me kill  
thee: but mine eye  
spared thee; and I said,  
I will not put forth  
mine hand against  
my lord; for he is  
the Lord's anointed.

Moreover, my father,  
see, yea, see the skirt  
of thy robe



for in  
that I



of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I SAM. 24:1-22.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Help me to practice Thy great law of kindness, Thy golden rule of love. I will not push to the front by pushing another back, nor climb to success by treading another down.

May I ever imitate Thee, my Saviour and Example, who rendered good for evil, who when Thou wast reviled, reviled not again. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"I will try to find contentment  
In the paths that I must tread;  
I will cease to have resentment  
When another moves ahead.  
I will not be swayed by envy  
When my rival's strength is shown;  
I will not deny his merit,  
But I'll strive to show my own."

—S. E. Kiser.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, April, B. C. 1060. Place, Engedi, near Jericho, means in Hebrew the Fountain of the Goat. This cave where David hid was spacious, holding six hundred men, as the Cave of Adullam protected at another time David, his family and four hundred men. **Persons,** David, Saul, and their followers.

**Scripture Setting:** **Saul Hunts His Hiding Son-in-Law.** David in the wilderness of Ziph, 1 Sam. 23:19-26. David in the cave of Adullam, 1 Sam. 22:1-2. David in the hills of Hachilah, 1 Sam. 26:1-12. David's praise for protection, Ps. 34:7-22. David prays for safety, Ps. 35:1-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage contrasts the jealous and the generous dispositions.

1. Refusing to kill Saul delayed David's hour of rule, but proved him worthy of ruling.
2. Saul's second effort against David's life showed incurable hatred and heartless ingratitude.
3. David spared Saul (a) as the father of Michal, David's wife; (b) as the father of Jonathan, David's friend; (c) as God's anointed; (d) as the people's choice.
4. Few angry, iron hearts there be that cannot be melted in the passion of genuine love.

### GENEROUS TO AN ENEMY: OR GOOD FOR EVIL.

**Point of Contact:** If the boys of America were invited to ballot for their favorite character in all the Old Testament, David, I am sure, would be first choice. His popularity then as now was due to his valor in battle, and his fairness, even kindness, towards his enemies. To secure a crown some men have acted treacherously. Robert Bruce, though one of the greatest of Scottish kings, of noble birth, in order to rule committed a violent and merciless deed. He invited John Comyn, his rival, to meet him in the Grey Friar's church at Drumfries and talk over their rival claims. He violated both the sacredness of the place and his oath by driving his dagger into his rival. He fled from the church crying guiltily, "I have slain the Red Comyn."

Greater was the discipline of David's spirit when he refused to strike dead the heartless Saul. One violent act, and David, instead of being as a wild beast on the mountain without home or sanctuary, could have enjoyed the pleasures of a palace. Where the ardent passion of Bruce was uncontrolled, David exercised forbearance. A second act of forbearance, not noted in this lesson, shines all the brighter since David again stood over the sleeping Saul, but though urged, refused to take the king's life. Such fine chivalry and generosity to an enemy made David a national favorite, the darling of his people.

**Envy and Enmity Cancelled in the Cave of Engedi.** "Saul went in to cover his feet: and David and his men remained in the

sides of the cave." The limestone hills of Judea abound in caves. In the dark sides of one of these David with six hundred trusty and tried warriors hid as king Saul entered. To Saul as he entered all was dark, and he thought himself alone. To David from within, the entrance of Saul against the clear light was easily seen. When Saul is wrapped in sleep David steals forward and with his hunting knife cuts a great piece from the royal robes.

How easy for that sharp knife to find beneath the garment the warm flesh and the still warmer blood of the king! But a three-fold restraint arrested David. He was a loyal subject to his country's king, for striking Saul he would be striking his people's government. He was patient as a saint against his envious oppressor, resolving to win back Saul's love by the greatness of his own forgiving heart. He was a devout believer in a Divine destiny that controlled each human life. Saul, if weak and jealous, was God's anointed, and God in His own time would put an end to his reign. Such high motives are worthy of our study.

Young people love to pay back a grudge. But it is not manly to remember an injury. Shakespeare makes one of his characters to say, "Kneel not to me: the power that I have on you is to spare you; the malice towards you, to forgive you; live, and deal with others better." And One who was greater, called, because of His relationship, David's Son, did say, "Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him

drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."

**The Frayed Flag of Friendship and Forgiveness.** "The Lord judge between me and thee, but mine hand shall not be upon thee." From a rocky point beyond Engedi David addresses Saul in a remarkable speech to show that he has formed no plot against the king's life. Nothing could furnish better evidence of David's kindly feeling than the breadth of the royal robe which David now waves as a flag above his head.

Before Saul's army and before the world here is the proof that if there had been a desire to kill there was the best of opportunities to do it. He is willing to call God to witness and to judge that he is innocent of such a bloody intent. And the evidence deeply moved the heart of Saul. His very life he now saw he owed to the kindness of David. Saul tried to answer, but his voice broke into convulsive sobs.

Why was David so desirous of presenting a token of his innocence waved from the rocks above Saul and his army? It was because he was under the shadow of a cruel calumny. Some one who wished to "tear his soul like a lion" was within Saul's court stirring up the jealousy of the king and representing David as a rebel. The introduction of the seventh Psalm would suggest it was Cush the Benjaminite. Now Saul was convinced that David was innocent. His hand had been free to strike, but he struck not. Saul could only cover his face and sob, "My son David."

**The Divine Odor Distilled from David's Devotion.** "Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good; whereas I have rewarded thee evil." In the whole varied field of David's remarkable life there never blossomed a sweeter or fairer flower than his chivalry toward Saul in the cave of Engedi. If we had only the green-eyed, murderous jealousy of Saul to remember, this spot would seem like a desolate wall of rock near the Dead Sea fit only to harbor outlaws. But David's high and noble impulse has breathed upon the scene, and now we remember the delicious fountain that flows and

the plain below where beautiful flowers grow. I wonder if this is why it was so sacred to Solomon, David's son, that when he wrote the Song of Songs he gives us this charming glimpse, "My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi."

Not as a king, but as a fugitive from the hot anger of Saul does David speak to us still in the greatness of his forgiving spirit. The fragrance of his gentle spirit comes floating down to us across four centuries like the odor "of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces." In the beauty and strength of his young manhood he played upon his harp such soothing strains that he comforted the delirious Saul. Tradition says that David after playing wound lilies around the strings of his harp to keep them from breaking. We may believe it, for after his harp was stilled a fragrance lingered where the "Sweet Singer" had been. David's example abides. In his tenderness, his godliness, and his attachment to his friends he has left an illustrious memory. Would you know his secret? He kept faith alive, and did not forget to pray.

The Persians tell of a traveler who found a lump of scented clay. He asked the clay the secret of its wondrous sweetness.

"Friend, if the secret I disclose,  
I have been dwelling with a rose."  
Good Lord, abide with us, that we  
May catch these odors fresh from Thee.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. When did David a second time spare Saul? Whom did he rebuke for not guarding the king? 2. By what four different terms does David in the lesson address Saul? What endearing term does Saul use? What does he prophecy David will become? 3. What pledge does Saul get from David? How did David afterwards remember Saul's family? 4. What son and daughter of Saul played a great part in David's life? How?

**Challenge Text.** "Be not — of —, but overcome — with —." Rom. 12:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. In the caves of adversity and oppression kind deeds shine like beacon lights. 2. How many remarkable deliverances when death fairly cuts our clothing but we are spared! 3. Strange are the turns of fortune; a partridge hunted on the mountains may save the hunter's life. 4. The hand that spares and saves is greater than the heart filled with malice.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN

Now the Philistines



against  
Israel:  
and  
the  
men of  
Israel



from before the Philistines, and fell down slain in mount Gilboa. And the Philistines followed hard upon Saul and upon his sons; and the Philistines



Jonathan,  
and  
Abinadab,  
and  
Melchishua,  
Saul's  
sons.  
And the  
battle  
went sore  
against  
Saul, and the



and he was sore wounded of the archers. Then said Saul unto his armourbearer, Draw thy sword, and thrust me through therewith; lest these uncircumcised come and thrust me through; and abuse me. But his



would  
not;  
for he  
was  
sore  
afraid.  
There-  
fore  
Saul  
took a  
sword,  
and



And when his armourbearer saw that Saul was dead, he fell likewise upon his sword, and died with him. So Saul died, and his three sons, and his armourbearer, and all his men, that same day together.



# DEATH OF SAUL AND JONATHAN.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 SAM. 31:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Teach us by the lives of those who fail. May the dark examples warn us, as the bright ones beckon us. May we remember that every dark sin and every bold sinner are but pictures of what we would be except for the grace of God. We thank Thee for the light that has shined into our hearts and for the helps that lead us to the true and right life. Abide with us ever. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record  
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;  
Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1056. Place, Mountains of Gilboa. Persons, Saul, Jonathan, Saul's armour-bearer, the two armies.

**Scripture Setting:** Wages of Sin. Trouble and anguish, Job. 15:20-35. False foundations, Matt. 7:13-29. Fate of the wicked, Lev. 26:13-39. Wicked driven away, Prov. 14:16-35. Song of sorrow, Psa. 39:1-13. End of the wicked, Psa. 49:1-20. Judgment certain, Prov. 1:20-33. Brings death, Rom. 6:12-23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** What solemn lessons are impressed upon us by the death of Saul: 1. The community of life interest and relationship. If one suffers, many suffer. By his high position Saul pulls down his own family and brings shame and defeat to Israel. 2. The certainty of the Divine threaten-

ings and judgments. For twenty-five years Saul has continued to be king, after he was rejected of God. The Divine sentence passes steadily on to fulfilment. 3. The power of example. This is shown constantly in Saul's life; because of his splendid presence and many strong qualities. Even in his death his armor-bearer is influenced to evil. 4. The sinfulness of the natural man. Saul is a notable instance of it. With the best possible conditions at the start, he at last became murderer and suicide. 5. The impotence of man to guide and keep himself. Only the grace of God can transform character and control lives to the glory of God. 6. The temptation to magnify the present and forget the great future. Saul was more solicitous about the treatment of his body than about the destiny of his soul.

### THE SAD END OF A WICKED KING.

**How Did It All Begin?** Here are pictures of war, defeat, and death, and the king killing himself. What a contrast to the beginning of Saul's reign! Then he was head and shoulders above every one both in physical stature and in opportunities for usefulness. God was with him by His Spirit, and at first he was successful against his enemies. We may well ask how and when did he begin to fall. The answer is found in his disobedience to God's command. If we try to go back of that we may find the beginning in some wish of his, or in a spirit of pride, or even in a desire to make special offerings to God in worship. Whatever it was, it was not following God's command carefully. Something that is good in itself may yet be contrary to God's will and purpose. These turning points of life may often be matters of seemingly small importance. The cheating in a game of sport, the lying about some matter, the doing of something mean and wrong, just because no one was looking. The taking an undue advantage in any way, as deceiving one's teacher in examinations. The temptation to some such sins may come to anyone. The yielding to any of them may start one in an evil course full of terrible consequences. The great lesson in Saul's life is to watch the beginnings of sin.

**Sowing and Reaping.** History and daily examples are full of illustrations of this law. French nobles sowed cruelty and lust and reaped the Revolution.

American patriarchs sowed the Declaration of Independence and laws perpetuating slavery, side by side, and reaped the Civil War. Every license granted to a liquor dealer, every train run on the Sabbath day, every re-election of a corrupt officeholder, every toleration of vice, is seed sown in productive soil. The widespread intelligence of our country is due to the common school. The rule holds as undeviatingly in ordinary life. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

**Forsaking God and Conscience.** Saul had many warnings from his own conscience, from Samúel and from God's Spirit. But he kept on in the evil way, preferring to do his own will, and go his own way. He even went to consult a woman who claimed she could call up spirits from the other world. This was particularly forbidden by God. He did not get any comfort from this, but the messenger God allowed to come up told him that he had lost his kingdom, and that he and his three sons would die the next day. Poor Saul! He forsook God, and God forsook him. So he no longer had guidance and protection from God. How often we learn that if man is just left to himself he goes wrong. A clock or watch needs to be cared for, wound up at the right time and set again and again by the "standard time." This must be done by the man who owns it. Just so the soul of every person must be kept in tune, and in time by God, who both made it and owns it. Conscience is the real clock of the soul, and its very name is a picture of God watching it, wind-



ing it and setting it. The name means, "I know with"—that is, I know with God. So the conscience is true and right when we let God care for it all the time. When the conscience says, "Do this," or "Don't do that," we should obey at once, and so we will avoid the beginnings of sin.

**Putting Off the Crown.** There is a good deal of uncrowning going on these days. Here is a fine young fellow who might have reached lofty heights of influence and power. But the evil of the world was too much for him. He dallied, yielded, was enmeshed of sin, and went the way of death—having put off his crown.

While dining in a restaurant in New York a few weeks ago with three friends another act of uncrowning was witnessed. Across at another table sat a minister and a woman at luncheon. Both were drinking beer! That minister put away his crown when he did that scandalous thing, and that woman also uncrowned herself.—Selected.

**Folly and Failure of Sin.** When God ceased to help Saul and the Israelites, the Philistines came against them in battle again. This time the Philistines were victorious, as the second and third pictures show. That man they are killing just now looks like Jonathan. The two lying dead are his brothers. Jonathan was a good and noble man, and tried to do all he could to help his father. But the sins of Saul were so many and so great that God had to punish him. In doing so, the good suffered with the guilty. In the fourth picture we see Saul shot at by the archers who had found him. His armor-bearer tries to shield him, but cannot. Sin means a "missing of the mark." True, indeed, in the case of Saul, for he had missed all the splendid opportunities which were given him of God. Every sin has its revenge on the sinner, and on as many others as it can reach in any way. Sin is a failure in a moral sense, but it is wonderfully successful in bringing misery, trouble, peril, and death. It is a seed which grows a large and terrible harvest.

**What a Harvest.** No, young man, it doesn't hurt you a particle to sow your wild oats. Go ahead and sow as you wish. But it's the gathering in of the crop that will make you howl. And you have to gather it, too. If you don't it gathers you in, and one is a great deal worse than the other.

In a jail at Covington, Indiana, twenty-five men, arrested for drunkenness during the progress of the county fair, made things lively by howling at the

passers-by. One fellow shouted: "Look here! this is what you taxpayers get for a little whisky revenue; you have to board twenty-five of us, locked up for drunkenness."—Selected.

**False Honor and Pride.** This is shown in the last pictures. Saul saw that the battle was lost, and that his three sons were slain, and saw, too, that he was wounded and would fall into the hands of the enemy. What now does he do? He called to his armor-bearer and said, "Draw your sword and kill me, for it is better to die by your hand than to be killed by the Philistines." It was wicked and cowardly for Saul to order his armor-bearer to do this. He would not obey him, and you can see how horrified he looks at the very thought of lifting up his hand against the king. We must honor him for refusing to do so mean an act. Then Saul commits the last act in his sinful life, and almost the worst. He falls on his own sword and so dies by his own hand. We call that suicide, which means killing one's self. It is almost the worst kind of murder, for one has no right to take any life, his own or another's. Saul had just strength enough to lift his face up so we can see it, and it seems to speak a solemn warning to all not to disobey God, and not to begin a life of sin.

**The Person to Watch.** Do you ever have any struggle with yourself? I do. The ever-present self rarely fails to say, "That's mine," "Give me the best," "Give me the ripest," "Give me the most comfortable seat," "Let me go first," "Certainly I am not to give up my trip," "I know there is not much money in the family purse, but you know I must have a new suit."

Maybe you know nothing of grasping, clamorous self. But I do. And I have to give him some pretty sharp orders, else he gets ugly.—Selected.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What was the real reason of Saul's failure in life? 2. What other Saul in the Bible, and what can you tell about him? 3. How many bad traits in Saul can you name?

**Challenge Text.** "Whatsoever a man ———, that shall he also ———. Gal. 6: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. "Saul is a type of carnal leaders of God's people." 2. Saul and his kingdom is a preparation for David and his kingdom. 3. To disobey God is to make shipwreck both of one's future hopes and temporal good. 4. The interdependence of the human family. 5. Even the wicked are made to work out the Divine purpose. 6. Life is a probation, and each one is responsible for his use of it. 7. If we fail in life and fail of Heaven, we have only ourselves to blame. 8. Taking one's own life is cowardly, selfish and sinful.

Dr. J. M. COON.

And the men  
of Judah came,  
and there they



David king over the house  
of Judah. And they told  
David, saying, That the  
men of Jabesh-gilead  
were, they that



Saul.  
And  
David  
sent



unto the men of Jabesh-gilead, and said unto them, Blessed be ye of the Lord, that ye have shewed  
this



unto your lord,  
even unto Saul,  
and have buried  
him. And now  
the Lord shew  
kindness and



unto you: and I also will requite you this kindness, because ye have done this thing. Therefore now let  
your hands be strengthened, and be ye valiant: for your master Saul is



and  
also the  
house  
of  
Judah  
have  
anointed  
me



over them.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 2 SAM. 2:1-11 AND 2 SAM. 5:1-25.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art King of kings, and Thy will is done in Heaven and in earth. We thank Thee for the royal souls Thou hast given to the world. We rejoice that Thou dost promise kingly traits and crowns to all who will love Thee and obey Thee. Inspire within us a desire for all that is good, true and noble, and by Thy Holy Spirit help us to attain to the same. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Where duty calls in life's conflict,  
There is your place!  
Where you may think you are useless,  
Hide not your face.  
God placed you here for a purpose,  
Whate'er it be:  
Know He has chosen you for it:  
Work loyally."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1056. Place, Hebron, 20 miles south of Jerusalem. Persons, David, men of Judah.

**Scripture Setting:** True Spirit in Success. Watchful of providence, 2 Sam. 2:1-10. Gratitude and prayer, 1 Thes. 5:16-28. Stewards of grace, 1 Pet. 4:1-11. Recognition of others, Eph. 4:20-32. Obedient and faithful, Gal. 5:13-21. Forgiving others, Col. 3:9-17. Conscious accountability, Rom. 14:1-10. A king's homage, Psa. 21:1-7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Now that David has actually reached the throne, let us gather up the steps by which he attained this height of success.

### HOW A GOOD KING RULED.

**The Last Step to the Throne.** Did you ever see your big brother or sister, or some friend graduate from college? He or she has spent years and years, to be ready that day to receive a diploma. It is a proud day for the graduate, and for all the friends. That first picture where David is anointed is like a graduation from college. For many years he has been in the college of life, and now he gets his diploma, which means the throne and the kingdom. As the college graduate goes forth to do his life work, so now David begins to rule as king. For a long time God had purposed that David should be king, and as a shepherd boy he was once anointed. That was when he was about seventeen years old, and now he is about thirty. What a college course that was of thirteen years! In it he was shepherd lad, musician, poet, soldier, statesman, friend, lover of God. These years and experiences and positions have been fitting him for his life work. This college course of life has developed the gifts, graces, and virtues he specially needed. Master teachers he has had, and above all the guidance of God and the power of the Spirit. Then he bows and receives his diploma of anointing, which means that both God and the people unite joyously in declaring him king.

**Come Up Higher.** One of the best things that Beecher ever said was, "Do the best you can where you are, and when that is accomplished God will open a door to a higher sphere." In actual life this truth is proved to be one of the natural laws in the spiritual world, and in the business world and in the world of scholarship as well.

These opening doors are always above us, and the ladder by which we climb to them is always the same. The rungs are individual duties well per-

1. The gateway of Providence, opening before him by Divine purpose. 2. The gateway of early training, personal and by association. 3. The gateway of a good heart and life. 4. The gateway of opportunity, which is another name for special Providence. 5. The gateway of faith in God and in self. 6. The gateway of humility and personal watchfulness. 7. The gateway of difficulty, opposition and trial. 8. The gateway of choice and holy purpose. 9. The gateway of a strong individuality. 10. The gateway of life's challenge. 11. The gateway of the Holy Spirit, and constant submission to His leading.

formed, and they must be mounted one by one. There is no bounding from the bottom to the top. There is no such thing as ignoring the first rungs because they are near the ground.—Exchange.

**First Act of the King.** This is shown by the third picture. Those men are running with David's message of blessing and praise to the people who had rescued the body of Saul. In the second picture we see those men lowering the ashes of Saul's body into the grave. The Philistines had treated Saul's body shamefully, and had nailed it to the city wall, to show their contempt. These men of Jabesh remembered Saul's brave deed for them once, so now they went by night and rescued the bodies of Saul and his sons, to give them decent burial. David honors them now for this good and brave act. But even before this official act David had mourned for Saul and Jonathan, and wrote a beautiful song about them. This shows how he forgave Saul, and how greatly he loved Jonathan. Of him he said, "Very pleasant hast thou been to me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman." It is called the "song of the bow," and may be found in the first chapter of Second Samuel. This anointing in the picture is at Hebron, as God commanded. Seven years later David is anointed king over all Israel, with Jerusalem as the capital city. He is loved because he is good, kind, helpful, and forgiving.

**A Wise Putting Off.** "What made you stop right in the middle of your sentence, and then start talking about something entirely different?" The questioner laughed, and her friend joined in as she replied to the puzzled query: "If I think in time, I make it a rule never to say today the mean thing that can be put off until tomorrow," she explained.

"So tomorrow it is out of date, and does not get said at all."—Reformed Church Record.

**Kingly Gifts for All.** All persons cannot be kings, but all can do kingly deeds; and a kindly deed is a kingly deed. They are nearly the same even in name. The fourth and fifth pictures show two things which every one may have—kindness and truth.

The little girl's feeding the donkey is an act of kindness. The kindness may be shown even to an animal; but the beauty of the act is that it is a picture of a kind heart. Then all may be true, and may and should speak the truth, even as God does. Kindness and truth are like crowns on one's head; and to be kind and true are kingly and queenly acts. These qualities David always had, so it was easy for him to show them after he was really king. Now it is well to remember two things about these kingly qualities. One is that every one is pleased to see them in others and is glad to have others believe that he, too, has them. No one wants to be thought unkind or untrue. The other thing that needs to be specially remembered is that it is very easy to lose these bright crowns of kindness and truth. I fear that it is specially easy for boys and girls to uncrown themselves, either by a sharp, harsh, and selfish manner, or by an untrue word or act, which is deceiving in some way. "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."

**What Anyone Can Do.** Did you ever stop to think how beautiful kindness really is? In your walks have you ever met a young woman gently supporting on her arm an old, old man? He is blind. Time has brought silver to his hair. His steps are slow and feeble. With a cane he picks his way on, all the way guided and directed by the one who is so good to him. At the crossing of a street she says, "Here is a step up. Careful now! Step up!" or, "Now down! Carefully!" So on they go, chatting all the way, the old man seeing things on every side through the eyes of his companion. And how your heart was stirred by the sight.

**Which Portrait Are You Painting?** I am thinking of those last two pictures. What a striking contrast! Saul lies dead, slain by his own hand; his life a failure, and now his soul has gone to be judged. David sits a king, chosen and favored of God, respected and loved by the people. Every one is painting a life portrait; and in many respects it will be one or the other of these pictures. Every day one is adding either bright or dark lines to the portrait. This life painting will show in one's face and actions, and the walk and companions chosen. But most of all, it will tell when it cannot be seen so easily—in the choices and desires, in the purposes and motives.

Here is where the painting is permanent and enduring. There is a hymn which you sometimes hear sung, "Where Will You Spend Eternity?" The answer will be according to the way we are painting our inward characters.

Did you ever attend an unveiling, when the curtain was drawn from a finished painting or statue? Every eye is fixed on the moving curtain, and at last there is the painting complete. The great judgment day is the unveiling of souls before God and the world. Then it will be known to all, and shown to all, which kind of a portrait you have been painting in and by our life. Now turn away from the pictures of Saul, so sad in its dark and gloomy lines. Look upon and think of David, with his harp by his side, and with his heart full of gratitude to God. I am sure he is thinking of the way God has led him and kept him, and has at least given him the kingdom and throne. As he thinks of it all, we can almost hear him say, "With God's help I'll be true and kind—true to God and His law, kind and good to all the people." And while you have looked at David and thought of him and rejoiced with him, you have been choosing him as your model, and have actually painted a bright line or two on your soul portrait. Jesus Christ has died for us, so that it is possible for us to be made beautiful and perfect in Him. He also has sent His Spirit to keep the model before us and even to hold and guide our hand as we paint. "And so we are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

**Helping Others to Be Good.** It was said of one of the best men of our generation, "Whenever he entered a room of any kind the conversation that was going on and the discussion, immediately sprang up to a far higher level than it was before." And to this added, "Men thought their best and spoke their best in his presence." What worthier commendation could any man have?

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many times was David anointed? 2. Tell what you can of each anointing. 3. Which tribe first acknowledged David's claim? 4. How long before David became king of all Israel? 5. Name six traits of character in David. 6. What was the chief secret of his success?

**Challenge Text.** "But God is the judge; He ——— down one and ——— another." Psa. 75: (9).

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. David prayed when in peril and so now in success. 2. We should obey God and also use all precaution and tact. 3. Success always brings special perils and burdens. 4. Even a king can afford to be just, respectful and generous. 5. David knew God's promises, and therefore he waited. 6. Respect for the dead should not interfere with the rights of the living. 7. David is a lesson of inspiration as Saul is one of warning.

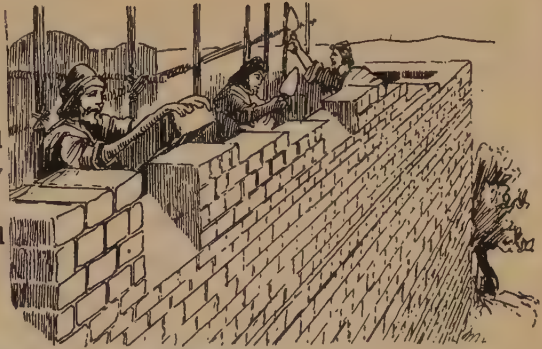


# DAVID KING OVER ALL ISRAEL

So David dwelt in the



and called  
it the city  
of David.  
And David



round about from Millo  
and inward. And David  
went on, and grew great  
and the Lord God of  
hosts was with him.

And Hiram king of  
Tyre sent



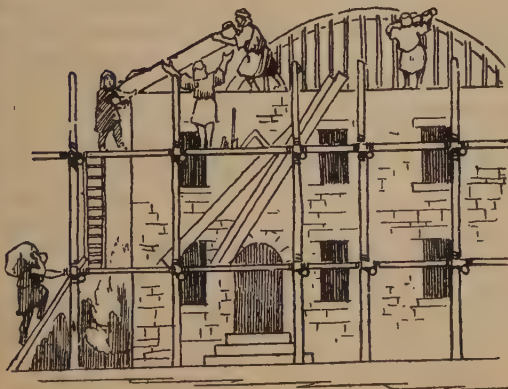
to David, and



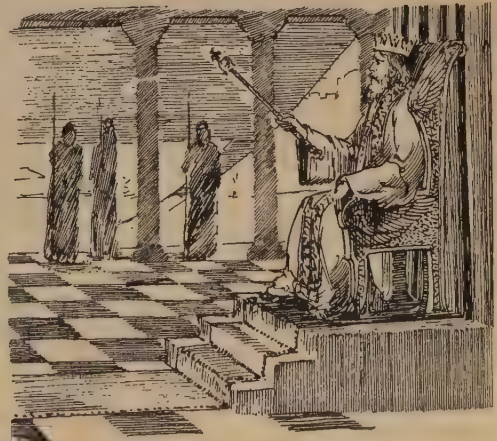
and



and they built David an



And  
David  
perceived  
that the  
Lord had  
established  
him



over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for his people Israel's sake.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS II SAMUEL 5:1-12.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we look from David, king over all Israel, to Christ, the Son of David, whose Kingdom is the world, and whose reign shall continue world without end.

May we be obedient servants of Thine, so that as Thou didst use David, Thou mayest use us for the advancement of Thy Kingdom.

May we so live and strive that our service may be acceptable to Thee, and that Thou shalt be ever with us. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"O glorious type of Heavenly peace!  
Thus Christ the Lord appears;  
While sinners curse, the Saviour prays,  
And pities them with tears.

He, the true David, Israel's King,  
Bless'd and beloved of God,  
To save us rebels, dead in sin,  
Paid his own dearest blood."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Time,** B. C. 1048. **Place,** Hebron, David's first capital. **Persons,** David and the elders of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** David a Type of Christ. A native of Bethlehem, 1 Sam. 16:1. The Shepherd, Psa. 78:70, 71; John 10:14. Prophetic vision, Acts 2:29-32. King of Israel, 1 Sam. 16:13; John 1:49. Messiah called David, Ezek. 34:23, 24. Acknowledged by Christ, Rev. 22:16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The story of David's

final anointing as king of Israel teaches many lessons. 1. The fulfillment of Samuel's prophecy. 2. God's providence in dealing with His servants. 3. The elders of Israel are used to fulfill His word. 4. The Jebusites could not withstand the power of God's anointed. 5. The presence of the God of Hosts made David great. 6. David was not exalted for his own glory, but for Israel's sake.

### A KING'S CORONATION.

**A Great Holiday.** For days great trains of camels, asses, mules and oxen laden with all manner of provisions had been climbing the hillside to Hebron, and an army of nearly three hundred and fifty thousand representatives from the twelve tribes of Israel, had gathered within the modest capital of David and its environments. They poured into the city from far and near; no less than a hundred and twenty thousand men from across the Jordan. The multitude had come to see a king crowned. It was to be a great national holiday—a three-days' festival. Never before or since has there been such a coronation. Though we may be little interested in kings, this coronation is of more consequence to us than any other act of history save one. More than six hundred years before their day the rule of Judah had been foretold. When the dying patriarch declared that "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law giver from between his feet until Shiloh come," Jacob uttered a mighty prophecy, and the beginning of its fulfillment was the coronation of David; its completion the pierced form of the Son of David, hanging upon a cross bearing the superscription, The King of the Jews. For David, shepherd, prophet and king, born in Bethlehem and of the line of Judah, was the precursor and type of Christ; His coronation a guarantee of the coming of the Lion of Judah. Chosen by God, anointed by Samuel, David was now to be elected by the people. Thus God, His priests and people work together for good government.

**Their Common Brotherhood.** "Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh," was the declaration of those who spoke for the tribes of Israel. For five years after the tragic death of king Ishbosheth, Israel had no ruler and the whole country was in a state of lawlessness akin to anarchy. The situation was desperate; instead of conquering and possessing the land as God intended, their condition invited attack and at any moment they might fall into the cruel hands of the Philistines.

David had been regarded as a "man of blood" because of the cruel excesses committed by some of his followers. But as time wore on, it became evident that David was in nowise accountable for these tragic acts. Indeed he had repudiated them and severely punished the perpetrators. For seven years Israel had been going from bad to worse, while under David's wise rule Judah prospered. With the Philistines Israel had nothing in common, and from them they might expect nothing, save the barbarities which the heathen always inflicted upon their enemies. But David was of their own stock, bone of their bone, flesh of their flesh. In their extremity the leading men of Israel decided to put aside prejudice and appeal to David. For is not blood thicker than water? The people ratified the decision of the elders with enthusiasm, and each tribe vied with the others in sending great delegations to Hebron to witness the coronation of David as Israel's king. They came not as slaves or vassals, "We are thy bone and thy flesh." Thus David was reminded of the



common brotherhood between ruler and people, which should be acknowledged by all in authority.

**Thus Saith the Lord.** They had followed David's leadership before. Many of those who came to Hebron had fought for Saul under David. They recognized their captain of other days, and with true soldier loyalty renewed their allegiance to their former commander: When they had returned from those famous victories over the Philistines, had not their women sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands?" Ah, their blood tingled with the old enthusiasm, and huzzahs rent the air, when their spokesman referred to the former days when they had marched together under the leadership of David, their captain.

But had they been moved to choose a king by no other motive than kinship and fighting comradeship? Were the elders so proud of the approval which the people had set upon their judgment, that they were now congratulating themselves on their wise choice? Did no one remember when the hand of God's gaunt old prophet was laid upon the head of a beautiful ruddy-cheeked shepherd lad to anoint him king of Israel? Slowly the people gather round their spokesman, and a solemn hush falls upon the vast crowd, when as though he would remind David of the sacred responsibility they are now imposing on him, words are spoken that recall to the candidate for coronation, that mysterious and wonderful day of his boyhood. "And the Lord thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel." David was God's anointed king. Every event of their national history: Saul's defeat and death, the cutting off of his line, those years without leadership, were all but events in the fulfilment of prophecy; all had worked out the will of God.

**A Defi Accepted.** The patriotism of David's followers was soon put to a test. Situated on the edge of the precipitous mountain wall that bounds the Jordan valley to the west, stood the city of Jebus. It was a national fortress surrounded on three sides by rock-ribbed ravines, so steep and so deep as to be impassible. Even the one remaining side was hardly open to attack. Encircled by beautiful valleys and enthroned above the Jordan, this rock girt city formed a strategic point which it was absolutely necessary to gain and to hold if the reunited kingdom were to hold its own against its enemies.

The Jebusites relied on the strong position of their city and rested in fancied security, even sending a contemptuous defiance to the besiegers. "Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in

hither." Even their feeblest men, the blind and the lame, could defend such a fortress against David's army! It was a foolish boast, for David was aware of the secret tunnels that honeycombed the city, and accepting their insulting defiance, he promised the office of commander of the king's forces to the man who should enter the fortifications of the city by means of these underground passages.

It was a dangerous undertaking, but Joab volunteered and the stronghold of Zion was taken, and it became the "City of David"—Jerusalem, the capital of the nation. David sang of its beauty in some of the sublimest of the Psalms, calling it the "City of our God in the mountain of His holiness," "Beautiful in elevation and the joy of the whole earth." Enthroned in the mountains, its strongholds of defense God-made, it has become to Christians the type of Christ's Church on earth and His Kingdom in Heaven.

**For His People's Sake.** "And David went on and grew great, and the Lord God of hosts was with him." In these simple words the chronicler gives us the real secret of true greatness. Even before Samuel sought him out from among his brethren to anoint him king of Israel, the shepherd lad had learned to trust God for his own protection and that of his flock. Twenty years had passed since then and David had shown his greatness not only in the killing of Goliath and in deeds of military prowess, but in fortitude under affliction, in generous forbearance toward his enemies, in loyalty to his friends, succor to the weak and helpless, beneficence to the poor, regard for his parents and their people.

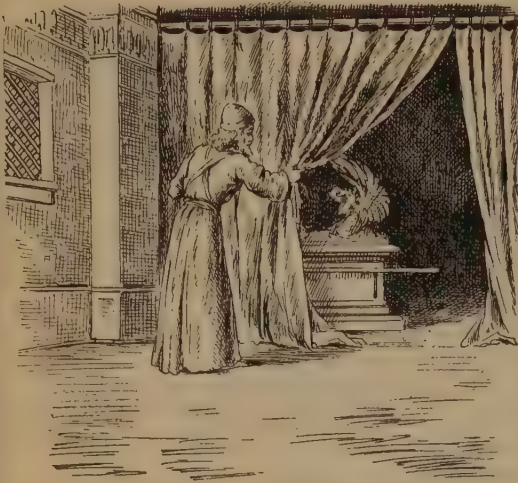
And now lifted to the throne, receiving homage and gifts from kings, David manifests his greatness through the humility which enables him to perceive that God has not taken him from the sheep cote to place him on a throne for his own self gratification, but that he has been exalted for his people, Israel's, sake. He recognized that he was not made a king for his own pleasure, but for the good of others. The care which as a lad he had exercised over his flock, he would now exercise in behalf of his people. David would be a shepherd king.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The ruler and his people are of the same clay. 2. God always knows His man. 3. No city can withstand the power of God's anointed. 4. Boasting is a poor defense. 5. God's presence is the secret of true greatness. 6. In the end the world honors the man whom God honors. 7. Only the strong in the Lord can take the stronghold of Zion. 8. God never enriches for man's selfish pleasure. 9. The highest office is merely a trusteeship. 10. God made the sheep cote a testing place for the throne. If David had neglected his sheep, he would never have been chosen to feed the people.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



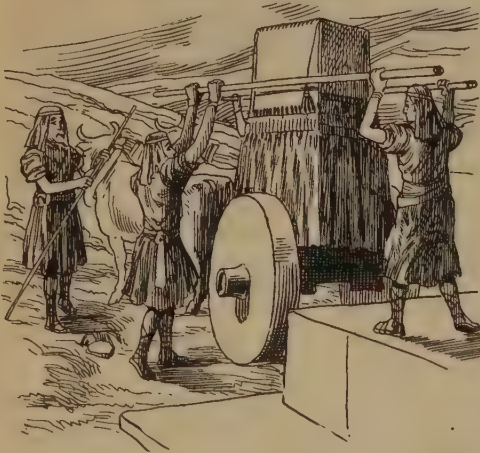
And David arose, and went with all the people that were with him from Baale of Judah, to bring up from thence the



of God,  
whose  
name is  
called  
by the  
name  
of the  
Lord  
of hosts,  
that  
dwelleth  
between



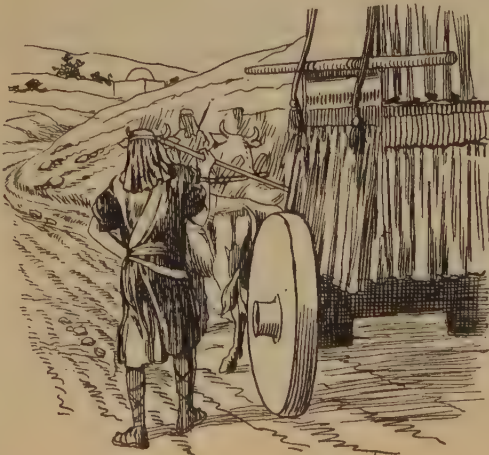
And they set the ark of God upon a new



and  
brought  
it



of Abinadab that was in Gibeah: and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab,



the new  
cart. And  
they  
brought it  
out of the  
house of  
Abinadab,  
which was  
at Gibeah,  
accompany-  
ing the ark  
of God:  
and Ahio





# DAVID BRINGS UP THE ARK.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE II SAMUEL 6:1-19. ALSO READ I CHRON 13-15.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we not lay irreverent hands upon that which is sacred. Keep us from irreverence and disobedience and may we learn that true service consists in doing Thy will. May we serve Thee with joy and be filled with the spirit of praise. Thine be the glory. Amen.

"We'll crowd Thy gates with thankful songs,  
High as the heavens our voices raise;  
And earth, with her ten thousand tongues,  
Shall fill Thy courts with sounding praise."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1042. Place, Gibeah or Kirjath-jearim, a hill city of Judah. Persons, David, Uzzah, Obed-Edom and Michal, David's wife.

**Scripture Setting:** The Ark of God. The design, Ex. 25:10-16. Purpose of the ark, Ex. 25:22. Carried over Jordan, Josh. 3:15-17. The ark at Jericho, Josh. 6:11. The ark taken, 1 Sam. 4:17. The ark in Heaven, Rev. 11:19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** From this passage of

Scripture we may learn many lessons concerning true worship. 1. True piety is shown in David's desire to rescue the ark of God from neglect. 2. Ignorance is blended with the king's religious zeal and God's explicit directions are disregarded. 3. David and his chosen men possess the joy of religion without its spirit of obedience. 4. There was sufficient enthusiasm but not enough confidence in God to entrust to Him the protection of His own.

### A KING'S LESSON.

**A Sacred Treasure.** Is there anyone whose enthusiasm has not been thrilled by the story of The Quest of the Holy Grail? While they braved no dangers and they journeyed not to a far country, the rescue of the ark of God was attended with much of the same enthusiasm and exaltation that characterized those romantic pilgrimages of the Middle Ages. There was the same display of military pomp, and king David and his cavalcade were moved by the same religious fervor.

The ark of God was not only the sacred chest in which reposed the two tables of the law, but to Israel it was as the very throne of God. For on it rested the mercy seat overshadowed by the holy cherubim above which God manifested His presence and delivered his oracles. Here atonement was made for the sins of the people. Could one imagine an object of greater veneration to God's chosen people? Yet strange to say, for seventy years the sacred ark had been forgotten. King Saul had not even had it placed in the tabernacle which he set up at Nob, but had permitted it to lie neglected and forgotten in the house of Abinadab in Kirjath-jearim.

**A Royal Council.** Often during Saul's reign had David grieved over the neglect of the ark and the growing irreligion of the people. For David loved God and all things pertaining to His worship; he would rather hold the humblest office in God's house than to fill the loftiest place the world had to offer. Shortly after he was king of Israel he proposed to restore the ark of God to its place as the center of national worship. He sent a call throughout the land for an assemblage of chosen men. Every village and hamlet responded to the king's call and sent

her best and bravest men, and when David explained his purpose, nobles, priests, Levites and warriors volunteered their service.

**An Enthusiastic Pilgrimage.** Thirty thousand chosen men of Israel joined the pilgrimage, led by the king and his musicians. With neither prayer nor sacrifice they started to take the ark of God. The journey to the house of Abinadab was one of unbroken joy. Here many of the pilgrims first saw the sacred ark. It was a costly thing, made of shittim wood overlaid with gold. The mercy seat which rested on it was of gold also, as were the cherubim above, whose outspread wings were of beaten gold. Large rings of gold at each corner held the strong staves of shittim wood overlaid with gold by which the ark was to be carried. It was too holy to be committed to horses or oxen. Jehovah had commanded that it should be borne upon staves or the shoulders of chosen men among the Levites, who were warned of God not to touch it "lest they die." But alas, not one of these thirty thousand picked men of Israel remembered this. All were ignorant of this explicit law concerning the ark.

The Levites should have known that it was not only their duty but a privilege to bear the ark. Or were they all proud of their ceremonial indifference and did they think to serve God acceptably in their own way? Truly a people so ignorant and indifferent to the laws and ordinances of their national religion needed to learn a lesson of reverence for the God who had raised them from bondage to nationhood.

**An Act of Astounding Irreverence.** They could think of no greater way to honor the true God than to worship Him according to heathen rites. So they would transport the

ark just as the Philistines carried their gods of wood and stone, and copying Philistine custom they procured a new cart drawn by oxen. We may trust David's zeal that that cart and oxen were equal to any equipage used at heathen festivals. Did they not know that obedience is better than sacrifice? David was soon to learn a lesson which should enable him to truly declare, "How love I Thy law; it is my meditation all the day." "Thy commandments are ever with me."

Tragic as it was, can any lesson be too costly that teaches the people obedience and establishes a nation on the enduring basis of reverence for God's law? The ark had been neglected during all the seventy years it had lain in the house of Abinadab, but now his descendants, Uzzah and Ahio, played a conspicuous part in the proceedings. Ahio walked before the ark as it was borne out of the house, and the two brothers proudly drove the cart. How much more acceptable their service had they obeyed God's ordinance and borne the ark on their own shoulders.

The entire multitude burst into song accompanied by the sweet strains of the harp and psaltery, the sound of the timbrel and stirring tones of cornet and clash of cymbals. In confidence they chanted:

"Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered," not knowing that a disobedient heart is God's chiefest enemy. Without understanding, they sang:

"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." And yet so great is God's mercy that He forbore to show forth His displeasure at the affront which they either ignorantly or carelessly offered Him. Onward swings the great religious procession, crossing fields and threshing floors. At one of these the oxen stumbled, shaking the ark. True faith would have assured them that the One who had deigned to manifest His presence above the ark, would preserve it from evil. Had Uzzah been accustomed to reverence the ark when it was in his home, the habit of a lifetime would have restrained him now. But, alas, Uzzah put forth his hand to stay the ark. No lightning flash could have descended more swiftly than judgment descended upon impious Uzzah. He died by the ark of God.

**The Pilgrimage Abandoned.** David, who wanted things to go his own way, was displeased and even dared to question the judgment of God. Could God have spared Uzzah and kept His own word inviolate we may be sure Israel would have been taught the lesson of obedience and reverence less tragically. But it was four hundred and fifty years since God's warning had sounded forth, and the Word of God changes not. The faith that had feared neither lion nor giant faltered, and for the first time David was afraid of God. He gave up the enterprise he had entered upon with so much joy and abandoned the ark.

But there was one who received it with reverence and godly fear. Obed-Edom, the Gittite, welcomed the ark to his house and it was left in his keeping. He was a Levite of the sons of Korah, a branch of the Kohathites whom God had designated to bear the ark, and gladly Obed-Edom assumed the duty which was his by inheritance. And, glorious reward, blessings such as they had never before experienced attended Obed-Edom and his household. Parents and children rested happy under the blessed Presence, servants sought their master's interest as never before, and thus served their own; field and vineyard bore abundant harvest during the three happy months that the ark dwelt in the house.

**The Second Pilgrimage.** When David was informed of the blessing which had followed Obed-Edom, he decided to make a second pilgrimage for the ark. But before starting the king acquainted himself with all of God's law concerning the ark and religiously carried out every detail. Priests and Levites sanctified themselves for the performance of duty; sacrifice was offered when they started with the ark from Obed-Edom's house, and God's blessing was besought upon the movement. They were led by eight hundred and sixty-two Levites clad in white, with their instruments of music. No heathen cart and oxen carried the ark, but it was borne upon the shoulders of Levites, and attended by seven priests blowing silver trumpets; following it were two doorkeepers, one of whom was Obed-Edom. Last of all came the king clad not in royal garments, but in the white robe and linen ephod of those who served God. They entered the gates of Jerusalem singing David's song.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates,  
And be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors,  
That the King of Glory may come in."

And David, not as king, but as priest and prophet, offered sacrifice and blessed the people in the name of the Lord of Hosts, who is the King of Glory. What though Michal looked down on the scene and despised her lord as he danced before the ark in spiritual exaltation, and led the people in their joyful worship? It was the greatest day of David's life and no less than eleven of David's Psalms were written in commemoration of it. On that day, the law was vindicated, reverence restored and obedience to God enthroned in Jerusalem.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What did the ark represent? 2. Name one other act of sacrilege mentioned in the Bible. 3. Could Israel expect to please God while they disobeyed His law? 4. Was Michal's contempt justified?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Many persons think to serve God in their own way. 2. Emotionalism is not always religious zeal. 3. The family altar is the ark of God in the home. 4. Disobedience is disloyalty. 5. Obedience brings its own blessing. 6. Reverence and obedience to the laws of God are an enduring foundation for any nation. 7. There is nothing more contemptible than contempt.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

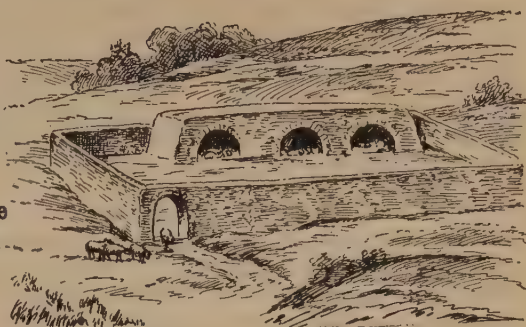


# GOD'S COVENANT WITH DAVID

Now therefore so shalt thou say unto my servant



Thus  
saith the  
Lord of  
hosts, I  
took thee  
from the



from following the



to be a ruler  
over my  
people, over  
Israel:  
And I was  
with thee  
whithersoever  
thou wentest,  
and have cut  
off all thine

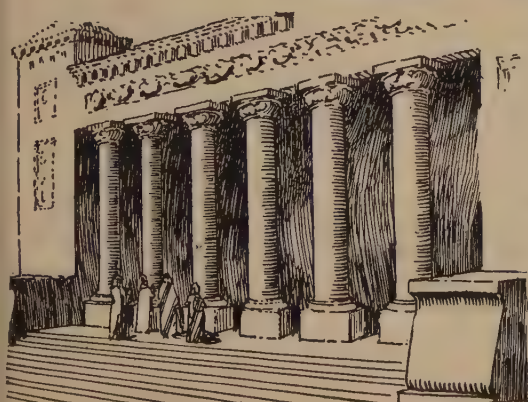


out of thy sight, and  
have made thee a  
great name, like unto  
the name of the great



that are in the earth.  
And when thy days be  
fulfilled, and thou shalt  
sleep with thy fathers,  
I will set up thy seed  
after thee, which shall  
proceed out of thy bowels,  
and I will establish his  
kingdom.

He shall build an



for my  
name,  
and I will  
establish  
the



of his kingdom for ever.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS II SAM. 7:1-17.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for Thy covenants of old, and we rejoice that Thy promises to Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses and David were fulfilled in Thy Son, whose throne Thou hast established forever. We rejoice that Thou dost still care for Thy people everywhere, and that Thy Word never fails. May we trust Thee and seek the upbuilding of Thy house and Thy Kingdom. Establish our hearts that we may keep Thy covenant. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Tell of His wondrous faithfulness,  
And sound His power abroad;  
Sing the sweet promises of His grace,  
And the performing God.

His very word of grace is strong  
As that which built the skies;  
The voice that rolls the stars along  
Speaks all the promises."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1040. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, David and Nathan, a prophet.

**Scripture Setting:** An Eternal Kingdom. Established, Psa. 89:35-37. Without end, Isa. 9:6-7. Imperishable, Dan. 2:44. Eternal, Isa. 60:21-22. The Kingdom the Lord's, Obad. 1:21. Christ the King, Luke 1:31-33.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** God's covenant with David shows forth His tenderness, wisdom and faithfulness. 1. David's wonderful success does

not cause him to forget God. 2. He holds not only his kingship but his possessions as belonging to God. 3. God commends David's purpose though He does not grant David's desire. 4. God unfolds His Divine plan to David. 5. Makes it plain that the time for a permanent habitation for God has not arrived. 6. Promises David that his son shall build God's house. 7. Blesses the king and promises protection and forgiveness to his descendants. 10. Points onward to Christ, the Son of David, whose Kingdom is eternal.

### AN ENDURING KINGDOM.

**No Life Without a Plan.** Life is so bewildering that it has been likened to a maze, but just as every maze is only the development of a carefully arranged plan, so the confusion and surprises of life are the fulfillment of God's great plan. The California tourist who visits the beautiful grounds that surround the Hotel Del Monte invariably strays into the Maze and soon is lost in its mysterious windings, only recovering his bearing after a long period of aimless wandering. Some become so hopelessly bewildered that they are compelled to remain in the Maze until eventide, when the gardener, who alone knows the plan, comes to guide those who may be imprisoned there, through its exits into the open. So at eventide the Gardener comes to the bewildered ones of life's maze and guides them into the open.

But to David was vouchsafed the privilege of having the maze of life unfolded to him by its great Architect and Designer. For with infinite patience and tenderness did God through Nathan's vision, disclose His plans to His servant, David. God deposed his enemies and God guided his feet into paths of greatness, and when David should emerge from life's maze into the open, God's care would follow the footsteps of his descendants. However devious their windings, they should not be cut off, for God had planned to establish David's throne forever.

**A Stately Palace.** To the simple Israelites, king David's house was a marvel of architecture and grandeur, for even in the cities the people of those days lived chiefly in tents. Only the wealthy could afford houses and

these were built of the native sycamore wood, while the royal palace was built of hewn cedar logs. Now cedar is soft in color and pleasing to the eye. It has a pungent, pleasant odor, and the resin it contains preserves it from the attacks of insects, making it very durable. It was also very costly, for it did not grow in their own country, but had to be imported from Tyre, the wood being a gift from his friend, Hiram, king of Tyre.

Though Israel possessed many skilled workers in the earlier days, and could boast of her jewelers, weavers, wood carvers and fine artisans, during the years of Philistine domination, no Israelite was permitted to use the simplest tools, and the nation had so lost its skill that David was compelled to send to Tyre for carpenters and masons to erect and adorn his house.

**A King's Gratitude.** Some men forget God in their prosperity, but good fortune and success only drew David nearer to the Giver of all these blessings. David had known cold and hunger. He knew what it was to be homeless, and in danger. Now he could sit quietly in this beautiful palace and meditate. Did he meditate in selfish content on his changed fortune and congratulate himself on his rapid rise in the world? Did he plan still greater victories and more dreadful carnage? Was he planning how to secure the throne to his descendants and build up a great dynasty? Ah, no selfish consideration occupied the shepherd king's thought. Prosperity incites him to higher service. As he looks at the durable walls



of his palace, its comforts and adornment, David is struck by the contrast between his house and the tent which sheltered the ark of God. He can see the tent as he looks out of the window and a holy ambition seizes him to erect an enduring building to hold the ark of God, and which might be used as a temple of worship—a building whose magnitude and magnificence should accord with the purpose for which it was to be used.

**Nathan's Vision.** The lesson which David learned in bringing the ark to Jerusalem has not been forgotten. He no longer impulsively undertakes a service for God, but first seeks advice and counsel from Nathan. Of Nathan we know nothing except that he is David's close friend and counsellor. The perfect frankness and equality that marked the relationship indicates an intimacy of long standing. Perhaps in their early youth they were students together at Naioth, where both were instructed in the law by Samuel. When conversing as man to man, certainly Nathan manifested no fear in the royal presence, but when they met as prophet and king, David the king stood in awe of Nathan the prophet. Nathan did not always possess prophetic vision, and when consulted by the king, not only did he commend David's plan, but he mistakenly avowed God's approval of the project, saying, "Go and do all that is in thine heart; for the Lord is with thee." Which only goes to prove how two good men may err in judgment and zeal, and how Christian people may and do sometimes confuse their own desire with God's will.

**A Vision of the Night.** In the quiet of his home, God appeared to Nathan in a vision, to overrule David's purpose. So compassionate is God that the refusal to accede to the wishes of His earthly child is accompanied with infinite tenderness. He speaks of David as "My servant," a term applied to few persons in the Bible, and then only to those commissioned like Moses, to do a great work for God. Thus the very first words of God's refusal inspire hope.

David's ambition was noble, his desire unselfish, but they did not accord with God's eternal purpose. David saw the present need only, while the calm survey of One to whom a thousand years are as a night's watch, extended throughout eternity. He pointed out to David that through all His dealings with Israel, God had a purpose and through all their affliction in Egypt, in their desert wanderings and entrance to the promised land, this purpose was being gradually worked out. Even David's own life had been controlled by God. The same power which had placed him in the sheep cote had exalted him to rulership.

Rest from their enemies was promised to David and God's people. Nation and individual were alike under the protection of an all-wise Providence. It would soon be time for the building of God's house; not, however, in David's day, but during the reign of a son who should be born to him, would the temple be erected. And as David had been a man of war, this son should be a man of peace, and during an era of peace the temple of the Prince of Peace should be erected.

**An Everlasting Promise.** And then the promise was made to David of an everlasting dynasty. He had not been called to the throne as Saul only to be cast down, for "Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever." It was a progressive covenant, referring first to David, then to Solomon his son, after that to David's remotest descendants, and then finally to Christ, the true Son of David, the Messiah of God. It was a wonderful promise, embodying all and more than David had dared hope or desire. It would have satisfied an oriental monarch to know that his throne should be preserved to his posterity. It would have satisfied a Hebrew to know that his people were to be preserved, but God's mercy so exceeds man's desire that He is ever giving more than we dare to ask.

David would go the way of his fathers; his sons would reign after him. They would sin against Jehovah, be chastened and forgiven. For a lapse of years David's house and the temple built by his son would be unused and his people, Israel, pass into captivity. But the root and offspring of David would reappear as a Bright and Morning Star, and all the world should come under its effulgent rays.

As Nathan unfolded his vision to the king, God's refusal of his desire, hurt David, but he was content that God's purpose should be upheld. Though he dimly understood God's covenant, all his life through down to old age, he sang of the Lord's promises, and the last whispered words of the dying David were, "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. When and by whom was the temple built? 2. Did David have any part in its erection? 4. Who accomplished its first restoration? 5. Who restored it for the second time? 6. What prophecy did Christ make concerning the temple that the Jews considered blasphemous? 7. Does God always give us our desire?

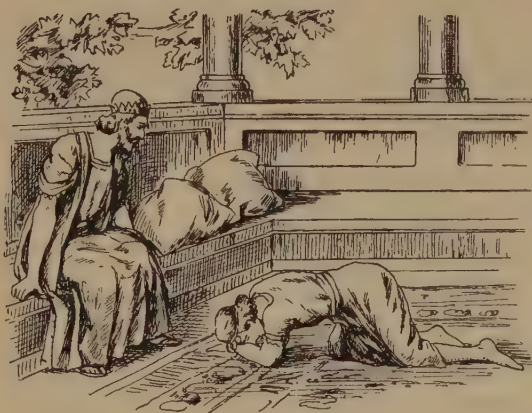
**Challenge Text.** Delight thyself also in the — and — shall — thee the — of thine —. Psa. 37:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The difference between the good and the evil man is shown in his thoughts. 2. Success is oft-times the acid test of character. 3. God's plans for us are always better than our desire. 5. The fighting man tears down and destroys many evils, but the building of God's church is done by the man of peace. 6. A man's promise can only span a lifetime, but God's promises abide from the beginning to the end of time. 7. We are all builders of God's temple.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he



and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth.

And he  
answered,  
Behold  
thy  
servant!  
And  
David



said unto him, Fear not: for I will surely shew thee

for Jonathan thy father's sake, and will restore thee all the



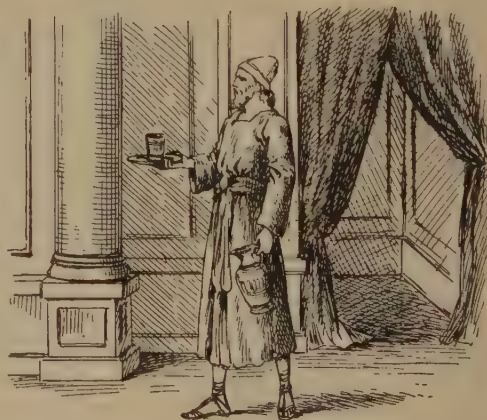
of  
Saul  
thy  
father;  
and  
thou  
shalt  
eat  
bread  
at my



continually. And he bowed himself, and said, What is thy servant, that thou shouldest look upon such a



as I  
am?  
Then  
the  
king  
called  
Ziba,  
Saul's



and said unto him, I have given unto thy master's son all that pertained to Saul and to all his house.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 2 SAM. 9:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, How Thou hast surprised us by Thy love and grace! At Thy table of salvation are the lame, the halt, the blind, now made perfect in Thy life and love. May we seek to imitate Thy goodness and grace. Give to us the Christ life and the Christ spirit. May we realize that every blessing we enjoy is calling on us to seek and bless the needy elsewhere. Help us to respond to the call and pass the blessing on. For Christ's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1040. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, David, Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son, and Ziba, Saul's servant.

**Scripture Setting:** Life Friendships. David and Jonathan, 1 Sam. 18:1-12. Jonathan and David, 1 Sam. 20:1-17. Forsake not a friend, Prov. 27:1-12. Born for adversity, Prov. 17:1-17. Memory of friends, Job. 29:1-16. Friends by serving, John 14:15-23. Love of Christ, Eph. 3:8-19. His life for his friends, John 15:1-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This lesson tells some things which friendship means and does. 1. Friend-

"The quality of mercy is not strain'd;  
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from Heaven  
Upon the place beneath; it is twice bless'd;  
It blesseth Him that gives and him that takes;  
'Tis mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes  
The throned monarch better than his crown."

ship remembers vows and pledges. It treasures the bright pictures of the past. 2. Friendship is not satisfied until it brings an offering to the one loved. 3. Friendship inquires, seeks, plans, persists, until it finds the friend. 4. Friendship has a quick memory of past blessings and a grateful heart to return them. 5. Friendship is enduring and vital, through many years and changing conditions. 6. Friendship has to do with heart and character, and therefore is not stopped by any men, outward failure or defeat. 7. Friendship forgives any failure of the past—forgives that it may bless the more fully and freely.

### A CRIPPLE AT A KING'S TABLE.

**The Wheel of Life.** "He used to be very well off, but now he has lost all." Again and again you can hear a remark like that, about some one you know, or that you may know of. If it is not a change of fortune, it may be of friends or of influence. Sometimes, of two particular persons, one may go up and another go down, by this turning of the wheel of life. That came near being the case here, as shown by the first picture. You remember that, in the story of Jonathan, and there is a picture of it something like this: Only a few years have passed, and now Jonathan's son is bowing down to David. His name is Mephibosheth, which means "contender against idols." If he was true to his name he was a good man, but he was lame in both of his feet. That was caused by his nurse letting him fall when he was a babe. She was fleeing with him at the time of the battle when Jonathan was slain. His life was saved, but he never could be cured of his lameness.

How does he come to be here before David? I am glad you asked that question, for to answer it makes us think of how David fulfilled his vow of friendship made to Jonathan. Since David became king he had been very busy doing all he could for his people. Then there were wars that took his time and thought. He was victorious over his enemies, and now he had come to a time of peace and quiet. One day he remembered his pledge to Jonathan, that he would always be a friend to his children. Learning about Mephibosheth, he sent for him, and now they meet in these changed conditions. God whispered to David and made him think

of that pledge. God always turns the wheel of life.

**How a Spider Saved a King.** Frederick the Great, king of Prussia, was saved from death by a spider, according to a story people tell. They say that the king was at luncheon and was about to drink some chocolate when a spider dropped from the ceiling into the cup. The king sent for another cup and the attendant returned immediately to say that the cook had shot himself. It was afterward found that the cook had poisoned the chocolate and that when the second cup had been sent for he believed that his act had been found out.—Argus.

**What All the World Needs.** Can you think of any one thing which the world needs, and which every one needs? I believe it is safe to say that it is kindness. It may not be the most important thing, but very often it will lead to the more important things. And without kindness it is almost impossible to reach people with those more important blessings. That second picture is suggestive of how the kindly act may be done even towards the brute creation. If this were a moving picture, I am sure the dog's tail would be wagging in gratitude for the cooling drink the young man is giving him. The animal world is quick to learn who are friendly and kind, and the wildest animals can often be tamed by kindness. Sometimes we have seen men and boys, and occasionally a girl and woman, who were like animals, and who could be best cured and managed by kindness. But this was the kindness of friendship, and the world is ever needing that.

The world is full of cripples of many kinds—by loss of property, of friends, of

positions, of hope and courage. To such, an act of kindness is refreshing and encouraging. And do you know that we have each one, as it were, pledged that we would try to be helpful. Too often we forget these pledges, as David did, for a time, and then the cripples are neglected. Can you think of some one just now that you could help in some way? Even if you make some sacrifice in order to do it, the help will be more appreciated, and you will be the gladder for.

**Help Needed at Once.** You saw a sad face to-day and wondered why it was sad. Or you knew the secret, it may be, and resolved to speak a kind, sympathetic word, but the hour passed, and the sad face was lost in the crowd. Think what that means. "I won't neglect another opportunity," you say. Well, be it so; but in that particular place there will be a little niche of forlorn silence. Suppose that burdened heart had been lightened and had carried its message of good cheer to another and another and another. The wires were stretched—a whole network of them—but you did not turn on the current, and now the lever is beyond your reach.—Exchange.

**The Blessing of a Good Father.** David and Jonathan were friends, but it was because both were good. Now, Mephibosheth gets the benefit of having a good father. The wise man says that "a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." So, too, a good father and mother are far better than a fortune. When David was thinking over the past, he could not help seeing the face of Jonathan, so good and true to him in his time of need. Then all at once he said to himself, "Why, I promised to be a friend to his children always. I wonder if he left any?" He found an old servant of Saul, by the name of Ziba, and he asked him, "Are there any of Saul's family living? For I want to show kindness to him." Ziba thought a minute, and then said, "Why, yes; Saul's son Jonathan left a cripple boy. He is now a man, and living at Lodebar, east of Jordan." When David summoned him to the palace, perhaps Mephibosheth feared that he would be killed, for that was often done when there was a change of kings. But here is what David said to him: "Mephibosheth, you need not fear. I will be kind to you because I loved Jonathan, your father, and he loved me." He also said, "You shall have all the lands that belonged to Saul and his family, and you shall always sit at my table in the royal palace. See pictures three and four.

He then told Ziba to look after the estate and report all to Mephibosheth. Wasn't that a noble thing for David to do? And wasn't it a great blessing that Mephibosheth

had a good father? A good friend is a great inheritance, and you can have a good friend only by being good, and by being friendly. "He that would have friends must show himself friendly."

**How Friendship Helps.** How great a help such a friendship is in life's mysterious journey no words can describe without the appearance of extravagance.

"What is the secret of your life?" asked Mrs. Browning of Charles Kingsley. "Tell me, that I may make mine beautiful too."

He replied, "I had a friend."

What reverence there was in that reply! What a tribute to the inspiration of a noble friend! Let no one friend think that there is gain in condoning failure on the part of the other. There may be sympathy in failure, tender, loving words of consolation, assurances of unbroken amity; but there must be no hesitation in helping to correct the wrong-doing and keep the soul clean.—F. B. Meyer.

**"I Am Not Worthy."** If you were asked to name the most beautiful quality in man or woman, I wonder what you would name? Well, at least, one of the most beautiful qualities is humility. David had this grace and he showed it on many occasions. Mephibosheth had it also. That act of bowing down to the king was partly because of his humility and modesty; it may have been partly in fear. But after David tells him to fear not, and plans for him to have his old estate and sit at the king's table, Mephibosheth shows his humility most clearly. He says, "What is thy servant that thou should'st look upon such a dead dog?" The picture of the dead dog means that Mephibosheth feels that he is useless to David, and so he is surprised at his kindness. Humility is not only a beautiful grace, but, when true, it is one of the best qualifications for usefulness. False humility says, "I am not worthy, and therefore I will not try." True humility says, "I am not worthy, but I will try."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What happened once to a cripple, laid at a beautiful gate?" 2. Tell about a table Christ spread in a wilderness. 3. Read the beautiful verse about Christ supping with those who receive him. Rev. 3:20. 4. At what church table does Christ say, "Take, eat?" 5. How did David come to think of Mephibosheth? 6. What great Friend should we all remember?

**Challenge Text.** Thine own ———, and thy ——— friend, forsake not." Prov. 27: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Children enter into blessings which parents have made possible. 2. We should ever be mindful of the obligations of friendship. 3. Our kindness to others should be prompted and measured by God's kindness to us. 4. "For Jonathan's sake" suggests and illustrates the words "for Christ's sake." 5. The seed of a true friendship will produce a lifetime harvest of good. 6. The friendship of Christ is most vital and most fruitful of good.



# ABSALOM'S REBELLION

But Absalom sent

throughout  
all the  
tribes of  
Israel,  
saying,  
As soon  
as ye  
hear the  
sound  
of the



then ye  
shall say,  
Absalom  
reigneth  
in Hebron.  
And with  
Absalom went  
two hundred



that were called; and  
they went in their  
simplicity, and they  
knew not any thing.  
And Absalom sent  
for Ahithophel the  
Gilonite, David's  
counsellor, from his  
city, even from Giloh,  
while he offered

And the  
conspiracy  
was strong;  
for the  
people  
increased  
continually  
with Absalom.  
And there  
came a



to David, saying, The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom. And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us

for we shall  
not else escape  
from Absalom:  
make speed to  
depart, lest he  
overtake us  
suddenly, and  
bring evil upon  
us and smite the



with the edge of the sword.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 2 SAM. 15:1-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Keep us from all that is low and mean and base. Guard Thou all the gateways of heart and life that we may not defile or be defiled. Specially wilt Thou cleanse the heart fountain of all evil thought and desire. Put Thine own Spirit in both as guest and host. So will we love Thee, serve and worship Thee. So will we be kept from sin and glorify Thee before the world. In Christ's name. Amen.

"We can't afford the heedless jest  
That robs us of a friend;  
We can't afford the laugh that finds  
In bitter tears an end.  
We can't afford the feast to-day  
That brings to-morrow's fast;  
We can't afford the farce that comes  
To tragedy at last.  
We can't afford to play with fire,  
Or tempt a serpent's bite;  
We can't afford to think that sin  
Brings any true delight."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1023. Places, Jerusalem and Hebron. **Persons,** Absalom, people he met, Ahithopel.

**Scripture Setting:** Youthful Sin and Folly. A wasted life, 1 Sam. 31:1-13. Prosperity of fools, Prov. 1:20-33. Moving toward Sodom, Gen. 13:1-13. Defiant wickedness, Isa. 5:18-24. The shame of sin, Ezek. 7:10-19. Warning against pride, Matt. 23:1-12. God is not mocked, Gal. 6:7-18. The great refusal, Mark 10:17-22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** A warning lesson to young men especially. Here are some of the sinful tendencies and temptations: 1. Absalom was after merely temporal good, and it is common tempta-

tion to youth today. 2. A selfish ambition of the lowest type and in a most consuming form. 3. A sinful nature and tendency bred in the hot-bed of animalism and idolatry. 4. Restless under restraint and authority and himself the worst anarchist, he accuses, insinuates, undermines, so as to wean away the people from his father and king. 5. Hypocrisy and deceit, in order to accomplish his purposes. All is dark, subtle, sinuous, with the trail of the serpent on it. 6. Corruption of the times. 7. Lack of parental training. David must share some of the responsibility of Absalom's sin. 8. Making merchandise of religion—perhaps the worst sin in the list these days.

### A WICKED YOUNG PRINCE.

**A Kiss That Nearly Cost a Throne.** What can you tell about Benedict Arnold, the traitor? One thing at least everyone knows—and that is that he is despised by all. This story is about one who was even worse than Arnold, for he was a traitor to his own father. David had several wives and many sons. One son was named Absalom, whose mother was a heathen princess. He was a proud, self-willed boy, though good-looking, and known by all as the boy with a beautiful head of hair. He was David's oldest son, and might have been king sometime if he had not been so wicked. When David married heathen women, their false religion came with them, and David forgot his own God. So his children grew up without religious training. One of them had committed a great sin, and Absalom felt that he should die for it. So, without any trial, and by a treacherous trick, Absalom had him slain. David was angry, and Absalom fled to his mother's old heathen home, and stayed there three years.

At last David was willing that he might come back, and when he did come he kissed him and forgave him. This was the kiss that nearly cost David his throne. Absalom should have been punished instead, but David was weakened by age and by false worship, and he overlooked Absalom's wickedness. This mistaken mercy opened the way for Absalom's wicked plot to kill his father and take the kingdom. David's mis-

take was in letting Absalom have his own way.

**Would Have His Own Way.** A young man went on a summer tour to Europe and was to spend a part of it in the Alps. In company with his guide and some other travelers, he came to one of the most dangerous passes, and the guide said: "Now you must all be strapped together." So he harnessed them all to a rope, and some guides went on before and other guides came after. The chief guide said: "Now, this is very dangerous." The young man did not like to be harnessed up in that way, so he slipped out of the strap and three minutes after he did it his feet slipped and he went down three hundred feet and was dashed to pieces in a moment.—A. J. Gordon.

**"Oh, That I were Judge!"** Absalom began his wicked plot by riding about in great style, with fifty men running before him, as a sort of body guard. This is shown in the first two pictures. He would make the people believe that he was a favorite of the king, and also a very important person. It is very easy to deceive most people by such exhibitions of display. Absalom's fine appearance would help to increase the impression. Absalom was thoroughly selfish and proud, but he had to act as if he had the interests of the people at heart. David did not know all that was going on, and he was only glad to have Absalom back home. He did not know what a traitor he had in the very palace. Then he may have thought that Absalom would soon be king, anyway, and so he let him rule more and more.

Now Absalom takes another step in the



plot. He pretends that he is a friend of the common people. He meets them at the gates of the city, where people would come to see the king for any reason. He would tell them that the king had neglected to have any judges appointed to try their cases. He would also say that their case was good, and "Oh, that I were made judge to help you!" Often, too, he would talk confidentially with them, and even kiss them. In this way he won the hearts of the people: but it was by flattery, and he did not mean what he said. Absalom had a sinful pride and ambition that made him disobey and deceive his father, and this led to his ruin.

**A True Kind of Pride.** A circus was in a town and a little boy stood watching the great tent curiously. A neighbor, coming up, said: "Hello, Johnny, goin' to the circus?" "No, sir," answered Johnny, "father don't like 'em." "Oh, well, I'll give you the money to go," said the man. "Father don't approve of them." "Well, go in for once. I'll pay for you." "No, sir; my father would give me the money if he thought it best; besides, I've got twenty-five cents in my box—enough to go." "I'd go, Johnny, for once; it's wonderful the way the horses do," said the man. "Your father needn't know it." "I can't," said the boy. "Now, why?" asked the man. "'Cause," said Johnny, "after I've been I couldn't look father right in the eyes, but I can now."

**"Let Me Go to Prayer-Meeting."** That was not exactly what Absalom said, but that is what it meant. And what did he want to do? Complete his plot to dethrone his father and have himself proclaimed king. Can you think of anything more wicked than that? He would make even religion a cloak for his meanness and treachery. Even yet David is blind to what Absalom is doing. He doubtless rejoices when Absalom asks that he may go to Hebron to worship, for he thinks it is to serve God. It is now nearly four years that Absalom has been stealing the hearts of the people. He has friends in all parts of the kingdom, and he intends to rally them at Hebron. He has sent spies everywhere, to see that all are in readiness to make him king. Men with trumpets were ready to shout the message to all, as soon as Absalom was crowned. The priest was also secured who would offer fitting sacrifices. It was all very religious in appearance, but this made it all the more wicked.

The real test was in the heart and purpose. He pretended to worship God, but really wanted to use it as a cloak to serve himself in. Scarcely any sin is worse than pride; and it is a sin that brings trouble always, for "pride goeth before a fall." The proud man is usually despised by everybody as soon as he is found out.

**The Fatal Mistake.** Absalom made one mistake that spoiled his plot. He left God out. That is the great mistake that all wicked people make, and therefore they always fail in the end. They may seem to succeed for a time, as Absalom did, but it is only in appearance, and for a time. We have seen how religious Absalom pretended to be, but it was a sham religion, and so did him no good, but only harm. There was no God in it, on the Divine side, and no heart in it on his side. Now we will see how his plan failed. Among those he persuaded to go with him was a man named Ahithopel, a very wise man, and David's counsellor. Absalom thought that in this way he would get the very strength of David. But when David heard it, he prayed, "O Lord, I pray Thee, turn the counsel of Ahithopel into foolishness." Just then Hushai, a good man, came to go with David, but David said to him, "Go back to be with Absalom, then mayest thou for me defeat the counsel of Ahithopel." In this way God prompted David to help answer his own prayer. Hushai did defeat the counsel of Ahithopel, as we see in the next story, and so Absalom was defeated in battle and killed. It was all because Absalom did not have God on his side, and David did. Losing God, he lost his friends, and all else.

**Why He Lost His Friends.** He was suspicious of everybody. He never threw the doors of his heart wide open to people, or took them into his confidence. He was always ready to receive assistance from them, but always too busy or too stingy to assist them in their time of need. He regarded friendship as a luxury to be enjoyed instead of an opportunity for service. He never hesitated to sacrifice their reputation for his advantage. He was always saying mean things about them in their absence. He measured them by their ability to advance him. —Success.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What mistakes did David make respecting Absalom and the management of affairs? 2. What was the real cause of David's neglect? 3. How long had Absalom been working up the rebellion? 4. Why did he go to Hebron to start his reign? 5. Name six sins in Absalom, or as many as you can.

**Challenge Text.** "Honor thy ——— and thy mother that thy ——— may be ———." Ex. 20: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Sin may be forgiven, but its effects and judgments are not removed. 2. The parent must govern the child or the child will tyrannize over the parent. 3. Thousands in their foolish "simplicity" go to the dance, the theater, the card table, the saloon, just because they are invited. 4. He who is unfaithful in his present place or sphere will probably be unfaithful under any other circumstance or condition. 5. The child left to himself will tread even upon the affections and piety of the parent. 6. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"—and the harvest is apt to be a whirlwind.

DR. J. M. COON.



# ABSALOM'S DEATH.

And ten young men that bare Joab's armour compassed about and



and  
slew  
him.  
And  
Joab



and the people returned from



after  
Israel:  
for Joab  
held  
back the  
people.  
And they  
took  
Absalom,  
and



into a great pit in the wood, and laid a very great



upon  
him:  
and  
all  
Israel



every one to his tent.



# ABSALOM'S DEATH.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 2 SAM. 18:1-33.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We are thankful for the life that now is, and for the eternal life, made possible in Christ. Help us that we may escape from the death of the wicked. May we be warned by the fate of those who have opposed and rejected Thee. Keep us from pride, vanity, selfishness and every sin. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Somewhere at every hour  
The watchman on the tower  
Looks forth, and sees the fleet  
Approach of hurrying feet

Of messengers that bear  
The tidings of despair.  
O Absalom, my son!  
He goes forth from the door,  
Who shall return no more.  
With him our joy departs;  
The light goes out in our hearts;  
In the Chamber over the Gate  
We sit disconsolate.  
O Absalom, my son!

—Longfellow.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1023. Place, Mahanaim, in the tribe of Gad. **Persons,** David, messengers, attendants.

**Scripture Setting:** **Father and Son.** Model father and son, Gen. 22:1-18. A loving son, Gen. 45:6-21. Judgment on father and son, 1 Sam. 4:3-18. Counsel to the son, Prov. 4. Rebellious children, Isa. 1:1-9. "Is it well?" 2 Kings 4:18-30. The son corrected, Prov. 23:12-26. The model home, Col. 3:12-25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lessons from Absalom's death need to be voiced afresh in every

age. 1. Laxness of parental training and discipline inevitably bring sorrow and disaster. 2. Mere material and physical qualities are not enough to give success. There must be inward character and right ideals and purposes. 3. Judgment invariably overtakes the wrong-doer, sooner or later. 4. Undue grief blinds one to many personal blessings and duties. 5. A life of sin is short, at best, and is increasingly difficult to change. 6. It is far better to mould the boy in his youth than to mourn over him in his death.

## THE DREADFUL DEATH OF A BAD YOUTH.

**The Worst Young Man.** Who is he? You have known some very bad ones, but you can almost always find some good qualities in each. It is easy to think of many bad traits in Absalom, and very hard to think of a single good one. Whether we think of him in relation to God, or to his father, or to the king, or to his friends, or to the people, or even to himself, it is all bad, bad, bad. At last one of his personal bad traits was probably the snare that trapped him and led to his death. This was his vanity over his long and beautiful hair.

As the two armies are fighting, and Absalom is cheering on his men, he rides through a thick wood and his head and hair are caught in the branches, holding him fast. The mule goes off and Absalom is left hanging thus. God's hand is in this also. You remember that David prayed that Ahithophel's counsel "might come to naught." Ahithophel was David's wise counsellor, and he had gone over to Absalom. When David prayed he sent a trusty friend to try and defeat any plan Ahithophel might offer. It was through this friend, Hushai, that Absalom did not kill David at once, but waited to raise an army. This gave David time to gather his army, and this battle was fought. And this was the last crisis in Absalom's wicked life.

**When Is the First Crisis?** Oh! how little we know what may be before us, on some morning that dawns on us just as other days, but which is to form a great crisis in our life. How little the boy that is to tell his first lie that day thinks of the serpent that is lying in wait for him! Is it not a good habit, as you kneel each morning, to think, "For

aught I know, this may be the most important day of my life. The opportunity may be given me of doing a great service in the cause of truth and righteousness. O God, be not far from me this day; prepare me for all that thou preparest for me!"—Blaikie.

**Looking Out for Number One.** That was the kind of a man Absalom was. If he ever did a kind deed for number two, or any other person, we have no record of it. Well, "number one" is hanging there now in a tree. If he had been friendly and helpful there would have been many ready to deliver him. But no one cared to do that. Some of the people remembered that David charged the soldiers "not to hurt the young man Absalom," but even they did not help him. One of these persons told Joab that he saw Absalom caught. "Why did you not strike him dead?" said Joab. The man replied that the king told them not to harm him in any way. But Joab was anxious to stop the war and the rebellion, and he caught up three darts and went and thrust them through Absalom's body. Then ten of Joab's young men came with swords and finished the work of death. Vanity, pride and selfishness were his ruin.

**Too Proud To Be Warned.** On the Mississippi river, a steamer was towing a heavily laden barge, when one of the sailors went to the captain and told him that the barge was sinking the steamer. The captain, with an oath, told the sailor to mind his own business.

Not long after the mate came to the captain, and said, "Sir, that barge is sinking us."

"We are all right. I'll take care of my own steamer," was the captain's reply. Soon after the captain perceived the truth of what the sailor and mate had said, and ordered the ropes cut at once,

because the heavily laden barge was sinking the steamer. The "ropes" were a heavy chain, and before the links could be broken the barge had gone down, dragging the steamer with it.—Exchange.

**The End of the Rebellion.** That man with the trumpet is Joab. As soon as Absalom is slain he calls to the army to stop fighting and pursuing. He knew that Absalom's soldiers would be discouraged as soon as they knew of his death. Even many of his own soldiers were glad the war was over, for Absalom was found out by them. They discovered that he cared only for himself. If a man or boy is "number one" in his own thought he cannot be number one in the minds of others. And such a man keeps going down the scale farther and farther. Was David glad to hear that his army was victorious, and that his kingdom was safe? He did not seem to think of anything except Absalom's safety. It was the first thing he inquired about, and when he learned of his death he could only cry, "Oh Absalom, my son, my son!" His grief was so long continued that Joab had to remonstrate with him. His grief was partly due to the fact that he had been too lenient and lax when Absalom did wrong.

**The Child Has A Right To Be Made Obedient.** An English army captain in India nourished a young tiger on the blood of animals, but one day it tasted his blood, and if he had not shot it at the moment it would have killed him. If a man never thanks God, how can his child be grateful to him? If we deceive a child he will have no compunction in deceiving us. David had never rightly loved Absalom, or he would have restrained him. He loved his handsome son with passionate earnestness, but there was no ruling habit or direction in that love. David was fickle in his treatment of Absalom.—Exchange.

**The Death That Is After Death.** Even Absalom's first death was disgraceful. Almost always the dead body is cared for tenderly, and laid away in the grave. But see that picture, where they are throwing his body into a pit, and that other where they are heaping a pile of stones on it. This shows how they despised even the dead body. But that did not distress David so much as the thought of the second death. When his baby boy died he mourned for him, but he

also said, "I shall go to him." He could not feel this way about Absalom, for he knew that Absalom had rebelled not only against his father and his king, but also against his God. By this death that is after death David was separated from Absalom for all eternity. You remember that the old clock on the stair used to tick something like this: "Forever-never, forever-never." This is what Absalom's death said to David's heart. Someone has said that David's grief was too late to be corrected, too great for any consolation, and too long, for there was no hope of reunion. When Jonathan died, David was grieved, but there was comfort also; comfort at the remembrance of his beautiful friendship and comfort in the prospect of meeting him again. That is not so in this case, for there is a death after death. One way to avoid a disgraceful death, and also the death after death, is by being obedient to one's parents. Here is where Absalom made his first mistake.

**Try This Plan.** In a family of children each one had a calendar and in the quiet time when they were about ready for bed they tried to think whether they had done more to make their parents' day glad and bright or sad and dark. They called it making sunshine and shadow. Days which they had made sunshiny by loving obedience and helpfulness, they marked with a bright yellow pencil, and days when they had grieved their parents by thoughtlessness and disobedience they marked with a blue or black one. Which do you think they liked the better to see, sunshine or shadow? They grew so that they tried harder to have fewer shadows this week than last.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What old judge sat waiting for news of his two sons and the ark? and what was the result? 2. What mistake did David make in the training of Absalom? 3. What other mistake in his marriages?

**Challenge Text.** "Whoso curseth — or — let him — the death." Mark 7:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Life is full of crisis moments, and often there are no warnings given. 2. The fate of Absalom illustrates the common doom of prodigals. 3. Absalom had unusual advantages at the start, but made a complete failure of life. 4. Lost opportunities and a wasted life cannot be recovered. 5. Selfish ambitions almost always lead to ruin. 6. The deceits and hypocrisy of Absalom were at last visited on him. Absalom sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind.

DR. J. M. COON.



# SOLOMON ANOINTED KING

And king David said, Call me Zadok the



and  
Nathan  
the



and  
Benaiah  
the  
son  
of  
Jehoiada.  
And  
they  
came



The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to



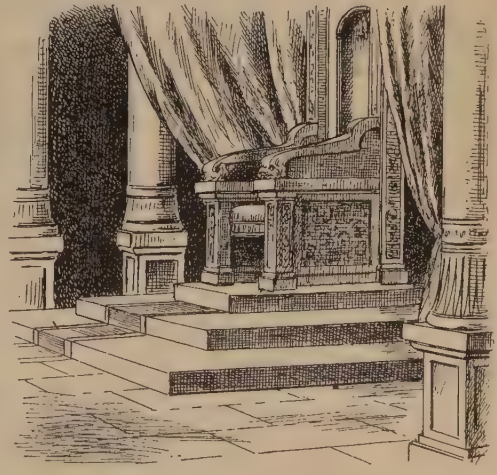
mine own  
mule, and  
bring him  
down to  
Gihon.  
And let  
Zadok  
the priest  
and  
Nathan  
the  
prophet



there king over Israel: and blow ye with



and say,  
God save  
king  
Solomon.  
Then ye  
shall  
come up  
after him,  
that he  
may  
come  
and sit  
upon my



for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 KINGS 1:1-33.

**Prayer.** Lord Jesus, Thou art the King of kings and settest up one and puttest down another. May we recognize Thy power and authority and be willing subjects of Thy kingdom. Give unto us the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and rule in our hearts and lives. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"May the strength of God pilot me,  
May the power of God preserve me,  
May the wisdom of God instruct me,  
May the eye of God view me,  
May the ear of God hear me;  
Christ be with me.

Christ in the hearts of all to whom I speak."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1015. Places, Jerusalem and Gihon. Persons, David, Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, Solomon, Adonijah.

**Scripture Setting:** Kings and the King. Promotion is of God, Psa. 76. Duties of the king, 1 Chron. 22:1-19. God's covenant, Psa. 89:1-14. Wrong ambitions, 2 Sam. 15:1-14. Using fraud, 1 Kings 1:5-15. True way to the kingdom, Mark 10:31-45. A kingdom worth having, Rev. 21:1-16. The new kingdom, John 3:1-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The record of how Solomon came to the throne may find applications in all relations and spheres of life. 1. Solomon is king by Divine purposes, and one can be cer-

tain of position and promotion on no other ground. 2. Solomon is king through helpful human agencies, as David, Bathsheba, etc. Thus one's friends and life relations may further his interest. 3. Solomon was king because of personal worth and fitness. One will not long retain a kingdom in any other way. 4. Solomon was king for a certain specific work. Thus always is service the end and warrant of rank. 5. Solomon was king by popular favor and acceptance, largely due to his essential qualifications. What others think of us is important in its place and may be a vital condition in working out God's will.

### THE CROWNING OF A FAMOUS KING.

**A New Peril to David.** How much trouble a bad boy or man can make! We saw that in the case of Absalom. After his death David had a prosperous time in his kingdom for many years. He at last planned to build a beautiful temple for God. He had already built a house for himself. He told God what he wanted to do; and God said that it would not be right for him to build it, for he had been a man of war. God told him that his son Solomon might build it, and all that he had done towards it could be used. Then David promised Solomon that he should be king, and build the temple to God. But one of his sons, by the name of Adonijah, said to himself that he was older and had the better right to the throne. He began some such plan as Absalom had tried. He actually persuaded all his brothers, except Solomon, to join him in the rebellion. He had a priest also who was to assist in crowning him. David was now old and weak and even in bed when the news was brought to him. Adonijah was confident of success and had gathered all his friends to a great feast. Even Joab, the general, had gone with him. They both seemed to have forgotten about the fate of Absalom. But every wicked person thinks that he can succeed where others have failed; and so he is self-confident. Adonijah means, "the Lord is my master," but he was not true to his name. This is the case with boys and girls sometimes.

**Are You a Weed or a Flower?** Shoot was a beautiful green blade that sprang from the ground. Mother Nature was very proud of it. But one day she was worried, for Shoot was not shooting just right. Queer little things were breaking out all over it. She said to herself, "It must be its wild oats." Next day when Mother Nature came

to wake it up those queer little buds had budded and instead of flowers there were—burrs! Then Mother Nature's heart was broken, for she knew Shoot was a weed. Shoot could not help it, but boys and girls can help it. They are "I's," not "it's"; and they should grow to be flowers and not weeds, for God will help them.—Rev. R. W. Gentry.

**"God Save King Solomon!"** Suddenly this is the cry that is heard everywhere. Even the Adonijah company hear it in their feasting. How does it come about? It was chiefly because God had purposed that Solomon should reign. That purpose made all things and persons fall in line. Even the sick king rises up in his bed and calls for the priest and prophet to come to him. He tells them to act at once and proclaim Solomon king. He remembers his promise to God and also to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. This promise, according to the purpose of God, makes him quick, strong and determined. Though seventy years old, he thinks and acts as promptly and resolutely as ever he did in his life. The first three pictures tell the story of this act of king David.

**God's Hand in History.** There is no doctrine in the Bible more clear than that God does interfere in the lives of men. He interfered in the life of Moses and Saul and David and Solomon and the prophets and the apostles, and He also interferes in the lives of men now. And that God does so interfere, surely believed and confidently trusted in, will transmute the prosiest life into grandeur and beauty. And when He speaks in audible tones to one man and gives tendency to the life and the future of another, it is only that He may bring blessing to the man and through him to the world.—Exchange.

**Honored and Anointed.** Before the public proclamation was made David had taken the usual steps to declare a new king. Solomon



is placed on the royal mule, and is brought into the city from the valley of Gihon. No one but the king is allowed to ride on this mule; and when Solomon was seen on it the people were ready to proclaim him king. But the anointing with the sacred oil was the chief ceremony. This was by the priest, who poured the oil on the head of Solomon. It was a solemn service, and performed only on rare and state occasions. It meant two things specially. One was that the king was in covenant with God and was expected to do as God wished. The other was that the Spirit of God was supposed to come with the anointing, and help the king in all his great duties. All this was done rapidly at the command of David. He also said that Solomon should come at once and sit on the throne and be king. As David was still living, he sent out the message to all the people that Solomon should be king in his stead, and that he had so appointed him. With God above him, his father beside him, and the Holy Spirit to guide him, Solomon had everything to help him on in the right way. But when all is prosperous is often the time of temptation. We shall see if it was so with Solomon. At least it is safe to watch continually.

**Watch! Watch!** Watch for the end of the world and Jesus's coming? Yes. Watch for the day of your death? Yes. But watch also for the judgment hours that come to you every day of your life. Every moment judges us, every act either condemns or justifies. Lives oftentimes swing on the pivot of a single deed, and eternal destiny is determined by the decision of a moment. **Watch!—Exchange.**

**First Act of the King.** When Adonijah and his company knew that Solomon had been anointed king they were greatly alarmed. They were not far away, and they had already begun proclaiming Adonijah king. But they did not have the royal mule, nor the anointing oil. The fear grew and they scattered and fled. Adonijah himself did not have courage enough to try to rally his followers. He must have known that he was a traitor to the king, his father, and disobedient to God. This was surely enough to make him a coward. He ran and laid hold of the horns of the altar, and would not come away until Solomon pledged to save

his life. It was the custom that one should not be killed while he held the altar horns in this way. No doubt Adonijah would have killed Solomon, and, perhaps, Bathsheba if he had come into power. And no one could have blamed Solomon if now he had ordered him slain. But what does he do? He sent word that if Adonijah would do right, and be true to him as king, no harm should come to him. This was a very gracious thing for Solomon to do, and it agreed with his name, which means "peaceable." Solomon told him to go free to his own home. Thus Solomon begins well. If he should not succeed it surely will be his own fault. He had many factors for the making of a good man and ruler. Not least of these was the life character and influence of David, his illustrious father.

**Father and Son Chums.** I know of a father who has a son in whom he takes a genuine interest, and they are the closest chums it is possible to imagine. It is, of course, impossible for them to be together all the time, for the father works all day at his store and the boy goes to school, but at night they are always together. The father does not monopolize the companionship of his son by any means, for he invites other boys to call at the house; and when you see them all together you can well imagine that there is no man about. The father enters into all the sports of the little fellows, who rightly avers that "he is great." That boy is now almost nineteen; but when he had passed the age of twelve the father said: "My, oh my! Next year you will be in your teens, and then what shall I do?"

"Same as you've always done," said the boy, while a dimple came in his cheek and a sly twinkle came to his eye. "You know we've pledged ourselves to stick together forever."

"So we have, so we have," said the father; "and no matter how big you get you will always be my chum."

That's the way to treat your boys.—Baptist Commonwealth.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What good work did David plan, and why did God prevent it? 2. What did Christ say about Solomon's glory? 3. Tell of another who rode in triumph into Jerusalem on an ass. 4. How many of David's seven different titles or kinds of work can you mention?

**Challenge Text.** "Behold, I have set my ——— in my holy ——— of Zion." Psa. 2: (9).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The lives of others are guides to us, either as inspiration or warning. 2. The conditions of permanent success are obedience to God and fidelity to duty. 3. God not only selects men for their work, but fits and equips them. 4. The example and heritage of a good father are of incalculable value. 5. Other men labor and we enter into their labors.

DR. J. M. COON.



# SOLOMON'S WISE CHOICE.

And now, O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant



instead of  
David my  
father: and  
I am but a



I know not how to  
go out or come in.  
And thy servant  
is in the midst  
of thy people  
which thou hast  
chosen, a great



that cannot be  
numbered nor  
counted for  
multitude. Give  
therefore thy servant  
an understanding  
heart to



thy people,  
that I may  
discern  
between



for who is able to judge this thy so great a people? And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him,

Because thou  
hast asked  
this thing,  
and hast  
not asked for  
thyself long  
life; neither  
hast asked



for  
thyself,  
nor  
hast  
asked  
the  
life of  
thine



but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I KINGS 3:4-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Grant us to see life from Thy high viewpoint. May we ever reckon with God and soul and Heaven in all our choices. Save us from being satisfied with the good or even the better. Stir us with a deep desire for the best—the very best Thou hast to give; and so may our choices go out like invisible hands to clasp and hold the best. For Christ's sake. Amen.

So let the way wind up the hill or down,  
Though rough or smooth, the journey will be joy;  
Still seeking what I sought when but a boy,  
New friendship, high adventure and a crown.  
I shall grow old but never lose life's zest,  
Because the road's last turn will be the best.  
—Henry Van Dyke.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1015. Place, Gibeon in the tribe of Benjamin. Persons, Solomon, and the Lord in a dream.

**Scripture Setting:** Right and Wise Choices. Moses' choice, Heb. 11:24-27. Daniel's choice, Dan. 1:8-21. Ruth's choice, Ruth 1:1-18. Mary's choice, Luke 10:38-42. Paul's choice, Acts 9:1-16. Joshua's choice, Josh. 24:14-25. The true wisdom, Prov. 9:1-12. Neglecting the great choice. Heb. 2:1-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this study of Solomon's wise choice, we may note several important facts. 1. The opportunity for wise choices. God

is constantly saying, "Ask what I shall give Thee." 2. Reasons for wise choices. Because God asks it; because of the Divine goodness; because of one's responsibility and mission; because of one's need and weakness. 3. Benefits of wise choices. We please God; we secure the desired blessing; we get also much incidental good. 4. Tests of wise choices. Continued obedience; religious fidelity. 5. Weakness of wise choices. Things may be wise, but not the wisest; things may be good, but not the best. Solomon chose wisely and right things; but failed of the greatest blessing, namely, spiritual things.

### THE GOOD CHOICE OF A YOUNG KING.

**I'll Do My Best.** "I can't do it and I won't." It was a bright young man who said it, and Satan gave him enough bad purpose to stand by his resolve. He was asked to do a service in the young people's society. Another was asked and he replied, "I feel I can't do it, but I'll try." He tried and was successful, for God helped him. I think Solomon was like this second young man. He did the best he could and God helped him to do still better, as we shall see. When Solomon was made king he was only a young man about twenty years of age. After he was fully established in the throne he worshiped God with many sacrifices. In this way he showed his desire to glorify God. This service was at Gibeon, where the old wilderness tabernacle was located. A great many people went there with him and Zadok, the high priest, offered the sacrifices. Solomon chose Gibeon rather than Mt. Zion, where the tabernacle (See 2 Chron. 1:3-6) was. Perhaps the reason was because Solomon was to build the temple, which came after the tabernacle.

**How Are You Choosing?** There is a story told about the choice of Hercules, who was the most famous of all the heroes of Grecian mythology. Two beautiful maidens called upon him in his youth, one named Pleasure and the other Virtue; the first one offered him a life of ease and delight, and the other a life of usefulness and fame. Hercules chose Virtue, and spent the greater part of his life in doing things to help weaker people with his wonderful strength. Two thousand years ago this story of Xenophon's about Hercules' choice delighted the people, for every one likes to see the right choice made between two possible opportunities. The most famous wrong choice ever made in real life is that of the rich young ruler

who came to Christ and asked Him what he must do to gain eternal life. Who can tell us what was his choice? (Matt. 19:21, 22.) Solomon belonged to the class who say, "I'll do my best."—Tarbell.

**"What Shall I Give You?"** When the sacrificing was over Solomon had gone to rest for the night. But there was not much sleep for him. The day had been full of great events and his mind was even fuller of great thoughts and ambitions. He was planning what he should do in order to fulfill all his father David had hoped. He was not thinking so much of wars and enemies as David had to and the most of the judges, but his thoughts went out towards the people he was to lead and train. At last he must have said to himself, "What a great work this is! How can I do it?" Just then he fell asleep. As he slept he had a dream or vision. It seemed as if God Himself appeared to him and said, "Ask what I shall give thee." He acknowledges all the goodness of God in bringing him to the throne; he confesses that the work is great, even too great for him to do alone; and then he said he would like to have wisdom to rule this great people aright. He must have been glad even in his dream that God appeared to him with promise of help.

**How Much Can You Take?** You—the boy who reads these words—still stand on the hillside. Beneath you is a barren soil, but measureless wealth. You may take away with you out of this mine of youth, the trade, the profession, the acuteness which, if you have adequate natural gifts, may make you many times a millionaire; or you may take the simple tastes and habits which will command for you a healthy, happy life. You may find

affections which will endure until death; or you may acquire vices which will taint your body and soul for all time.

More than all, it is on the height of youth that God speaks to each man the words which, if he takes them with him, will give him victory and peace, not only in this life, but in the life hereafter. What will you carry away? Now is the time to choose.—The Youth's Companion.

**God's Abundant Goodness.** God was pleased with the answer of Solomon. He showed His pleasure by giving more than Solomon asked; perhaps more than he dared to hope. Paul says that God is able to do for us abundantly above what we can ask or think. Here God says, "I have also given thee riches and honor." Think of the different ways God had blessed Solomon. He had given him a good father; He had filled him with a desire for peace; He had made the kingdom prosperous and at peace with all the world; He had multiplied the children of Israel until they were "a great people"; He had inspired him with a lofty idea of the needs of the nation; He had come to him in a vision and offered help; He had prompted him to make the request he did; He granted his requested promptly and generously; He threw in the "riches and honor" for good measure; He added also a special promise of long life for his continued obedience. Solomon did not win this part of the promise, for he was not obedient. He died at sixty years of age, but it was his own fault.

**Obedience Brings Blessing.** When "I will be wise" had come to mean "I will obey God and come near to Him, or let Him come near to me by my obedience," it was a resolution which was open to all men, the weakest and the humblest, as well as the strongest and highest, to make. The little child just putting a trembling foot onto the margin of the vast plain of life; the plough-boy busy at his work without a rest from morning till night, from year to year; the practical man strong in affairs but with no gift for abstract speculation; the poor, sick woman with no strength left but just to suffer—this new change of the Gospel threw open the gates of wisdom to them all. Then all could be wise.—Phillips Brooks.

**A Dream That Was Not All Dream.** We are not apt to think much of dreams, though sometimes they have a message and a meaning. In Solomon's day a dream usually meant something, and there were persons who claimed to be able to interpret dreams. God often spoke to men in dreams. So Solomon believed what the dream revealed to him. He was greatly encouraged because God had promised to help him. He

went to Jerusalem and offered sacrifices to the Lord before the ark. The burnt offerings meant that he dedicated himself to the Lord for whatever work there might be for him. The peace offerings were to show his gratitude and thanksgiving. Besides this, he made a jubilee feast to all his servants. In this way he won the friendship and service of all in yet greater degree. Solomon's wisdom was tested in the case of the two women and their babies. One of the babies had died, and each mother blamed the other for its death and each mother claimed the living child. Solomon was asked to say which was the real mother. He sent for a man with a sword and said that he would divide the living baby and give each woman one-half of it. The one woman agreed to that, but the other said, "O, my lord, give her the living child and do not slay it." Then Solomon knew that she was the real mother, and ordered the living child to be given to her at once. The Bible says that "God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the seashore."

**If I Had Only Known.** "When I was a lad, I accompanied my father, who was sent by the government to treat with a tribe of Indians in California. On the way we encamped for a week in what is now the State of Nevada, upon a certain bleak hillside. I might have bought the whole hill for ten dollars, but I slept and ate and amused myself, and paid no attention to the sterile ground beneath. My barren hill was the site of the famous Comstock lode, which has yielded hundreds of millions in silver and gold. To think that it all might have been mine if I had dug but a little way below the surface, as other men coming after me did."—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Was Solomon's choice the best he could make? Why not? 2. What are we apt to put first in our choices? 3. What ought we to put first? 4. What three books did Solomon write? 5. What did Christ say about Solomon's wisdom? Luke 11:31.

**Challenge Text.** "Seek ye first the kingdom of \_\_\_\_\_ and His \_\_\_\_\_ and all these \_\_\_\_\_ shall be added unto you.—Matt. 6: (9)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Youth is specially the time for choices that govern the life. 2. A right and wise choice is of great good, even though it seems to fail of realization. 3. We should watch lest the good cheat us out of the better and the best. 4. Our whole life is apt to turn on a few choices or even on one. 5. When we choose the best all needed inferior blessings are included. 6. Choice is a great exponent of character, and also a fashioner of character. 7. God gives liberally to the heart and life that is open to receive.

DR. J. M. COON.



# BUILDING THE TEMPLE

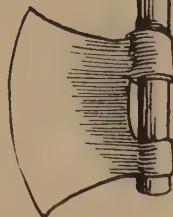
And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone



before  
it was  
brought  
thither:  
so that  
there was  
neither



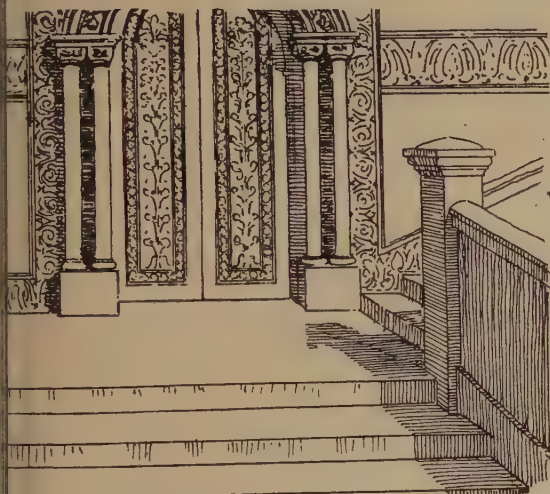
nor



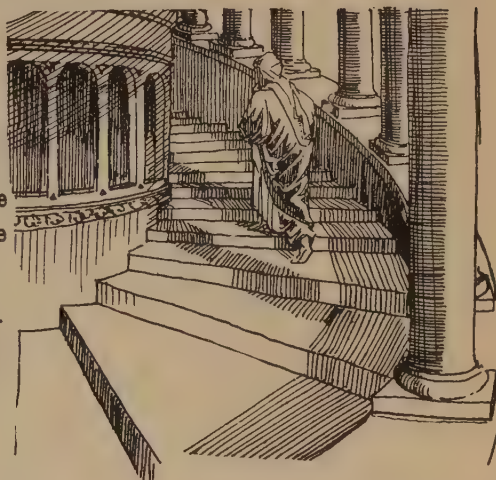
nor any



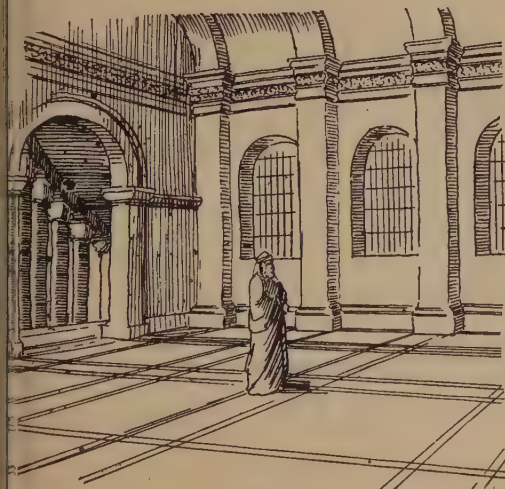
of iron heard in the house, while it was in building. The



of the  
middle  
chamber  
was in the  
right side  
of the  
house;  
and they  
went up  
with

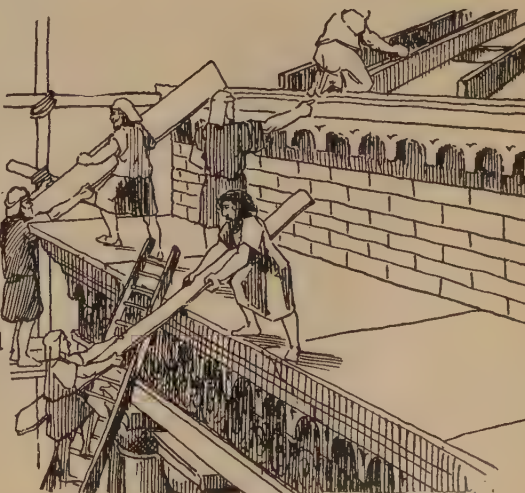


into the middle



and out of  
the middle  
into the  
third.

So he  
built the  
house, and  
finished it;  
and covered  
the house  
with



of cedar. And then he built chambers against all the house, five cubits high: and they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 KINGS 5:1-12 and 6:1-14.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we have a true reverence for Thee and for Thy house. Help us also to remember that we ourselves are temples of God. Enable us to make them fit dwelling places for Thee. May we cast out all that is displeasing to Thee. Abide in us by Thy Holy Spirit. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,  
As the swift seasons roll!  
Leave thy low-vaulted past!  
Let each new temple nobler than the last  
Shut thee from Heaven with a dome more vast.  
—O. W. Holmes.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1012. Place Mount Moriah. Persons, Solomon and his people.

**Scripture Setting:** Building the House of God. Right foundations, Isa. 44:18-28. Love for it, Psa. 84. Prayer in building, Dan. 9. Building securely, 1 Cor. 3:10-23. The true sanctuary, Eph. 2:13-22. Zeal for God's house, Psa. 69:1-9. The better temple, Heb. 9:1-28. The Heavenly temple, Rev. 21:1-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This great work of Solomon emphasizes some principles which apply to

all human undertakings. 1. He was providentially called to the work and specially fitted for it. 2. He had the advantage of much previous work, both general and special. 3. He was directed and sustained in it all by the good hand of God. 4. He had the co-operation of worldly forces and factors. 5. A remarkable providence overruled, so that every part fitted into its true place. 6. He persevered until the work was done. 7. He followed the Divine directions, and did all for the glory of God.

### THE GREATEST BUILDING IN THE WORLD.

**A Four-Fold Wonder.** What is the most famous building you ever saw or read about? However famous it was this is even more wonderful. It was wonderful because it stood for God dwelling among men. Like the tabernacle at first, it seemed to say, "God is here." It was wonderful because God gave the plan for it. It was just four times as large on the ground as the tabernacle was; and God told Moses exactly how to build the tabernacle. It was wonderful in its cost. David said that he had prepared a hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver, which alone would be equal to more than \$7,000,000,000. Besides this there was the brass, the iron, the stone, the cedar. Some of this money was deposited in the temple, dedicated to God. But a fabulous amount was used in the building itself. It was wonderful in its beauty. In its proportions it was harmonious and commanding; and the immense amount of gold and silver used, produced a wonderful effect in every detail of both the structure and its furnishings. It was wonderful in its deeper design and object. This was to declare and magnify Christ and His mission. Nearly every part of the building and furniture pointed to Christ and His sacrifice. Other buildings might be noted in one or two of these particulars, but no other building has ever been famous in all four of these ways.

**A More Wonderful Temple.** Do you remember the story of the lost portrait of Dante at Florence? A certain artist determined to find it again. He went into the palace where tradition said it had been painted. The room was used as a storehouse. The walls were covered with dirty whitewash. He had the heaps of rubbish carried away. Patiently and carefully he removed the whitewash.

Lines and colors long hidden began to appear; and at last the grave, lofty, noble face of the great poet looked out again upon the world of light. "That was wonderful," you say, "that was beautiful!" Not half so wonderful as the work which Christ came to do in the heart of man—to restore the forgotten image of God and bring the Divine image to the light. He comes to us with the knowledge that God's image is there, though concealed; He touches us with the faith that the likeness can be restored.  
—Henry Van Dyke.

**Who Built the Temple?** It is called Solomon's temple, because built during his reign; but it might be said to be wonderful again in that it had so many builders. In the first place, God built it in finishing the plan and giving the nation great prosperity and freedom from war; and in making the neighboring nations and kings friendly. Then David built it in collecting vast amounts of money and material for that very purpose. He built it, too, by planning and purposing it in his heart. He would have gone on to do the actual work, if God had permitted him. Because he was a man of war God planned that Solomon should do it. Also Hiram king of Tyre did much towards furnishing stone and cedar, and to that extent was a helper in the building. Lastly, the people wrought in many ways and so finished the great work. There were 70,000 porters, 80,000 stone hewers, and large numbers of other workers in the mines and woods, for transportation and construction. All those workmen were busy for seven and a half years before the whole building was finished.

**Give Christ the First Place.** A young preacher has just delivered a somewhat ambitious discourse in the annual meeting of the association and was feeling pretty well satisfied as to the impression he had made, when an old pastor quietly said to him, "My brother, give Christ His place." On



reviewing his discourse the young man was abashed to discover that he had not in any way connected Christ with his line of thought. A religious address that professes to be keyed on the Gospel, yet which contains no mention or suggestion of Christ, is radically defective. It is like summer with the sunshine left out. In every sermon Christ should have His place, and His place is by no means unimportant.—Exchange.

**Its Religious Meaning.** The very purpose of this splendid building was to glorify God. And since God planned it and the tabernacle as His dwelling places we know that it was intended for man's worship. Some of the things which we learned about the tabernacle we are now reminded of again. One peculiar thing in the work of putting the building together was that the great building rose up quietly with no sound of hammer or chisel. All the stones and beams were shaped and fitted before they were brought on the ground. The temple had two courts about it, one for the people and one for the priests. In the court of the priests was the great altar of burnt offerings, made of unhewn stones. Near this stood a large tank for water. It was made of brass, and was supported by twelve oxen also of brass. In this tank the water was kept for washing the offerings. On the right side in the Holy Place were ten tables bearing the shew bread and the golden vessels of the sanctuary; the altar of incense stood near the vail in the center; ten golden candlesticks instead of one as in the tabernacle stood on the left side. Before the Holy Place there was a house of marble and cedar where the chief priest and his sons dwelt. Outside of the temple proper there were rooms for the priests also. These could be entered from the outside only. The Holy of Holies was separated from the Holy Place by a great vail, as in the tabernacle. In it was the ark, which contained the two tables of stone. Two large angelic figures overlaid with gold stretched their wings from one wall to the other, the tips of two wings meeting above the cherubims that covered the mercy seat. Into this room only the high priest entered, and that once a year.

**The Temple a Spiritual Picture.** Of its parts the outer court has been held to represent the world; the altar of burnt offerings, Christ the great sin offering; the Holy Place, the church; the light of the golden candlestick, the light of God and Christ to the church; the table of shew bread, Christ the Bread of Life; the altar of incense, the prayers and spiritual sacrifices of the church; the Holy of Holies, Heaven; the high priest is also a type of our great High Priest, who "rent the vail in twain" between the Holy and Most Holy place, thus signifying that the "way into Heaven is now open."—Johnson.

**Temple Promise and Prosperity.** God made it favorable for the building of the temple as we have seen. Even the heathen king Hiram sent his servants to greet Solomon. When he learned that Solomon was to build a temple, he said, "Blessed be the Lord who hath given unto David, a wise son to rule over this great people." God was pleased also when the temple was finished. The prosperity which He had given for many years was continued, as we shall see.

This great truth is illustrated also in all ages. The tabernacle grew into the temple; the temple was followed by the synagogue; and now we have the church everywhere as the place where God especially meets man. The presence of the church, the visible temple of God, is always a sign of prosperity. It is also a source and cause of still other blessings. No one chooses to make his home where there are no churches. Therefore, also, everyone should be glad to do his part in sustaining the church temple and its worship. Each person will receive the largest spiritual blessings, and the best earthly blessings, too, only by personal service and worship in the church of Jesus Christ. Best of all, when one becomes himself a temple of God, for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is the great privilege of each person, and God is constantly calling upon us to dedicate ourselves to His worship, service and praise. The Holy Spirit is promised to conduct the exercises in this wonderful temple of the soul; and He will use all our powers to glorify God and make known His goodness and grace to others.

And both these temples—the house of God and the soul of man—should be kept true and pure for the purpose God intended.

**The True Spirit of Worship.** When Abraham was on his way to Mount Moriah to offer his beloved son, Isaac, in obedience to the Divine command, he bade the servants: "Stand ye here, while I and the lad go yonder to worship." Well it is for the devout soul thus to address the elements that tend to distract when in the place of prayer—"Care and anxiety, worldly thought, fear and doubt, stand ye here while I go yonder!" Oh, for the true spirit of worship which can leave all these undesirable aliens outside the door when we enter the Holy Place!—Reformed Church Record.

**Challenge Text.** "Know ye not that ye are the — of God, and that the — of God — in you." 1 Cor. 3: (6).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The house of God should receive the best and largest gifts. 2. Every one may be a temple of the Holy Spirit. 3. The house of God is pre-eminently a place for prayer and worship. 4. Believers are as stones for the Heavenly temple, and are being fitted and polished here. 5. The house of God, without God in it, is a misnomer and a disgrace.

DR. J. M. COON.

## THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of



all this  
prayer and  
supplication  
unto the  
Lord, he



from before  
the altar of  
the Lord, from  
kneeling on  
his knees with  
his hands  
spread up  
to heaven.  
And he  
stood,  
and



all the  
congregation  
of Israel with  
a loud voice,  
saying, Blessed  
be the Lord,  
that hath given  
rest unto his  
people Israel,  
according to  
all that he

promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise which he promised by the hand of



his  
servant.  
The  
Lord our  
God be  
with us,  
as he was  
with our



let him not leave us, nor forsake us: That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers.



# THE TEMPLE DEDICATED.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 KINGS 8.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we think less about our outer selves and more about our real selves, the soul temple. Thou hast made us for Thyself; so may we be ready always to welcome Thee to our temple home. May we not allow any enemies or unclean things to hide and lurk in any room or corner. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"My body is the temple of my God,  
For He has said it! Well or poorly kept,  
My glory or disgrace, yet His abode,  
And every deed I do or thought I think  
Makes record on the temple instantly."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1005. Place, Mt. Moriah. Persons: Solomon and the people.

**Scripture Setting:** God in His temple. The God of the ark, Psa. 68:1-20. Latter day glory, Hag. 2:1-9. Going to the sanctuary, Psa. 122. Jesus cleanses the temple, John 2:13-22. The tabernacle, Ex. 26:1-37. Cleansing the heart temple, Psa. 51. The corner stone, 1 Pet. 2:1-10. The household of God, Eph. 2:11-22.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** Looking at the temple as a symbol of God dwelling with man, we dis-

cover several important truths. 1. The sanctuary is a vital factor in the world's history. 2. It speaks of the patience and condescension of God. 3. It declares God the author of salvation and the One worthy of worship. 4. It is a call and challenge to man to consider the claims of God. 5. It reveals the plan of God for the conquest of the world. 6. It affirms the blindness and indifference of the carnal heart. 7. It is nothing and worse than nothing if God is not in it.

### THE DEDICATION OF TWO TEMPLES.

**The Ark of God's Covenant.** Dedications of all kinds usually go in couplets. There is the dedication of the doer and the dedication of the thing done. A boy may complete a good work of any kind, and this is its dedication, but he has given himself to the work with determination and purpose, and that is his dedication. So with a girl; so with a business man; so with man or woman in any relation of life. We say that a church is dedicated, yes, but the church members were dedicated first, and possibly again afterwards. We shall find that to be the case here. Do you see those people bearing the ark? They are active and joyous from the king to the least one who is helping in the service. We have seen that ark again and again, in many places and conditions. It was first placed in the tabernacle, and was the chief reason for building the tabernacle. Now that the temple is finished king Solomon orders the ark brought into the Holy of Holies. No wonder they offered sacrifices and rejoiced in the Lord and before Him. It is the time of the feast of tabernacles, and the city is full of people. Then the service of dedication draws even a larger number than usual. The bringing up of the ark to the city was the greatest event in David's reign; so now the bringing of it from its temporary tent on Mt. Zion was the crowning glory of Solomon's reign.

**What the Ark Meant.** The ark may be taken as a picture of the Divine Presence, or the Divine plan in human life. It was a visible form of an invisible power. Here was the abiding-place of the symbol of the Divine Presence. The law was placed in the ark to show that the centre and heart of all things is righteousness. On this God's throne is founded. According to righteousness He rules all things. The law is the very natural breath

and atmosphere of Heaven. When we have reached perfection, we do right as naturally as we live. Jesus Christ "puts his law in our hearts, and writes it upon our minds."—Peloubet.

**The Outshining of God's Glory.** And now a very wonderful thing happened. The priests carried the ark into the Holy of Holies and placed it under the wings of the cherubim angels. The other part of the temple was filled with priests and singers clothed in white and with harps in their hands. They were rejoicing with the king and reciting the words, "O, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever." Round about was the immense throng of spectators. Solomon himself sat upon a brazen platform, surrounded with his guard of five hundred men, each with his shield of gold. It was a thrilling moment in this great and joyous service. Suddenly when the rejoicing was at its highest the glory of the Lord filled all the house like a golden cloud. The brightness was so great that the priests could not stay and minister, but were obliged to go out of the temple and stand in the court. All this is fully set forth by the many beautiful illustrations. Solomon knew what the glory meant, and he rejoiced that God showed His approval in this marked way.

**Keep the Soul Temple Glorious.** How many girls remember that to each one of them has been given a dwelling, which is entrusted to her exclusive care, and which no one but herself can cleanse or keep in order? It matters little whose hands sweep or dust the room in which she sleeps and eats. But that inner chamber in which the soul dwells she alone can keep in order. Does she examine it every morning, to sweep out the vulgarity, the malice, the indolent indifference to God and His truth which she may find there? She does not open her house at night for noxious insects and foul

birds to harbor in it. Does she thrust out with equal zeal all trivial thoughts and gossip, with their malignant sting, from that most secret chamber? She may live in a hut or in a palace. But that place in which her soul dwells is unseen by mortal eye. It is her work to keep it clean and pure as long as life lasts.—*Youth's Companion*.

**The Place of God's Dwelling.** The tabernacle was the meeting place of God and man. Now that the Israelites were no longer wandering in the wilderness a more permanent building was desirable. The temple served this purpose for hundreds of years, and itself pointed on to Jesus Christ, the true temple in whom alone God and man can meet. Solomon has felt the presence of God; and as we see him there with hands extended, he has just finished the prayer of dedication. While praying he knelt before God, and now he stands to give a kingly blessing to all the people. In the prayer he has offered he has made many requests: That God would regard the oath made at the altar, and require its fulfillment; that He would maintain the cause of Israel against their enemies; that He would hear and answer their prayer for rain; that He would protect them from famine, pestilence and plague; that He would grant equal blessings to the stranger "that all people of the earth may know Thy name to fear Thee"; that He would guide and prosper His people in battle; that He would forgive, receive and restore them when they were carried into captivity. This was a remarkable prayer for a king to make, and Solomon must have been helped by the Holy Spirit. At the close of the prayer, fire came from Heaven and burned the bodies of the animals that had been prepared as sacrifices. This was further proof of God's presence and approval.

**The Believer is God's Temple.** Said a great king once, "Where I sleep, there is the palace." Each one of us may say, Where I am, there is God's temple. "See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount," were the words ringing in the ears of Moses as he came down Mount Sinai to become the architect of God's dwelling place, the tent of worship. We have had a pattern given us; if we model our lives upon Christ's life, God will dwell in us.—*Tarbell*.

**Dedication of the Second Temple.** The king and people were the second temple. They had dedicated themselves to this great task at the first, for it never would have been accomplished otherwise. It meant very

much of purpose, heroic work and sacrifice. Now that it is all done they dedicated themselves again. When Solomon ceased praying he turned to the people and blessed them. He thanked God for His favor up to the present time; he publicly acknowledges the fulfillment of all His promises; he prayed that God might continue with them, and enable both king and people to do all the Divine will. This was even more pleasing to God than the dedication of the temple of stone, for God thinks much more of souls than He does of stones. The two chief purposes of the material temple and of every church building are to make us think of the Christ temple and to help us build the soul temple. There were seven days of this dedication service, and then seven days more of joyous celebration at the feast of tabernacles. Then Solomon dismissed the people who were "glad of heart" because God had shown them so many and so great favors.

After this Solomon built a palace for himself in Jerusalem, and a palace for his wife, who was a daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. He also built fine houses for himself in other cities. He was thirteen years doing this, and the nation was greatly prospered. Of Solomon's glory and fame we will learn more in the next story.

**Dedicate the Soul Temple.** If God says to us, in the bright promise of youth, "Ask what I shall give thee," let us make the best choice, and answer: "Give me grace to know Thy Son, the Christ, and to grow like Him;" for that is the true wisdom which leads to eternal life, and that is the true royalty which brings dominion over self, and that is the true happiness which flows unsought from fellowship with the Divine Life.—*Henry Van Dyke*.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What three temples are there in the spiritual kingdom? 2. Why are churches dedicated? 3. How and why should we dedicate ourselves as temples of God? See Rom. 12:1. 4. In what ways may God answer prayer? 5. How was Solomon's prayer answered?

**Challenge Text.** "I was — when they said unto me, Let us — into the — of the Lord." Psa. 122: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. A great man is still greater when he honors God. 2. True prayer includes reverent and joyous adoration. 3. God's character and providence are the sure bases of appeal to Him. 4. Man's unworthiness, need and sin are the best plea for mercy and blessing. 5. Prayer should be specific, but always submissive to the Divine will. 6. Nations as well as individuals need the prayers of God's people.

DR. J. M. COON.





## QUEEN OF SHEBA AT THE COURT OF SOLOMON

BY SCHOPIN

"King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and wisdom." The Queen of Sheba, hearing of his fame, visited Solomon with a great train of followers on camels, bringing gold and precious stones and other gifts, traveling across the desert to meet Solomon, that she might learn of his wisdom and greatness. When she had seen all the queen exclaimed: "Behold, the half was not told me."

We see, in the picture by Schopin, the courtyard of Solomon partly surrounded by magnificent buildings, the grand doorway being at the right hand, where the great king is coming out to greet the visiting queen. On the parapet of cut stone are costly vessels and beside them a youth with a tray of refreshments. There are other attendants, one holding up the train of the king's garment, others bearing fans and a sun umbrella, while a lion chained to the wall crouches there, as the custom was to keep such fierce creatures to add to the sense of power and majesty.

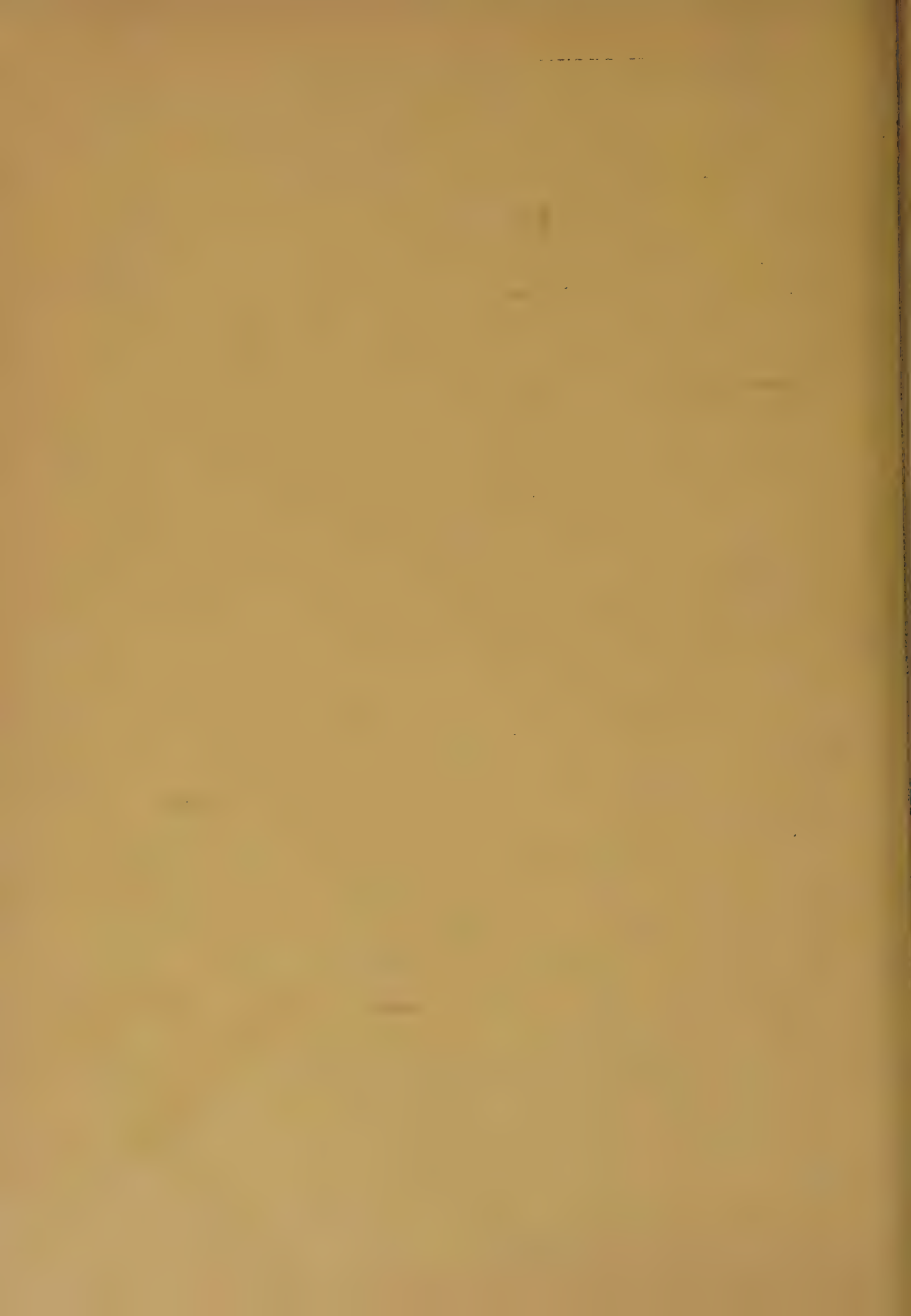
A rich carpet is spread on the doorstep, and on it are carved benches to aid the queen in dismounting. A richly decorated camel is kneeling as he has been taught, to make dismounting easy. The queen is an elegant lady, holding her scepter, and about to descend to take the outstretched hand of Solomon. The queen's Ethiopian attendants coming from a hot country wear very few clothes, which adds to the picturesqueness of the scene. A slave holds a fan of ostrich feathers over the queen's head, and all suggests the life of wealth and luxury which has been hers. The French artist has composed a gorgeous scene worthy of this remarkable incident.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE QUEEN OF SHEBA AT THE COURT OF SOLOMON.





# THE FAME OF SOLOMON

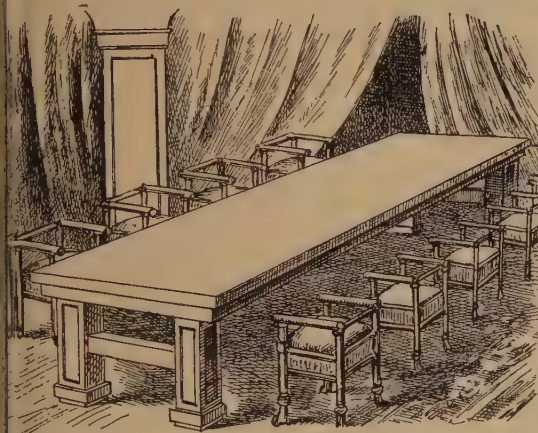
And when the



of Sheba  
had seen  
all Solo-  
mon's  
wisdom,  
and the



that he had built, And the meat of his



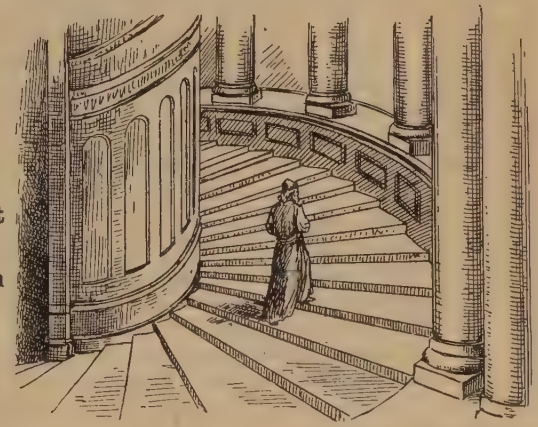
and the  
sitting  
of his



and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his



and  
his  
ascent  
by  
which  
he



unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 KINGS 10:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the King of kings and the Lord of lords. With Thee are all the treasures of wisdom, power and grace. Thou dost invite all to come unto Thee, and Thou dost not turn any empty away. Thy gifts are peace, pardon, joy and life, eternal life. Draw us that we may delight to sit at Thy feet and receive of Thy bounty and mercy. And may we find that Thou dost give us Thyself also. For Christ's sake. Amen.

I came and communed with that mighty King,  
And told Him all my heart; I cannot say  
In mortal ear what communings were they.  
But wouldst thou know, go, too, and meekly bring  
All that is in thy heart, and thou shalt hear  
His voice of love and power, His answers sweet and clear.

—F. R. Havergal.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 995. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Solomon, queen of Sheba, courtiers.

**Scripture Setting:** Kingly Glory and Grace. Christ's power and glory, Rev. 1:7-20. The King of kings, Matt. 2:1-11. Prophecy of kingship, Zech. 9:9-17. A great King, Psalms 95. Kingship by the cross, John 3:11-21. Worthy of homage, Phil. 2:1-11. Prince of peace, Isa. 9:1-7. A price and a Saviour, Acts 5:24-32.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** By suggestion and analogy this historical incident teaches us how to find the King of kings, the Saviour. 1. The queen of Sheba was willing to listen to reports of Solomon, so we should inform ourselves about Christ. 2. The queen decides to test the reports for her-

self, so we should personally come and test Christ. 3. She comes with open mind and heart, and with generous gifts; so we should come to Christ, and even in our poverty, need and sin we may come. 4. She receives Solomon's answers and wisdom and is humbly obedient and receptive; so we should be before and with Christ. 5. She joyfully witnesses to his power and glory; so we should confess the glory, grace and pardon of Christ. 6. She gave to Solomon fabulous gifts, and personal praise to Solomon's God; so we should bring gifts to Christ, first giving ourselves. 7. She received the blessing and gifts of Solomon and returned to her own country; so we should come to Christ for salvation and equipment and then go to our own and other lands with the wonderful, wonderful message of life.

### A FAMOUS BIBLE KING.

**More and More Prospered.** "Hurry now, we must go early and get a good position." This you have heard more than once, when people were planning to see the president or some other great person. Our story is about a famous king of the olden time, and about a queen who was anxious to see for herself, and learn if he was as great and wise as some people had reported. The king was Solomon, the king of Israel and the queen was the queen of Sheba. Solomon had prospered in every way, since he became king. He was famous for his wisdom especially. He had asked God for that, you remember. He had written several thousand proverbs, and he knew very much about plants, birds, animals, fishes and insects. He was also the richest king in all the world, and all nations were friendly to him. Because of all this his fame spread abroad over all the world. The wonderful temple he had built, and his own palace also helped to make his fame and name known. He used very much gold and ivory in his palaces and public buildings. This made them look brilliant beyond anything which had ever been known. It was said that silver was as plentiful as stones in the streets. Wouldn't you have liked to see king Solomon if you had lived in his day?

**How to See the King.** First of all, I got a card of invitation. It was only a little card, but it was the command of my king, and I must obey. Then

I got a letter from a government office telling me exactly what I must wear. Every little thing was commanded—the hat, the coat, the black silk stockings, the silver buckles, the shoes, the white gloves, and, because I was a minister of the Word of God, over all I was to wear a scarlet robe, with two broad bands of white silk down the front of it. Nothing was left to my own choice; everything must be right if I was to see the king. So the Bible tells us that those who are to see God must wear the right dress, the robe of righteousness, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.—Rev. J. C. Gibson.

**The Visit of a Queen.** Among those who heard of Solomon was this queen of Sheba. This was a wealthy country in Arabia, nearly fifteen hundred miles from Jerusalem. Though it was a long journey, very long for those days, yet she planned to take it in person. She was very rich, and so she brought many servants with her, and a long caravan of camels loaded with spices and gold for king Solomon. She came to ask especially about his religion and his God. She had not been taught about the true God and she was willing to learn of Him. Solomon received her kindly, answered her many questions, and showed her all the great buildings he had built. She was taken through Solomon's palace, and saw the splendor of his table and servants. She was not allowed to enter the temple, but she saw the private stairway by which the king entered for worship. As she had come to make a thor-



ough test and examination, so Solomon freely showed her all things. The Saviour King freely gives salvation to any who will come and accept it.

**Come and See for Yourself.** Moody is said to have stopped once in the midst of a sermon to boys to offer a book to anyone who would come up and get it. All hesitated, but at length a bold youngster advanced and received the volume. That was Moody's way of illustrating God's gift of life through Christ. It will never be forced upon anyone, but the offer is open to all. We have only to step forward and receive the gift.—Exchange.

**"The Half Was Not Told Me."** This is what the queen says after she has seen all. No doubt she expected to dazzle king Solomon with her riches and glory. But he so far exceeded all she had heard that "there was no more spirit in her." She was astonished and bewildered. It all seemed more like a dream or some wonderful fairy story. She would not believe even the reports she had heard, but now she confessed that it all far surpassed any reports. She praised Solomon, and also the people who were permitted to hear his wisdom continually. She said, "Blessed be the Lord thy God, who delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel." Some think that she accepted the true God and ever after worshipped Him. Then she gave Solomon one hundred and twenty talents of gold, equal to about three million dollars. She also gave him a great store of spices and precious stones, such as they never had seen before. Solomon also gave the queen rich presents from the royal bounty and many other gifts besides. She then returned to her own land.

**More and More Glorious.** This meeting of Solomon and the queen of Sheba caused two quite opposite effects. Of the queen it is said, that "there was no more spirit in her." This was as if she said, "I can't equal this and I will not try." As to Solomon, it had just the opposite effect. For the next ten or twelve years he was even more constant and active in making himself famous. It was as if he said, "I can do much more than I have, and I'll prove it to the world." At least his actions said this. The queen's praise was a whisper to his vanity and pride, and he was quick to hear it. "He exceeded all the

kings of the earth for riches and wisdom." They came to him from far and near. Among the presents that were brought to him were some horses. That seemed to give him an idea for splendor and glory. Very soon he had "a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen." For these he secured horses from Egypt and from Syria and from the Hittites. In this way Solomon seemed to be growing greater and greater. Was he really? We shall see in the next story. But meantime we tremble for this great king because he had a heathen princess for a wife, and now had brought horses and chariots into his kingdom. Can you guess what these acts meant to the future of Solomon?

**Avoid the Taint of Sin.** A famous artist said he would never allow himself to look at an inferior drawing or painting, to do anything that was low or demoralizing, lest familiarity with it should taint his own ideal, and thus be communicated to his brush. There is everything in holding a high ideal of your work. Hold the idea of excellence constantly in your mind, for whatever model the mind holds the life copies. What we think, that we become. Never allow yourself for an instant to harbor the thought of deficiency, inferiority. Reach to the highest; cling to it. Take no chances with anything that is inferior. Whatever your vocation, let quality be your life slogan. And above all, let this be your rule in spiritual things. Choose Christ, alone, and serve Him heartily and fully.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many of the "seven wise men" of Greece can you name? 2. Quote one or more of Solomon's proverbs. 3. Quote any famous sayings of others. 4. Who was "Poor Richard," and what was he famous for? 5. Define a proverb. See Dictionary. 6. What gifts were brought to the Christ babe, and when and by whom? 7. What is true wisdom? See Eccl. 12:13, 14, Job. 28:28, Luke 11:49, 1 Cor. 1:24-30.

**Challenge Text.** "Behold, a — than — is here." Matt. 12:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. A nation is blessed and honored when it has wise rulers. 2. Christ attracts by the wonders of His wisdom, grace, love and life. 3. The worship of God has the promise of temporal as well as of eternal blessing. 4. The half can never be told of Christ's grace and glory as a Saviour. 5. The people of God should impart blessing to all whom they meet. 6. The world is studying Christ as shown in the believer, in the Church and in the Christian nation. 7. How fully and fairly do we represent Christ in our relations with others? 8. Riches, glory and honor cannot give happiness, but Christ can and does.

DR. J. M. COON.

## SOLOMON'S SIN

For it came to pass, when Solomon was  
that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his



heart was  
not perfect  
with the  
Lord his  
God, as  
was the  
heart of



his father. For Solomon went after

the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the  
abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil



in  
the



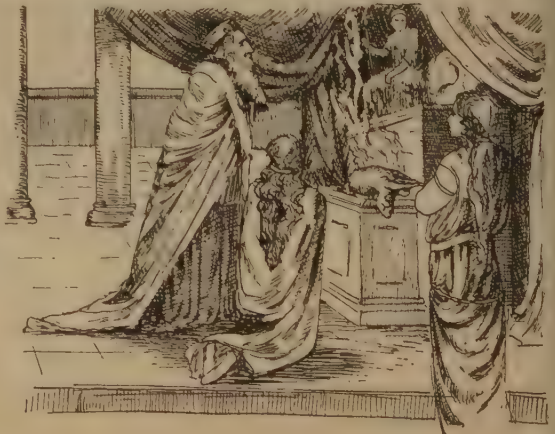
sight of the Lord, and went not fully after the Lord,  
as did David his father. Then did Solomon build an

the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise

for Che-  
mosh, the  
abom-  
ination  
of Moab,  
in the  
hill that  
is before  
Jeru-  
salem,  
and for



did  
he for  
all his  
strange  
wives,  
which  
burnt  
incense  
and



unto their gods.



THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I KINGS 11:4-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help us to see the nature and power of sin. Then only will we be able to see Thee, and welcome Thee as a Saviour. May we avoid the fatal mistake of being satisfied with merely temporal good. Grant us the best spiritual blessings, even Thyself as Saviour, Guide, Helper, Friend. Then only are we safe from sin and sure of Heaven. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Mortal sins thou goest out to battle,

Monsters shapen out of thine own breath,  
Traitorous senses, oh, the very clay

Thou art made, of! Fight then to the death,  
For the Lord thy God is with thee in this day!

—Mrs. Spofford.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 995. Places, Jerusalem and neighboring hills. Persons, Solomon, his wives, the Lord.

**Scripture Setting:** The Doom of the Wicked. Warnings of God, Deut. 8:1-20. A sinful nation, Jer. 7:1-10. Doom of the wicked, Psalms. 9. Causes of downfall, Isa. 1:10-24. Fate of the ungodly, Ezek. 26:7-14. The ungodly heart, Heb. 3:1-13. The call to all, Prov. 8:1-7. Last call of grace, Rev. 22:12-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is a common picture of the tactics and progress of sin in the

soul and life. 1. A weakening of the inner spiritual forces of heart and conscience, verse 4. 2. A gradual departure from the right in outward conduct, verses 5, 6. 3. Increasing in sin and multiplying times, ways and places of sin, verses 7, 8. 4. Resisting the continued and emphatic warnings of God, verses 9, 10. 5. Provoking God to judgment, and so failing of the mercies and blessings previously enjoyed, verse 11. 6. Failing to turn and repent, even when unexpected mercy is extended, verses 12, 13. 7. Bringing the individual and the nation into many life entanglements, and consequent misery.

GREATEST FOLLY OF THE WISEST KING.

**Weakness in Solomon's Greatness.** "All is not gold that glitters." This was true in king Solomon's case. Solomon had a gold throne, and gold steps to it, and gold, gold in abundance and for every purpose. But he did not have a heart of pure gold. That is, his heart was not fully right before God. When he had that night vision and God said, "Ask what I shall give thee" he asked for that which would make him famous as an earthly king. That was a good thing to ask, but it was not the best. Solomon kept prospering as an earthly king and became more and more famous for his wisdom, power and glory. He even worshiped God and sacrificed to Him. But he also allowed the worship of other gods, and at last began to worship them himself. This all came about because he did not fully follow God and obey Him. And it began by his not making the best choice at first. This was the weakness in his greatness. It led to his marrying a heathen princess, the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. She brought her idol gods with her and so idolatry began. Then there were more wives and more false gods, until Solomon forgot the true God almost entirely. "His heart was not perfect with the Lord."

**Is the Heart Right?** You cannot make intellect the basis of character, because some of the most intellectual people I ever knew had no character. Nor can you make the will the basis of character, because some of the most self-willed people I ever saw were characterless. Neither can you make conscience the basis of character, because conscience is largely a thing of education, somewhat like the fellow who said, when he first joined the church, that any little thing he did wrong turned

his conscience, but he said, 'I have got so now I can steal a horse and it doesn't bother me at all.' Therefore the will, the intellect or the conscience cannot be made the foundation of character.

"If I were seeking an enduring foundation on which to rest character, I would make the affections the basis, for the heart controls all the rest."—Sam Jones.

**The Wife's Great Influence.** Even one wife has great power in the home, as wife and mother. She can make or mar the home. Happy indeed is that home when the wife and mother loves the true God and worships Him by word and life. Solomon's wife was not such a woman, but a heathen who worshiped false gods. And he had not only one such, but seven hundred of them, all worshipping false gods. Then he had three hundred partial or inferior wives, who also were heathen. Poor Solomon! What chance had he to be good? But it was all his own fault, for not one of these bad women could have become the king's wife without his choosing her. Now it is said that "his wives turned away his heart after other gods." He seemed at first to try to worship the true God also; but it was only for a short time. He soon gave up to the many false gods of his wives. And even when he was worshipping God also, God was not pleased with that. God will not be an "also" God. He is the only true God, and He must have the full worship of the whole heart. And we all can see that this is reasonable and is also the very best thing for us.

**Influence of Wife and Mother.** A group of people were studying the heavens, and wondering what was the center of the universe.

"Well, Johnny, give us your opinion of it all," demanded one of the party, turning toward a small boy. "What is the center of the universe?"

"Maw," answered Johnny, promptly.

There was a ripple of laughter, and then the acquiescing comment of the questioner:

"Well, I suppose she is—to him."

"Alas, he voiced a greater truth than he know!" whispered a mirthful member of the circle into a sympathetic ear. "I don't think I ever knew anyone more self-assured of being the center of the universe than is 'Maw.' All with whom she has anything to do must revolve around her if they revolve at all."—Exchange.

**Some of the False Gods.** The pictures of them are enough for us. I am sure none of us would begin to worship such things as those. Perhaps you say, "Oh, no, I would rather not have any god." But after all that is a kind of god, and his name is No-god. For some reasons he is the very worst false god. Now let us see what some of these false gods meant. You can study the pictures as we find out about them. There is Ashtoreth, also called Astarte. She was the goddess of the Zidonians who copied her from the wicked Venus of Phoenicia. In the worship of her the worst kind of sins were practiced, and she was supposed to be pleased with it. How very different from the true God, who cannot even look upon sin with the least bit of favor or approval. There is Milcom, which is the same as Molech. This was an idol made of brass and children were sacrificed to it. It was made with great arms and grasping fingers which held the boy or girl fast until the body was all burned up. Our true God, who is Jesus Christ, took the children in his arms, but in order to bless them. Christ loves all the children and all children can easily love Him. There is Chemosh, that is much like Astarte and Molech. The name may be one thing or another, but all are false.

**How a Boy Destroyed a False God.** A boy who attends one of our Sunday schools went out in the country to spend his vacation, and went to help the men harvest. One of the men was an inveterate swearer. The boy, having stood it as long as he could, said to the man, "Well, I guess I will go home tomorrow." The swearer, who had taken a great liking to him, said: "I thought you were going to stay all summer." "I was," said the boy, "but I cannot stay where anybody swears so; one of us must go, so I will leave." The man felt the rebuke, and said: "If you will stay I won't swear," and he kept his word. Boys, take a bold stand for the right; throw your influence on the side of Christ, and you will sow seed, the harvest of which you will reap, both in this world and that which is to come.—Kind Words.

**Solomon the Idolator.** It was bad enough for Solomon to allow his wives to worship

false gods. This itself was sinful, for he might have prevented it easily. And God holds us responsible for things which we might prevent. But Solomon did not stop at merely allowing idolatry in others. He himself began to be an idolator. It is said that "his heart was not perfect with the Lord," and then "he did evil in the sight of the Lord," and at last we are told that "likewise did he for all his strange wives." His progress in sin is rapid and all because he followed his own selfish will and pride rather than God. His heart was never right, and so at last his life shows it in open idolatry and rebellion. God had been good to him and had appeared twice to him to warn him against the very sins he is now committing. Solomon was willing to use God to advance him in his earthly glory and kingdom. But he never asked God for that higher wisdom which alone can save one from self and sin and Satan. The next story will tell how God punished Solomon and even the mercy in the punishment was "for David's sake." So the wisest king in all the world committed the greatest folly and sin.

**Where Solomon Failed.** The natives of India used to say of Sir Henry Lawrence: "When Sir Henry looked up twice to heaven and once down to earth, and then stroked his beard, he knew what to do." This suggests the elements of a successful life, especially for one intrusted as a ruler or leader of his people. Solomon was to look up and "seek out all the commandments of the Lord." He was to do the great work that lay about him; and all this was to be done with a meditative, thoughtful spirit; with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts. Solomon had the outward look of policy and progress, and the inward look of pride and vanity; but he failed to take the upward look of confession, humility and faith.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many wives did Solomon have and what kind? 2. What good traits did Solomon have? 3. What good and great work did he do? 4. What was his fatal lack? 5. How alone may we be saved from sin and kept in the time of temptation?

**Challenge Text.** "Keep thy \_\_\_\_\_ with all \_\_\_\_\_, for out of it are the \_\_\_\_\_ of life." Prov. 4: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. If even Solomon fell, who is safe? 2. The folly of trying to live a good life without Christ and His guidance. 3. The power of a choice that is best as well as wise. 4. The life of sin is usually started in little omissions and transgressions. 5. Many hindering providences are gracious warnings and barriers against a life of sin. 6. Every sin injures others as well as the sinner, and is specially directed against God. 7. Judgment against sin may be long delayed, but falls at last. "Be sure your sin will find you out."

DR. J. M. COON.



So when all Israel saw that the

hearkened not unto them, the people answered the

king,  
saying,  
What  
portion  
have  
we in  
David?



neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your

O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the

of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. Then king



Reho-  
boam



sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel

with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his

to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the



house  
of  
David  
unto  
this  
day.  
And it  
came  
to pass,  
when



all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and

over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 12:16-20.

**Prayer:** Out of the good and the evil of the past, O Lord, may we find wisdom and warning for our own lives. What is loyal to Thee may we follow. What is wicked may we put aside. May the follies of youth pass from us, and the counsel of Thy ministers be heeded by us. Amen.

“From war’s alarms, from deadly pestilence  
Be Thy strong arm our ever sure defense;  
Thy true religion in our hearts increase,  
Thy bounteous goodness nourish us in peace.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 976. Place, Jerusalem, the capital of Judea; Shechem, 30 miles north of Jerusalem, where the division was enacted. Persons, Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Ahijah and leaders of the tribes.

**Scripture Setting:** Pride and Evil Company. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly. Psa. 1:1. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Prov. 1:10. Enter not into

the paths of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Prov. 4:14. Every one that is proud is an abomination to the Lord. Prov. 16:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. A story of two young men who were given kingdoms. 2. The folly of pride as illustrated by Rehoboam. 3. The evil heritage from Solomon to his son. 4. The cost of evil companionship. 5. The uprising of the common people.

### A YOUNG KING’S FOLLY.

**Solomon’s Kingdom.** For years before king Solomon died and left his kingdom to his son Rehoboam, it had been like a glittering soap bubble, ready at a touch to burst. The people had been ground to dust under its heavy burdens of taxation for all kinds of lavish expenditure by the great king. He had built himself the finest palace in the world; had erected all kinds of idol temples for his thousand wives and concubines; had levied a great army and built a navy, and had made his people poor and desperate by his extravagances. His most cruel act was to take them from their homes and fields and compel them to labor for months upon his public enterprises.

He had corrupted the religion of Jehovah by allowing his many wives to import their heathen worship into the land, and supplant the worship of the one true God of Israel. The time had come in God’s providence to break in pieces a despotic empire and to restore to the people their right to liberty and happiness.

**Solomon’s Son.** When Solomon came to die, he named his son Rehoboam to succeed him. This young man was brought up in luxury and viciousness. His father had lost the religious fervor of his earlier manhood, and his mother, Naamah by name, was from the idolatrous country of Ammon, and had succeeded in having Solomon erect a costly temple to the cruel god Moloch over against the Jewish temple. Jerusalem, the capital city, had become corrupted by the vices of many nations brought thither through the evil tolerance of king Solomon.

Rehoboam was about twenty-one at his father’s death, and because of the great reverence of the nation for his grandfather,

David, he could easily have held the love and loyalty of the people and placed his kingdom upon a sure foundation of peace and prosperity. His father’s abuses he could have corrected and by a little kindness to his oppressed and troubled subjects he could have entered upon a great and popular reign. He had a magnificent opportunity as a young king.

**The Plea of the People.** No sooner had young Rehoboam begun his reign than the people made ready to ask that relief should be granted them from certain forms of oppression. They wanted the lowering of their taxes, which under Solomon had grown onerous and impoverishing. Everything that one ate or drank or wore or owned was taxed to an extreme; a few rich people were growing richer, but the masses of the poor were becoming poorer each year, notwithstanding the fruitfulness of field and vineyard and orchard.

But more than the heavy and exasperating tax was the cruel demand of compulsory labor upon Solomon’s many public enterprises, which were undertaken not for the good of the nation, but for the glorification of the king. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin at the south had less grievance because they were in a sense the beneficiary of Solomon’s schemes, but the “ten tribes” to the north felt the hardness of the conditions, and it was from these great tribes that there came the insistent and bold yet courteous plea to king Rehoboam to lighten their burdens.

**The Counsel of Wise Men.** Rehoboam went in kingly state to the old northern capital, Shechem, where the ten tribes, with their leaders, had met. With great dignity



and courage, they set forward young Jeroboam, whom Solomon had exiled to Egypt, and who had now been recalled to serve as spokesman for the tribes. They said:

"Thy father made our yoke grievous; thou, therefore, make the grievous service of thy father and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee."

The king asked three days in which to consider and make answer. Summoning the old men who had been the friends and counsellors of his father Solomon for forty years, some of them doubtless also counsellors of his grandfather David, he asked their advice. They said wisely and kindly, "Be a servant unto your people; help them all you can as their king; answer them graciously; speak a good and comforting word to them; promise them you will lighten their heavy burdens—do this, and they will love you and serve you, O'king, to the end of your days."

**The Counsel of Fools.** Turning from the old men and their wise counsels, Rehoboam sought the advice of the young men who had grown up with him about the palace of his father. They were the "young bloods" of the capital, as vicious and worthless as Rehoboam himself. As their dainty lives were unused to toil, they had only contempt for the hard-working common people and their cry for help from the king. Neither had they the wisdom to foresee the tragedy of rebellion that waited upon their brutal counsel. They said to Rehoboam:

"Say to the people, whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

So on the third day came Rehoboam before Jeroboam and the leaders of the ten tribes, saying to them as his cruel answer to their plea for mercy: "I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."

**The Answer of the People.** The ten tribes had their answer ready, and it was quickly spoken by their leader, Jeroboam. For one hundred and twenty years they had been loyal to the kingdom under Saul and David and Solomon. They had pride in themselves and their own cities and leaders, but they clung to the line of David and to the temple of Solomon until there came, like the crack of a whip in their faces, this stinging answer of Rehoboam. Then they broke into rebellion, and said: "What portion have we in David? Neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tents, O Israel; now see to thine own house, David."

So Israel departed unto their tents, and calling Jeroboam before them, they said: "Be thou king over the ten tribes of Israel."

**The Two Kingdoms.** Thus broke in pieces

the empire of Solomon, which at one time was the most powerful of its time. In its stead came the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel, or, as often described, the "southern kingdom" and the "northern kingdom," Judah being at the south and Israel at the north. Judah was composed of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, while the kingdom of Israel was made up of the ten tribes.

Judah had greatly the advantage over Israel in its possession of the city of Jerusalem, the famous capital of David, and in the ownership of the magnificent temple of Solomon, to which the tribes were required to come each year as their one place of national worship. In material ways Israel far surpassed Judah.

**King Jeroboam.** He was also a young man, though older than Rehoboam. He was of the powerful tribe of Ephraim, and had been made overseer of the building work carried on at Jerusalem by king Solomon, especially the fortress of Millo. His ability as an organizer had attracted the king's notice, and his qualities of leadership and power over men had become favorably known to the tribes. The prophet Ahijah had come to him with a message from Jehovah, saying in effect as follows:

"The Lord God hath sent me to name you as king over the ten tribes of Israel. The time is near at hand when these tribes of the north shall build a kingdom for themselves and shall look to you to be their king. Get ready for the crown."

The word came to Solomon that the prophet had spoken to Jeroboam, and he banished him to Egypt under pain of death if he should return. But when the hour of destiny came Jeroboam was ready and the ten tribes were waiting for him as king.

**The Price of Folly.** The last word of warning is for the young who, like Rehoboam, have come to their own. As to him, so it will be to every young person—he will have the chance to play wise man or fool. Rehoboam knew the right thing to do, or he would not have sought the old men for advice. His ruin was wrought by the company he kept. If he would only have turned his back on them forever, it would be to this day "Rehoboam the wise king," not "Rehoboam the fool."

**Quiz and Study.** How had Solomon paved the way to ruin? 2. How had Rehoboam been raised? 3. How had Jeroboam become famous? 4. What might Rehoboam have done? 5. How did the two kingdoms compare?

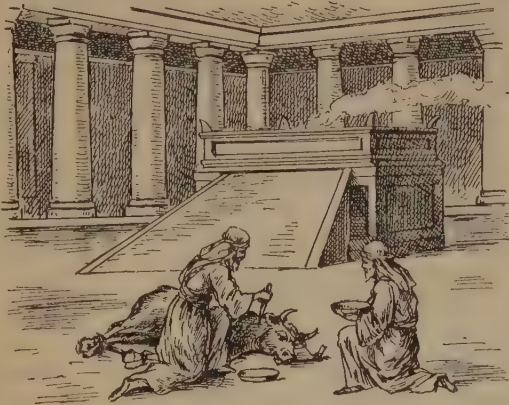
**The Gist of It.** 1. Motherhood moulds the son for good or evil in most cases. 2. The weakest quality in the father is often the heritage of the child. 3. The wealth and luxury of the few make the poverty and bondage of many. 4. A man's wife is the door to his success or failure. 5. Breaking God's laws will in time break any nation.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# JEROBOAM'S IDOLATRY

And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now shall the kingdom return to the house of David: If this people go up to do



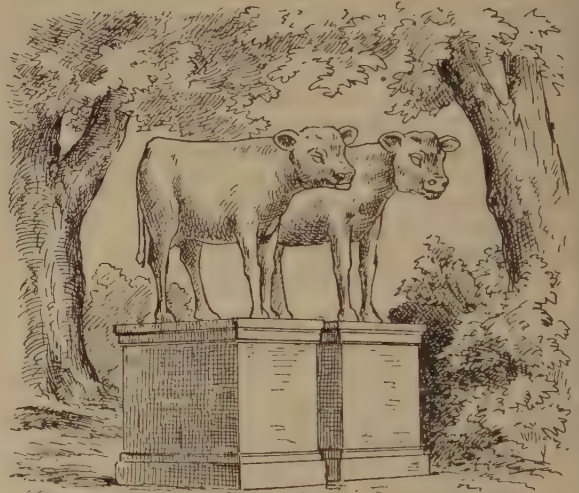
in  
the  
house  
of  
the  
Lord  
at



then shall the heart of this people turn again unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of



and they  
shall kill  
me, and go  
again to  
Rehoboam  
king of  
Judah.  
Whereupon  
the king  
took  
counsel,  
and made



of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up



And he set  
the one in  
Bethel and  
the other  
put he in  
Dan. And  
this thing  
became a  
sin: for  
the people  
went to



before the one, even unto Dan.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 12:26-30.

**Prayer:** From evil men in high places deliver us, O God. By the memory of our fathers who suffered and died that we might enjoy peace and righteousness and good government, we beseech Thee as Ruler of nations that no evil man shall corrupt and shame us by ungodly example. Amen.

"God of our fathers, known of old;  
Lord of our far-flung battle line,  
Beneath whose awful hand we hold  
Dominion over palm and pine:—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget, lest we forget."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 976-954, the 22 years of Jeroboam's reign. Places, Shechem, the capital, and Dan and Bethel, the sacred places. Persons, Jeroboam and the prophet Ahijah.

**Scripture Setting:** Ingratitude and Idolatry. Of Israel. Deut. 32:18. Of Saul. 1 Sam. 15:17. Of David. 2 Sam. 12:7-9. Its punishment. Neh. 9:27; Jer. 18:20. Idolatry punished. Deut. 17:2; Rev. 14:9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Jeroboam's idolatry sets in bold relief the double sin of ingratitude and evil example. 2. Worse than his own baseness towards God who had so highly honored him, and the example of idolatry which he himself set before the kingdom was the fact, as repeatedly stated, that he "caused Israel to sin." He made his subjects sin by compulsion.

### HOW A KING "PLAYED POLITICS."

**A Great Kingdom.** Israel, the northern kingdom, was about twice the area of Judah, and nearly the size of New Hampshire, containing 9,400 square miles. It had fewer mountains and more valleys than its rival kingdom. The Sea of Gennesaret, later the "Sea of Galilee," was an important feature, as was the great plain of Esdraelon to the southward. It was a land "flowing with milk and honey."

Much of the nobler history of the Jewish nation had centered in this northern portion, and its citizenship through the entire history of the "Chosen People" had been of a higher type in courage, independence, and aggressiveness. Most of the leaders of the undivided nation had come out of the ten tribes. There was less luxury and more patriotism and a sincerer worship of God.

**A Great Opportunity.** Jeroboam was probably forty years of age. No further clue than the name only is given of his family. He was "son of Nebat." He had neither royal blood nor high political or social advantage. He evidently came up democratically from the common people. Rehoboam of Judah was born with a "golden spoon in his mouth," while Jeroboam had forced himself to the top as a man of singular native ability. He had been a hard worker, and had won the high respect of a great king and an entire nation.

It was no small tribute to his ability and reputation that Solomon had grown jealous and fearful of him and had therefore sent him into exile. Never had a young king so great an opportunity to win the hearts of his subjects by a reign of mercy and righteousness and turn their hearts also to Jehovah by a high personal example of gratitude.

**What Jeroboam Could Have Done.** First, he could have lowered the taxes upon his subjects. It was for this in part his people had pleaded before Rehoboam, and Jeroboam himself was their spokesman. He was to reign twenty-two years, and would have ample opportunity to reform the cruel methods of money-raising that had provoked the rebellion of the tribes. He began this good work, but in a little while his reforms ceased. Second, he could have put aside ambitious exploiting of his kingship and contented himself with living simply and unostentatiously and by a good example have led his people to regain their lost prosperity. This he did not do, but on the contrary, like Saul, soon forgot the lowly origin out of which he came and aped the luxury and prodigality of other evil kings. Third, he might have honored God, who had lifted him to such high eminence, and by a devout example and firm hand upon the idolatrous tendencies of the times have healed the religious backslidings of the nation.

**What Jeroboam Did.** His first royal act, which was defensible, was to build anew into a large and beautiful city Shechem as his capital, and to fortify it, and also Penuel, east of the Jordan, as a defense against Assyria. Fearing that if his people under the law of Moses continued to go annually to the temple at Jerusalem to attend the appointed feasts and to worship Jehovah, they would transfer their loyalty to Rehoboam and cause the loss thereby of his own place and power, he craftily devised a plan of worship of his own and made a law that his subjects should remain at home. He made two calves of gold, and after building shrines to contain them, he set up one at Dan, in the far north of his kingdom, and one at its extreme south,

near to Jerusalem, and decreed these two places to be the centers of worship.

He next unlawfully took upon himself to appoint men as priests who would be willing to serve in the worship of the golden calves, the regular priests of the temple refusing thus to serve. Having thus appointed his idolatrous worship and his false priests and changed feasts, Jeroboam followed it up by enacting that his people should worship only at Dan and Bethel.

**How the Plan Worked.** Jeroboam did not mean that his golden calves should be worshipped as idol-gods. They were intended to represent Jehovah to the people as some sort of "graven image," which the law of God had expressly forbidden. By putting the two images, one at the north and one at the south, on the great road to Jerusalem the king made it easy for the people to stay for worship near to their own homes and avoid the labor and expense of going up each year to Jerusalem.

As there were certain great feast days appointed for definite times by Moses, and to be observed only at Jerusalem, Jeroboam sought to counteract these religious attractions by other like feasts for his own kingdom but upon different days. From his unlawfully chosen band of priests it was easy to secure a shameless compliance with his craftily devised plan of worship which both disobeyed and dishonored God and ensnared his people.

**The Evil Outcome.** For hundreds of years later Jeroboam's artful scheme of idolatry infected Israel like a poison. It became the pattern and suggestion to other kings, and because it had a certain plausibility about it there were even good men who defended it. It was the consummate plan of a politician who put his own interest over against his duty to God and his people.

The first evil consequence was that many priests too conscientious to serve before the graven images exiled themselves from their priest-cities in Israel and removed to Judah as a refuge. They were followed by many of the people. The golden calves intended only to represent Jehovah soon became objects of worship in themselves, as is always the case, the weak worshipper passing easily from the unseen God to worship that which stands for Him.

**Ingratitude and Disobedience.** Jeroboam's worst sin was his ingratitude, and the worst form of ingratitude is that which turns against the goodness of God and tramples His mercy under foot. Jeroboam had been given great natural ability and powers of leadership. In the providence of God he had risen to high position among the tribes, but had lost it through the jealousy of his king. Poor and exiled he had been driven

into an unfriendly country, out of which the kindness of Jehovah had recalled him to the highest place in the gift of his countrymen. While the crown and sceptre of the kingdom seemed to come from the people, it was the direct gift of God, as Ahijah, his prophet, had foretold.

What a tremendous change from exile and poverty in Egypt to a palace and a throne in his own kingdom, and what base ingratitude to have set his subjects to worshipping calves of gold and dishonoring the temple of Jehovah and breaking in pieces his laws, for no better end than that the scheme of a selfish and ungrateful politician might be attained.

**Jeroboam's Epitaph.** The Bible has some good and noble epitaphs over the memory of its saints and heroes, and it also has some that mark the extreme of wickedness and of Divine displeasure. Especially do we find such epitaphs of evil among the records of the kings of Israel and Judah in the books of Kings and Chronicles. Over many of their graves it is written, "He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord." Over a few it is recorded that "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord."

But Jeroboam achieved the deepest infamy of all, and because his sin was greatest his epitaph is repeated twenty-three times over in these words: "Jeroboam, son of Nebat, made Israel to sin." It was bad enough to sin against one's self, as do most sinners. It was worse to sin against others, and by an evil example and influence, lead one's companions into sin. But worst of all was it to go beyond example and personal sinning and as a king to so frame the laws of a nation as to "make" his subjects to sin against Almighty God. This epitaph stands apart.

**The Last Word.** Jeroboam, by the mercy of God, was king for twenty-two years. His political schemes for a time prospered and the nation became more and more pliant and wicked. He lived long enough, however, to reap some of the ruin he had sowed and to find that God makes mock of politics and politicians.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What is the evil epitaph of the Bible concerning Jeroboam? 2. Why did Jeroboam enact an idolatrous worship for his kingdom? 3. Why did he appoint his own priests? 4. What was his worst sin? 5. Why was it worst?

**The Heart of the Story.** 1. God chooses a man for what he might be. 2. Opportunity knocks at every man's door, but stays not. 3. Because God chooses a man as His instrument does not always signify that the man is a saint. He makes even the devils to serve Him. 4. Ingratitude and prosperity too often go together. 5. Politics and religion are not usually yokefellows.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



## OMRI AND AHAB

So Omri slept with his fathers, and was



in  
Samaria:  
and Ahab,  
his son  
reigned  
in his  
stead.  
And Ahab  
the son of  
Omri did

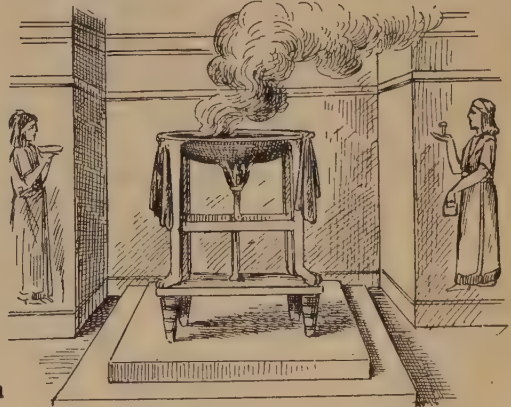


in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to



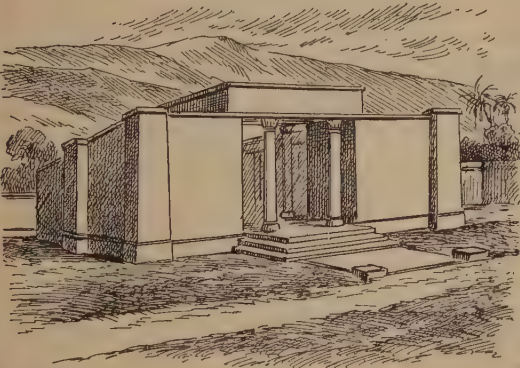
Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians,

and  
went  
and



served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an

for Baal in the



of Baal  
which  
he had  
built  
in Sa-  
maria.  
And  
Ahab  
made a



and Ahab did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 16:15-33.**

**Prayer:** Thou, O God, hast given unto us to live in an age of light and liberty, under the blessings of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our homes, our happiness, our freedom, our religion, our good rulers and churches and schools, are all Thy gifts. Amen.

"We praise Thee that the Gospel's light  
Through all our land its radiance sheds;  
Dispels the shades of error's night,  
And heavenly blessings 'round us spread."

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 936 to 904, inclusive; the 34 years of the united reigns of Omri and Ahab. Places, Tirzah, Samaria and Jezreel, capital cities or pleasure homes of Israel's kings. Persons, Omri, Shemer, Ahab, Jezebel.

**Scripture Setting:** National righteousness. Prov. 14:34. The good ruler. Isa. 32:1. The doom of the evil ruler. Prov. 10:25. An evil woman. Prov. 12:4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. An evil line of kings the heritage. 2. An ambitious and able father without principle or fear of God or man. 3. A son more evil than his evil father, both by inheritance and disposition. 4. A woman more evil than either father or son. 5. A worldly and prosperous nation saturated with idolatry and increasing licentiousness.

**AN EVIL TRINITY—FATHER, SON AND WIFE.**

**An Evil Line.** The two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, set out side by side, each moved by envy and hatred of the other. Both began with evil kings, Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Both had groves and altars and shrines in abundance to the gods of heathendom. For some reason the bad beginning in Judah was broken into by the reign of two really great and good men, Asa and Jehoshaphat, father and son. In the northern kingdom there were five kings before the reign of Omri, as follows: Jeroboam, Nadab, Baasha, Elah and Zimri.

These were of changing dynasties, but amid all changes one thing remained constant, and that was the evil spirit of Israel's kings. "He did that which was evil" is continually written over them by the sacred historian. Besides this was the turmoil of war and blood; the dagger of the assassin; the deadly increase in the viciousness of court and people. There was not much promise of peace or righteousness to king or nation.

**The Downward Pull.** What was it that brought to pass this steady downward movement of the nation and such an unbroken line of evil rulers? Why was it that Judah, of the same blood and raising and of the same country and environment, should now and then have great and good men come to its throne and rule in righteousness over a glad people? The answer is not easy to give, but here are some things to be said:

First, it was because the priests of Judah, many of them at least, were good and true men, and kept alive the true worship of Jehovah and the spirit of religion among the people. It is certain that some of Judah's good kings owed their goodness to the timely care and training of a godly priest. The priests of the northern kingdom were unfit usurpers of the sacred office, and their lives were false and vicious. Secondly, Israel, on

its temporal side, was too prosperous. In this it far exceeded Judah. Put together prosperity and bad spiritual leaders, and the downward pull is doubly strong.

**Baal Worship.** Ancient idolatry, as named in the Bible, ranged from the nobler form of worship of the heavenly bodies, the sun and moon and stars, down through the fire-worship, to images of beasts and reptiles upon the earth. In some cases, as in Egypt, there were blended the purer and the grosser forms. In Israel the same condition existed. A remnant, godly and undaunted, both of priests and people, continued to worship Jehovah according to the ritual of Moses. But the mass of the people borrowed the evil religions of surrounding nations and made them their own.

Vilest, grossest, deadliest and most seductive of all was the worship of Baal, which came chiefly from the Zidonians, whose cities were Tyre and Sidon. Baal was part sun god, part Bacchus, part Hercules and was worshipped under the image of a bull, the symbol of the male power of generation. He was wanton like Peor, cruel like Moloch, insatiate in lust like Minotaur, and the priestesses were prostitutes and fornication the sacrament. Astarte, the female god, divided the infamous honors of the licentious and unspeakable ritual of this wide-prevailing pagan cult.

**Israel's Proneness to Idolatry.** Why did the Jew, of all the people in the earth, so repeatedly fall into idolatry, is a question not easy to answer. Remembering that his pathway as a nation was marked by a blaze of miracles, and that from the days of Abraham, founder of the nation, to David and Solomon there had been an unfailing succession of prophets and miracles direct from God, it is a strange thing that a people so honored should riot in the worship of idols and so soon and so often forget the mighty power so many times wielded for their benefit by the hand of Providence. Yet for thousands of years the Jew put to shame God's



favor and made mock of miracle and messenger, and was saved from destruction again and again, only because He had pledged His eternal faith and mercy to certain great leaders of the nation. Perhaps it was the sense of that unbounded mercy and long-suffering and the conceit of being the "chosen people" of God that begot in the Jew his presumption and ingratitude.

**Omri's Twelve Years.** Omri and Zimri were generals of the army of Israel, both treacherous, cruel and ambitious. Zimri was the trusted servant of king Elah, but had come upon his master when drunk in his palace at Tirzah and had slain him in a most cowardly way, and then assumed the kingship. Omri's division of the army, hearing of this, proclaimed Omri king, and civil war set in until Omri finally won the kingdom.

His first achievement was the purchase of the "hill of Shemer" on which he built his capital, Samaria, and so fortified it that it withstood many severe sieges in after years. Omri was a soldier, a hard fighter, a scheming, ambitious man, ready to betray or slay a friend or foe if impeding his kingly plans. His chance came and he took it, regardless of consequences. So skillful in war was he that he compelled respect and forced tribute from his enemies. He might have made an imperishable name as a wise and helpful ruler had he so chosen, but his fame rests upon the shameful fact that he deliberately corrupted his people and added to the villainess of existing idolatries in Israel by introducing and giving prestige to Baal worship, the most vicious and licentious of all ancient religions.

**Ahab's Twenty-two Years.** "Ahab" means a "son who resembles his father," and the name singularly fits the case. He had much of the ability of his father Omri and more of evil, though that seems hardly possible. He was a general of deserved fame. He had a measure of patriotism, and extended the power of his kingdom. He was far from being a coward or a weakling, but he was selfish, covetous, egotistical and cruel to the last degree. He seemed wholly lacking in the sense of kingly honor and self-respect or in the dignity and justice of a king. He did more evil of a more vicious kind than Omri, and swept Israel yet further into Baalism. He built in his capital city a great temple to Baal, and set a body of four hundred and fifty priests of that religion to minister for the people, and after setting up an image of Ashtarothe, the female deity, he instituted and encouraged the indecent rites in her honor.

**Queen Jezebel.** Ahab took to wife "Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal." The modern name is "Elizabeth," but in this sweet old-fashioned name among women it is well that we do not recall that of Ahab's queen. Bad

as he was, she was worse; a bad woman always descending to a lower depth than a bad man. Her father, king of the Zidonians, worshipper of the vile Astarte, the Zidonian Venus, had slain his own brother and usurped his throne. Jezebel was a brilliant and probably beautiful woman, more than a match for her husband, who became a tool in her hand.

She was an intense Baal worshipper and an equally intense hater of Jehovah and the Jewish monotheism. She had great courage and audacity; was as resolute as adamant in her evil plans, and most atrociously shamed the sex to which she belonged by the satanic cruelty of her nature. "She was one of those masterful, indomitable, implacable ones who, when fate places them in power, leaves a terrible mark on the annals of nations." She was the Bloody Mary, the Lucretia Borgia and the Catherine de Medici, all in one body of evil.

**Good and Bad Rulers.** Think of twenty-two long years of evil rule under this ill-matched pair, Ahab and Jezebel. Both names are by-words in history and men and women turn the pages that tell their story with strong disgust. But it is not so much their own personal wickedness as it is their baleful influence upon their subjects. The first evil effect of a wicked ruler is to coarsen the moral fibre of every man, as that of a bad woman in a high place is to coarsen her sister women.

The next evil effect is the evil that falls upon the home in the coarsening and brutalizing of the father and mother, and in the taking away of the tenderness and purity that belong to that holiest of all institutions—the home. The third and worst effect of evil rulers is in robbing childhood of its right to good and true parentage and to the sweetness and sacredness of the undefiled home life.

**The Last Word.** Power for good or evil is multiplied many times by whether one's husband or wife be good or bad. No alliance of evil and good can command the blessing of God or the favor of men, and it is certain that two evil spirits bound together in marriage are tenfold the worse to themselves and others. Therefore let young men and women take heed whom they wed.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How is the continued evil of Israel's kings to be explained? 2. How did Israel's kings compare with Judah's? 3. What were Omri's best and worst acts? 4. How did Ahab dishonor God in his capital city? 5. What were the characteristics of queen Jezebel?

**Food for Thought.** 1. Sin is not of God's authority or permission. 2. The most dangerous religion is that which sanctifies lust. 3. "The human heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." 4. A man is always made better or worse by his wife, and conversely. 5. A bad woman sinks to the lowest level of wickedness.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



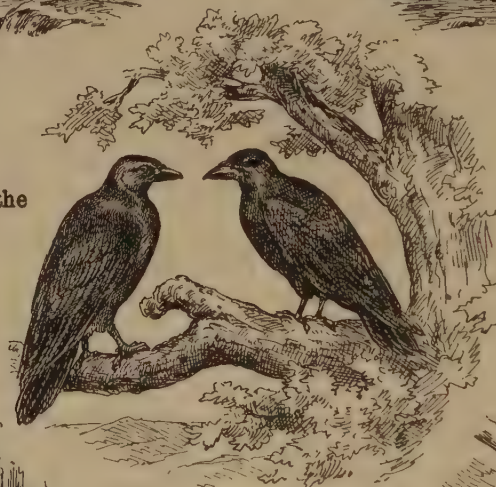
And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and



thyself by  
the brook  
Cherith,  
that is  
before Jordan.  
And it shall  
be, that  
thou shalt



and I have commanded the



to feed thee there.

So he went and did  
according unto the word  
of the Lord: for he  
went and dwelt by the



Cherith,  
that is  
before  
Jordan.  
And the



bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook.

And it came to pass after a while, that the brook dried up, because there had been no rain in the land.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 17.

**Prayer:** May Thy good hand be upon us also, O Lord. May the prophet's trust in Thee and obedience to Thy Word be our example and admonition. Reveal Thyself to us that we may know Thy love and care and power are greater than our needs. Amen.

"Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,  
Pilgrim through this barren land;  
I am weak, but Thou art mighty,  
Hold me with Thy powerful hand.  
Bread of Heaven,  
Feed me till I want no more."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 920-900, the twentieth year of Elijah's career. Places, Cherith and Zarephath. Persons, Ahab, Elijah, the widow and son.

**Scripture Setting:** The righteous upheld, Psa. 37. God the feeder of all, Psa. 136:25. Like a father, Psa. 103:13. God's care for us, Matt. 6: 25-34. Always with us, Matt. 28:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** God's care of Elijah, as illustrated: 1. By giving courage and protection as he came before king Ahab. 2. By making him His chosen ambassador before court and nation. 3. By sending the ravens with food to sustain him during the famine. 4. By clothing him with miracle working power for himself and those dependent on him.

## A STORY OF BIRDS AND BREAD AND BARREL.

**Sin and Judgment.** Under the doubly evil example of Ahab and Jezebel Israel was hurrying on to apostasy and destruction. It was only a question of a few years at most until the fires of patriotism would die out wholly and there would come the armies of hostile nations and the desolations of war. Always in due time sin, whether of individual or nation, is followed by judgment.

But in the case of Israel the great mercy of Jehovah accorded them another opportunity to repent and turn from their idolatry. His instrumentality to bring them back to their senses was not in this case to be the armies of Assyria or Egypt. He would discipline them Himself and in such a way that it would be plain to Israel that the judgment was from God and designed to arouse their consciences and recall them to the forsaken altars and faith of their fathers.

**Famine.** Grim famine was to be the Divine scourge for king and people, and it was to be so far prolonged that men would see in it an unmistakable sign of Jehovah's displeasure at the sins into which His people had fallen. The sword of the invader might be misunderstood and accredited to the spirit of conquest. The pestilence, slaying its tens of thousands, might not appear to be God's direct instrument. However destructive these agencies of punishment they could not fall upon all alike. A three-years' famine sent from God would afflict every living creature alike, whether man or beast. And Elijah, the Tishbite, the rugged son of the wilderness, the "storm-king" of Israel, God's greatest prophet, was to carry the word of famine and judgment into the very presence of Ahab and Jezebel.

**Enter Elijah.** He was called "the Tish-

bite," probably from his birthplace in Gilead, east of the Jordan, a high plateau, fit chiefly for grazing. Rough, austere, disdaining the vices and luxuries of his nation, out of the rude lands beyond the river, he appeared before king Ahab without warning or ceremony. The Hebrew prophet had no need for introduction or apology. For a thousand years, when God had called to duty His prophets He had so ordered their lot that king and court and people stood reverently before them as they came with their "burden" of prophecy upon them.

There was no pause of doubt or skepticism or cowardice with the brave old Tishbite. He was conscience keeper to king and peasant alike and could go where he pleased and say what God had given him to speak. "As the Lord God liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word."

**Suffering and Sorrow.** The famine began its work of destruction. For a time there was little change. The valleys were green, the trees held their foliage, the countless streams and brooks of the northern kingdom went surging under the sunlight. Food and drink grew scarcer and the rains ceased to fall. By and by the early and the latter rains wholly failed; the waters dried up except in remote and protected places; the ground grew bare and desolate and the heavens above were as brass. Starvation set in for people and cattle, and the one supreme purpose of all was to find food enough to sustain life. The land was filled with suffering and sorrow: children were crying to their mothers for bread and fathers were looking here and there in vain for relief for their little ones; while the beasts of the barren fields were making their moans. It was

all terrible, but it was the only way to bring the idolatrous and backslidden people to a realization of their great sin. Hard and cruel as suffering appears, it is often an angel of mercy and deliverance to sinning men.

**The Brook Cherith.** While stream and field and vineyard and orchard were growing utterly desolate and barren and the Baal-worshippers were crying in vain to their god to send them rain and food, God was watching specially over the life of His brave prophet. First, he sent him to the "Brook Cherith," which was somewhere to the east beyond the Jordan, near to Elijah's native country. No one knows just where Cherith and its saving pool of water was, but its remoteness and seclusion along some canon of the river must have made it a safe place of refuge against the terrible drouth and also against the wrath of king Ahab. Here Elijah stayed close to God, fed daily by the great strong ravens who came at Jehovah's bidding to bring him food from some unknown place.

No stranger miracle than this is in all the Bible. Yet it is easy to understand that if God can give a bird the strange instinct of flight hither and thither in search of its own food, He could as easily make it to find food for His prophet.

**Zarephath of Zidon.** The time came when the water in the brook Cherith failed and the ravens, by God's bidding, ceased to bring Elijah his morning and evening meal. It had been a noble school of faith and hope in God to the prophet, as day by day he waited the coming of the birds and watched the drying up of the brook.

But now God's strange providence once more interposed. "Get thee to Zarephath," it said, and Elijah moved far to the north towards Lebanon, then west to near Zidon, a Phenician city on the shore of the "Great Sea." To this day a chapel, built hundreds of years ago, marks the supposed site of the place where Elijah dwelt until the end of the famine came. Singularly, too, it was in the land of Jezebel, who would have given much to know the prophet's hiding place that she and Ahab by any means might extort from him the word that would bring rain from heaven upon the parched land.

**Widow and Son.** Hither to the village of Zarephath came Elijah, worn and thirsty and hungry, and doubtless wondering over the strangeness of the providence that brought him to this starving village. Just outside the gate he met a widow to whom he made his plea for a little water and food.

Doubtless the streams from the mountains of Lebanon, snow-covered, kept alive the streams around Zidon, but food was scant as elsewhere. The water was brought, but the handful of meal and the last of the olive oil were all that remained to the widow and her son. "Fear not," said Elijah, "make me a little cake first, and afterward make for thee and thy son." And then he promised her in the name of the Lord God of Israel that "the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." In her humble home Elijah abode as guest until the famine ended.

**A Story Within a Story.** While Elijah was waiting for the end of the famine in the widow's home there came to pass a wonderful miracle at his hands that should be told here in the very words of the Bible as found in the 17th chapter of I Kings:

"And it came to pass after these things, that the son of the woman fell sick; and his sickness was so sore that there was no breath left in him. \* \* \* And Elijah said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom and carried him up into a loft where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed. \* \* \* And he stretched himself upon the child three times and cried unto the Lord and said, O Lord, my God, I pray thee let this child's soul come into him again. And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child and brought him down out of the chamber into the house and delivered him unto his mother; and Elijah said, See, thy son liveth."

**The Reason for It.** The story of Elijah has both God's wrath and mercy as its elements. Nothing but suffering, long, intense, and general, would wean Israel from its abominable idolatry. It looks cruel that men, women, children and beasts of the field should be starved to death; but starvation is better than filth and every abominable vice. Better the children in Heaven than on earth, if reared amid such unspeakable wickedness. And then their fathers and mothers were the guilty ones who deserved the punishment they received, and could be brought to their senses only by the judgment of God.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What was Israel's religious condition when Elijah came? 2. Who were responsible for this condition? 3. Why did God send famine upon the nation? 4. Why did he punish both innocent and guilty? 5. Why did he put power over the famine in Elijah's hands?

**Meditations.** 1. God's ways are not always plain, but they are always right and just and merciful. 2. God always has a man ready for an emergency. 3. Man is immortal till his work is done. 4. The way of suffering is commonly the way of spiritual quickening. 5. God is to be trusted absolutely, even to the death.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



## ELIJAH AND AHAB

And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the



of his house.  
(Now Obadiah  
feared the  
Lord greatly:  
For it was  
so, when  
Jezebel  
cut off the



of the Lord, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a



with bread  
and water.)  
And Ahab  
said unto  
Obadiah,  
Go into  
the land,  
unto all



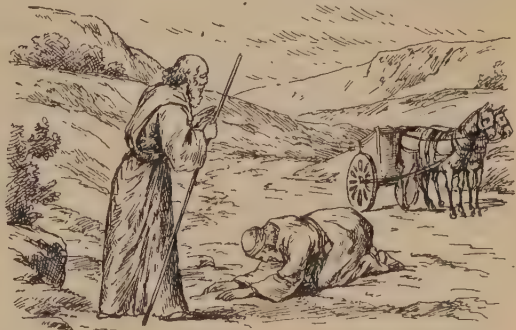
of water, and unto all  
brooks: peradventure  
we may find grass to  
save the



alive, that we lose not  
all the beasts. So they  
divided the land  
between them to pass  
throughout it: Ahab went  
one way by himself, and  
Obadiah went another  
way by himself. And  
as Obadiah was in this  
way, behold, Elijah



and he  
knew  
him,  
and



and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold.  
Elijah is here.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS I KINGS 18:1-20.

**Prayer:** Give unto Thy servants, O Lord, the courage and loyalty of Thy ancient prophet. When men in authority or the people under them would sin against Thy law, may Thy servants with boldness and love declare against it. Amen.

"Lord of the nations, thus to Thee  
Our country we commend;  
Be thou her refuge and her trust,  
Her everlasting Friend."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, between B. C. 920-900. Place, somewhere near Samaria, the capital.  
**Persons,** Elijah, Obadiah, Ahab.  
**Scripture Setting:** God's Mercy and Wrath. Full of compassion, Psa. 78:38. Will not always chide, Psa. 103:9. Will turn away wrath, Psa. 106:

23. Mercy follows wrath, Psa. 107:10-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** God's unfailing mercy:

1. Keeping guard over His saints. 2. Heeding the cries of the suffering. 3. Putting an end to famine.
4. Showing mercy even to Ahab if he would repent.
5. Keeping covenant with His servants.

### AHAB BOWS BEFORE ELIJAH

**Israel's Repentance.** For three and a half terrible years the famine had fastened upon Israel, until scarcely enough bread and water were left to sustain life. The king himself knew not how to keep alive the dependents on his bounty. Such hard pinching, ever-intensifying hunger and thirst, for a time at least, broke the stubborn heart of the people and even moved the fear of the king. God's heavy judgment was not so much to punish as to reform, and when there began to be a spirit of sorrow among the people for the idolatry that had so dishonored Jehovah the hand of Divine Providence lifted and the conditions were changed. It was a long, terrible test of the Baal whom they had worshiped, and when there was no relief to suffering from their idol gods there came back with shame and sorrow the memory of the God of their fathers and how He had given them bread and water and sent the early and the latter rains.

**The Mercy of God.** Their hearts were open to God, and He knew that the end intended by such suffering had at last been attained, and therefore judgment gave place to mercy. He saw that Ahab, who had ransacked all places in his own kingdom and sent messengers to neighboring kingdoms in quest of Elijah, that he might lay hold upon and compel the prophet to undo the famine, had now for the first time attained a state of mind and heart where Elijah would dare to come into his wicked presence and speak the word of command from Jehovah. God saw further, that the masses of the people were at last ready, in a little time, to stand in the presence of Ahab and the priests of Baal and, denouncing the latter, cry with one voice: The Lord He is God. The "turn of the tide" had come at last even though it was not to be lasting, and the mercy of God became uppermost.

**Faithful Obadiah.** When His time had

come to take away the famine God spake to Elijah and commanded him to show himself to Ahab and tell the king that he would send rain upon the earth. About that time Ahab had called before him in his palace at Samaria the governor of his home affairs, Obadiah, and had instructed him to go into all places where water could possibly be found, that the lives of the king's horses and mules might be saved. Ahab, in his anxiety, divided the kingdom between himself and Obadiah to search after water, and Obadiah, on his way, met Elijah, who bade him go tell Ahab of his coming. "Obadiah feared the Lord greatly," and had hid away and fed a hundred prophets of Jehovah despite the wrath of Jezebel, and his faithfulness to God was known to Elijah. At first he hesitated about going to his master, knowing the king's hatred for Elijah and fearing that if the prophet were carried away his own life would pay the penalty. But Elijah comforted the loyal servant of God by saying: "As the Lord of hosts liveth, \* \* \* I will surely show myself unto the king today."

**Brave Elijah.** The time of enforced seclusion and quiet for Elijah has passed. God had fed him by the ravens at Cherith, and from the miraculously-filled barrel and cruse of Zarephath. For years Ahab had been seeking him with evil intent, and now Elijah's time had come to stand before Ahab. Elijah was worthy the confidence of his God. He was born and reared in the mountains of Gilead, in sight and sound of the majesty of the heavens and the earth. He was strong, hardy, temperate, swift—a typical mountaineer. He was, tradition tells us, a man of short stature, of rugged countenance, with the thick locks of the Nazarite streaming over his shoulders like a lion's mane, giving him a fierce and unkempt appearance. More than all, with stern and unswerving loyalty



to God, he hated with a bitter hatred the abominations of Baal, the cruelty of Ahab and the licentiousness of Jezebel.

**Face to Face.** For three years and more the prophet and the king had dwelt apart. Elijah's last warning had been that rain would not fall upon the earth again until he should speak the word. Then, it was Elijah waiting before the king; now, it was Elijah who had sent word to the king to come before him. Doubtless Ahab, taught in the wonderful history of his race, knew something of the mighty power committed to the Hebrew prophets, and he must have been sure in his heart that this was God's man. Doubtless, too, he had so felt the keen edge of famine and so knew himself to be under censure of the loyal servants of Jehovah in his kingdom, that a measure of humility had found way into his proud spirit. If he had sense of courage and truth at all, how must his heart have sunk within him as he looked once more into the rough heaven-lit face of the brave Tishbite who feared only his God. "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" he asked, with something of his old pride and hate. Mark the noble answer, divinely patient and dignified, of Elijah: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and hast followed Baalim."

**Elijah's Command.** The man from the mountains, rough-clad and stern, was master now, and more than king and army and royal blood and prerogative. Why some great painter has not immortalized himself by picturing this scene between prophet and king of Israel is a matter of wonder, as all its elements are tragic, intense and full of power and interest.

Elijah speaks quickly and sharply without a moment's hesitation, and in the voice of a king to his discredited and conscience-stricken royal master, if master he could be called even by courtesy: "Go," he said, "gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table." Turning from him, the king, with unquestioning obedience to Elijah's stern command, sent his messengers throughout the famine-stricken land, saying to all Israel: "The king commands your presence at Mt. Carmel on such a day."

**The Coming Doom.** Ahab knew that it was the rumble of the day of judgment to the false gods and worshippers of Baalim, and that Jehovah's triumph was soon to transpire. Let him have credit at least for discerning the hand of God in the movements

and words of this utterly fearless servant, the prophet. What was impending at Carmel he could by no means surmise, but his quick obedience to Elijah's word proved that he foresaw a day of reckoning to all who resisted the power and will of Jehovah.

Baal with all his splendor of temples and worshippers had failed to provide a drop of rain or a blade of grass. His power, put to the test, had been broken and dishonored, and now the sign of Israel's one true God was in the heavens above and the earth beneath. With the shadow of a great tragedy awaiting king and people, and fear and joy blending as the people heard that Elijah had come to his own as God's prophet, court and people made ready for the gathering at Carmel.

**God's Reasons.** Before the crucial day of Carmel comes, let the reader take time to consider and review the conditions that invoked a day of judgment.

First, king Ahab had broken every law of kingly obligation to his people and his God, and it was needed that he should be humbled and discredited before the nation.

Second, Jezebel the queen had made Israel to reek with the licentiousness and cruelty of her imported idolatry and her four hundred priests of the groves and, in default of repentance by them or their vile mistress, justice ordained their utter extermination for the sake of Israel.

Third, the four hundred and fifty priests of Baal who had so long blinded the eyes and corrupted the ways of the plain people had not shared in the sufferings of the famine or in the sorrow of heart that came to their deluded victims and they also deserved the doom that awaited.

Lastly, the people who had so grievously sinned, but after God's punishment had repented, needed an opportunity to renew the ancient covenant which they had broken.

**The Uplifting Curtain.** Behind the curtain of Divine judgment, of famine and pale-faced mothers and crying children, of starvation and sorrow beyond description and far beyond our experience, there have been mysteries that we could not understand about God and evil and punishment. Some things we will not understand at all in this present life; but as the curtain is lifting and Carmel is coming into view we begin to see certain great truths that have been hidden from us.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why did Obadiah fear to bear Elijah's message to Ahab? 2. What rebuke did Elijah give to Ahab? 3. What did he command Ahab to do? 4. Why was Ahab so changed in the presence of Elijah? 5. Why did God send Elijah alone as His representative?

**Looking Backward.** 1. One man, with God at his back, is a majority. 2. The man of sternness is needed for the time of great sin. 3. A troubled conscience is a wonderful tamer of a proud spirit. 4. A man who fears God utterly can fear none else. 5. "The mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small."

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# THE PROPHETS OF BAAL

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening

that Elijah the



came near, and said,  
Lord God of Abraham,  
Isaac, and of Israel, let  
it be known this day  
that thou art God in  
Israel, and that I am  
thy servant, and that I  
have done all these  
things at thy word. Hear  
me, O Lord, hear me,  
that this people may  
know that thou art the  
Lord God, and that thou  
hast turned their heart  
back again. Then the



and consumed the  
burnt sacrifice, and  
the wood, and the  
stones, and the dust,  
and licked up the  
water that was in the  
trench. And when  
all the people saw it,  
they



and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he  
is the God.  
And Elijah  
said unto  
them, Take  
the prophets  
of Baal; let  
not one of  
them escape.  
And they  
took them:  
and Elijah  
brought  
them down  
to the brook  
Kishon, and



300 there.

I KINGS XVIII: 36-40.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 18:21-39.

**Prayer:** Reveal Thyself to us, O God, as Thou didst to Thy people of old. Set our sins and backslidings in the light of Thy countenance. Let Thy testing fires cleanse our hearts and lives of all that turns us away from Thee. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"The dearest idol I have known,  
What e'er that idol be,  
Help me to tear it from Thy throne,  
And worship only Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, between B. C. 920 and 900, nearer the latter year. Place, Mt. Carmel, overlooking the Great Sea. Persons, Elijah, Ahab, the priests and people.

**Scripture Setting:** A time of confession, I Jno. 1:9. A day of decision, Josh. 24:15. Backslidings healed, Jer. 14:4. God's promise of old, Deut. 30:1-3.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The great concourse

on Mt. Carmel had many significant features: 1. The place itself was central and historic. 2. A broken and neglected altar to the true God was a mute witness to all their long backslidings. 3. The worst of kings, ashamed and fearful, was there. 4. Priests of Baal and Ashteroth, nearly a thousand in number, were chief actors. 5. The penitent and suffering people, with the greatest of prophets, Elijah, as the central figure, waited.

### TRUSTING GOD AND TESTING BAAL.

**The Time.** When the great famine—the first general disaster that had fallen upon Israel—had come, the nation religiously was at its worst, the physical famine being a sign of the spiritual famine of God's word and work. Now that the end for which the famine was sent was at least partly attained and the people were penitent the time was ripe for the great test between the hosts of Baal and of Jehovah, as represented by His lone prophet. Elijah was coming toward the end of his hard career of twenty years. His ministry had been full of pain and persecution and sadness of heart, and its one aim had been to bring Israel to repentance, that by their help he might purge the land he so greatly loved of the priests and shrines of idolatry. In God's mercy the time for bringing all things to pass was now come.

**The Place.** "No spot could have been more fitting for the gathering of Israel. The long range of Carmel, some parts of which rise 1,600 and 1,700 feet above the sea, skirts the whole south of Esdraelon. Of this the promontory at the western end, rising about 600 feet above the waters at its foot, was chosen. Though then bare and scorched, like the whole country, its luxuriant richness in ordinary times was a proverb, Carmel clothed with verdure being the paradise of the land. The altar on it had been a great place of religious resort on new moons and Sabbaths, and though now overthrown, was famous throughout the land. Close beneath the rocks, under the shade of ancient olive trees, was a well which was said never to fail, and this, even after long drought, still held sufficient water to supply Elijah with as much as he required. About twenty-five miles off, on the southwest, rose the city of Jezreel on its green hill, with Ahab's palace

and stately gardens, in which perhaps was Jezebel's temple of Asherah.

**The People.** It must have been a vast multitude of the plain people who gathered at Carmel. Its central position and accessibility coupled with the rumor of the interposition of Elijah; his issue with all of Baal's priests; the presence of the king himself, and the expectation of some great tragedy, must have drawn the people from all parts of the kingdom, no point of which was more than fifty or sixty miles distant. The place afforded a great natural amphitheatre, about which many thousands could stand and see and hear. By many Elijah and the king would be seen for the first time, and a contrast would be drawn between the two men, the impression of which would remain until death. The sin of the people, who had been more sinned against than sinning, was in their instability. "How long will ye halt between two opinions?" was Elijah's sharp question to them, or, as one translates it, "How long will you hop from bough to bough like the birds?"

**The Priests.** Eight hundred and fifty of these graced the occasion in their "white robes and peaked turbans." Four hundred and fifty of them were ministers of Baal, the Phœnician "sun-god" whose vast temple Ahab had built at Samaria, in which the image of Baal shone resplendent. Theirs was the official religion, whose temples and shrines were distributed throughout the kingdom, an insistent, aggressive and defiant religion that threw down the altars of Jehovah and put in their stead the obscene images of the imported deities. The first great era of persecution was begun by these infamous and foreign priests of Baal, who, with their hosts of prostitutes serving their

vocation under the guise of priestesses of the temples and groves, stopped short of no device of cruel and licentious superstition to serve Ahab and Jezebel and corrupt the people. Along with these priests of Baal were four hundred priests of Asherah, whom Jezebel had brought with her from Zidon and installed at Samaria and Jezreel, feeding them at her own table.

**The King's Court.** Ahab, with probably his court, was conspicuous in the assemblage, as nominal master of the day by virtue of his royal position. But in the estimation of all but his priests, even in his own esteem, he was far from being the real master. His queen was not there. Whether Ahab was essentially a cruel or simply a weak king, moved to evil by others, is a question unsettled among students of history. He was vicious and sensual. His evil life was so overshadowed and dominated by the greater wickedness of his wife that he is sometimes made to appear in an excusable light. But Elijah knew the positive meanness of the man when he said, "It is thou and thy house that troubleth Israel."

**Elijah the Tishbite.** Above all others, in the simple power of his great character, towered the prophet Elijah, whom one has called "the grandest and most romantic figure Israel ever produced."

Disdaining the luxuries of life, and living only to serve his God sincerely, he appeared in strange company among sleek priests and well dressed courtiers in his tunic, with belt of hide tightened about him like a son of the desert. His mantle and staff were his only superfluities, and he has been truly pictured perhaps as "sinewy and thin from his scant diet, his hard life, the rapidity of his movements and his powers of physical endurance." At Carmel, or elsewhere, he would be the observed of all observers, the most striking personality in all the vast company of priests and politicians and courtiers and soldiers and people. It was his hour and he knew it.

**Jehovah Versus Baal.** The early morning, the hour of worship of the "sun-god," was the beginning of the final test. Elijah began by chiding the people in stern and biting words: "Why do you limp now on one foot and then on the other. How long will you halt between Jehovah and Baal. If Jehovah be God, follow Him; if Baal, follow him. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve." Then he unfolded his plan of testing Jehovah and Baal. He gave the first trial to the latter's priests. On their altar, surmounted by their offering, the fire from heaven should be invoked, and Baal—he was a god of fire—should be made by a miracle to indicate his deity.

All day his howling priests importuned their god, cutting themselves with knives and shrieking about the altar while Elijah jeered them on, until the hour of the evening sacrifice came, when with a great hush over all, Elijah gathered up the dismounted stones of Jehovah's neglected altar, twelve for the twelve tribes, put them in place, slew the bullock and, placing it on the altar, poured upon it and into the encircling trench twelve barrels of water, and then lifting holy hands to Jehovah, prayed that the Divine fire of confirmation might descend. In an instant, as the prophet's prayer ended, the fire of Jehovah answered, and leaping upon the altar consumed not only the offering, but the stones and wood and even the water around it.

**The Close of the Day.** The sun was fast descending to the waters of the Great Sea which Carmel overlooked when Elijah completed his test. As the fire burned its way into the very earth beneath the altar there was a moment of intense and awful fear in the hearts of the people when falling upon their faces to the ground they cried, "The Lord, He is the God! The Lord, He is the God!"

King and priests were stricken dumb and powerless and terrified by the manifest hand of the God of Israel. With all his courage and audacity Ahab would not have dared to issue an order or interpose a word of hindrance to the complete and perfect mastery of Elijah. Such was the deep and fierce revulsion of the people that he or his courtiers would have been torn limb from limb if they had interfered. In a moment more, at the command of Elijah and with full sanction of Jehovah, the 850 priests of Baal and Asherah were hurried en masse to the foot of the hill and slain in the dry bed of Kishon, to the end that they should no longer live to defile and pervert.

**Once More.** The door of opportunity was opened once more to all of the mighty company on Mt. Carmel except to the slaughtered priests of Baal. Ahab the king had another chance to redeem himself. His venal and sensual courtiers could turn their backs if they would upon their lives of vice and luxury. Even Jezebel could read the handwriting of fate and be warned by it. Especially there came once more to the people who had sinned and suffered so much because of their idolatry a new day of hope and mercy and forgiveness. Just as the rain was soon to fall in gracious power on the parched earth, so would God's love fill their hearts and lives if only they kept their renewed covenant with Him.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why did Elijah insist upon all the priests and people and king coming to Mt. Carmel? 2. What motives drew together the great multitude? 3. What was Elijah's plan for the day in detail? 4. Why did he give the opening of the test to Baal? 5. Why was he justified in slaying the priests?

**Conclusions.** 1. God honors His saints in His own way. 2. Three things make a Christian invincible—faith, courage, purpose. 3. The one cure for a cancer, physical or spiritual, is to cut it out. 4. Only plain, stern truth befits a time of backsliding. 5. As long as God gives life He gives opportunity to repent.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# ELIJAH ON CARMEL.

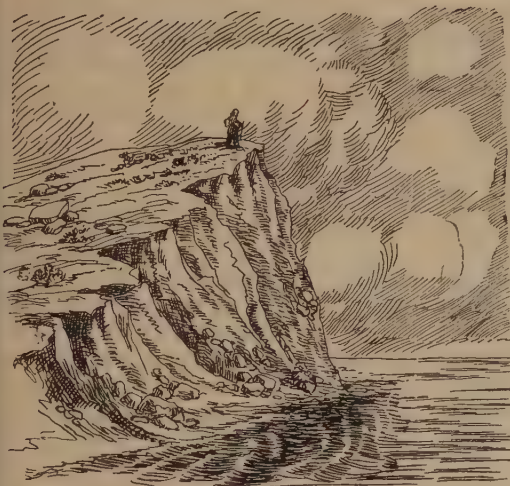
And

said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to



And Elijah

of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face



And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward



And he went up, and



and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 18:41-46.

**Prayer:** Thou wilt not always chide, O God, neither wilt Thou keep Thine anger forever. Even as a father pitieth his children when they turn in sorrow from their sins, so wilt Thou be merciful to us.

“There a wideness in God’s mercy,  
Like the wideness of the sea;  
There’s a kindness in His justice,  
Which is more than liberty.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, between 920 and 900 B. C.—the years of Elijah’s ministry. Place, Mt. Carmel, and the road to Jezreel. Persons, Elijah, his servant, Ahab, Jezebel.

**Scripture Setting.** God the giver of rain, Job 5:10. God’s word like the rain, Isa. 55: 10-11. God gives the rain to all alike, Matt. 5:45. The joy of forgiveness, Psa. 32:1. God will redeem from famine, Job 5:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** 1. God blesses both the physical and the spiritual. 2. He gives rain to the parched earth and grace to the back-slidden heart at the same time. 3. The prayer of the righteous man will avail in time of famine and pestilence. 4. We need withholding of our temporal mercies that we may learn trust and gratitude. 5. The broken seed He will not break, nor quench the smoking flax.

### ELIJAH’S GREAT VICTORY.

**After the Battle.** The great day at Carmel closed towards sunset and the multitude turned towards their homes. Elijah had been vindicated. He had borne the odium of the famine for more than three years because of the fact that he had been the messenger of Jehovah concerning its coming. Ahab the king, though he ought to have known better, had cherished a relentless hatred towards Elijah and had sought to lay hands upon him in the countries surrounding, as though the prophet himself and not Jehovah was the cause of suffering to the kingdom. All this was swept away by the events at Mt. Carmel. After the day’s test between Jehovah and Baal had ended there were none who could not see that it was Jehovah Himself who had brought punishment upon the nation for its idolatry, and that Elijah was simply the instrument in Jehovah’s hands. Even Ahab’s hatred for Elijah seemed to pass and the people more than ever held the prophet in reverence because he had been doing God’s will under Divine appointment. All that had happened would henceforth be set to the account of Jehovah’s plan.

**Ahab’s Feast.** The Jews had a custom of following certain sacrifices with a feast, and this occasion seems to have been within their rule. When the day was ending and the people had dispersed to their homes Ahab, the king, still lingered. “And Elijah said unto Ahab, ‘Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.’ So Ahab went up to eat and drink.” Somewhere near to the altar which had been consumed by the fire from heaven Ahab and his escort sat down to eat and drink, not as an ordinary occurrence, but as signifying two great events which had marked the day—first, the turning of the hearts of the people away from Baal and back to Jehovah;

second, because of the great downpour of rain which was in a little while to fall throughout the kingdom and end the three years and a half of famine. It meant, therefore, much more than the usual sacrificial feast when the king of Israel sat at table on the invitation given by Jehovah’s prophet. It was indeed a sign that even Ahab was humbled and penitent and that Jehovah was reconciled to him, both personally and as head of the kingdom of Israel.

**The Two-Fold Rain.** Do not forget that God’s mercy on this great day had a two-fold expression. Out of the heavens had fallen, all unseen but felt by thousands of hearts, the gentle rain of God’s forgiveness to all who, with sorrow, turned back to Him and joined in the great cry, “The Lord, He is the God:” They had been saying for years, “His mercy is clean gone, and He hideth His face from us behind heavens of brass.” Doubtless in the multitude gathered at Carmel were not a few of the “seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal,” and they had specially been praying to Jehovah to both forgive his sinning people and let the rain water the parched earth. One blessing would not come without the other. Punishment, hard and long, had come from God to bring the people to their senses, and in the very nature of the case the sorrow for sin and God’s forgiveness of sin must come first, after which would come the gracious falling of the literal rain from heaven, as the second token of the mercy of Jehovah.

**Elijah at Prayer.** “And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees.” It was not for the old prophet to eat and drink as Ahab was doing. On the high top of Carmel he could look northward, eastward and southward and see a wretched, barren land, sere and brown,



and could remember how it looked three years before when he prayed "that there might not be rain." Then the valleys and hillsides were green and beautiful. The long years of suffering between came before him and his heart ached for his country and people. Once more it was appointed unto him to speak the word in prayer that would call together the mighty clouds from over the Great Sea and pour down rain until earth and valley and hillside and dry beds of streams and wells were filled to overflowing. How it moves the heart of a Christian now to call up that picture of the Old Testament saint with face between his knees in prayer!

**"A Sound of Abundance of Rain."** As he prayed he said to his servant Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said Behold there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand.

By that far-off but swift-moving and fast-growing cloud Elijah knew that the "fervent, effectual prayer of the righteous man" had availed, and that the rain was being swiftly marshalled by the storm clouds of the sea and would soon be pouring down upon the land. Surely Elijah rejoiced greatly in his heart at that moment. For years he had borne the burden of God's avenging messenger, and king and people had reviled and hated him because of the famine and the suffering. Now it was all passing, and God had so ordered it that Israel would be saying, "Elijah has brought us the rain."

**The Race to Jezreel.** So quickly gathered and grew the rain-clouds that Elijah hurried his servant to Ahab, saying, "Prepare thy chariot and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain."

Jezreel was eighteen to twenty miles away towards the southeast. Down the hillside, along the gulches and valleys, across innumerable brooks and streams, through the great plain of Esdraelon, as the road took its course, Ahab and his charioteer and horses plunged through the gathering blackness and rain, lest the torrents that quickly fill and overflow the banks should cut him off from his home; and just ahead, his loins girded, ran the prophet Elijah, clean-bodied, strong as steel, brave as a lion, a hundred times greater than a king.

**The Wrath of Jezebel.** Ahab hurried through the gate of beautiful Jezreel, where his summer palace was, while Elijah, his

strange service as escort ended, turned aside.

He knew Jezebel, and that in her heart of cruelty and deadly hatred of him and his God there would be no place for him in Jezreel even though Ahab should now play the friend. He knew also that once Ahab had told his wife the story of the day and how her four hundred priests of the grove were lying dead in the brook Kishon there would be nothing that her fury would not use to destroy him. So fierce was she over the news that she forgot her cunning and sent a messenger to him saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them" (her dead prophets) "by tomorrow about this time."

**Elijah's Flight.** When Jezebel's threat came to the prophet he knew that the full power of king Ahab and the queen and the army and court would be put behind the threat, and that it would be folly to remain longer in Isreal. It was not a question of courage or faith in God. Elijah knew that Providence helped those who helped themselves and that God put no premium upon foolhardiness in the face of danger. He knew, too, that Ahab was pliant in the hands of his wife and would not dare to resist her wrath against him.

There was only one country in which he could abide with safety and that was Judah, the southern kingdom, between which and the northern kingdom there was rivalry and strong dislike by both kings and people. He would be safe far down in the southern part of that kingdom close to Arabia and its wilderness, and the fact that he was the victim of the persecution of Ahab and Jezebel would all the more secure for him the sympathy of the people of Judah.

**Did the Famine Fail?** No, it did not fail. If Elijah or any other servant of God expected the full and perfect transformation of Israel through the famine or other agencies of Jehovah, he had failed to take due account of the stubbornness and malignant power of idolatry in its most sensual forms, or of the proneness of the Hebrew race to lapse into it. In the days of Moses and Aaron and Samuel, down to Ahab and Jezebel, the record of Israel had been stained by frequent and dire lapses. It seemed to be bred in the bone of the Jew to turn at a moment's notice from the altars of Jehovah to golden calf or sun god. Hundreds of years must pass before the nation would finally be weaned from idols. Meantime, though many fell, many more stood fast in their Carmel covenant.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why did God make the ending of the famine to depend on Elijah's prayers? 2. If there had been no Jezebel, is it likely that Ahab would have become a friend to Elijah?

**The Last Word.** 1. Elijah's prayer is given by the New Testament as an evidence that God will honor any good man's prayers. 2. Evil companionship stands in the way of every good intention.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper



and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and

behold, then an



and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken



of water at his head.

And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the Lord



the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did



and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 19:4-18.

**Prayer:** Deal gently with us, O Lord, in times of loneliness and weakness, when faith is low and hope is almost gone. Thou, who knowest our frame and rememberest that we are but dust, grant unto us Thy grace and renew again our strength and courage. Amen.

"In every condition—in sickness, in health; In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth; At home and abroad; on the land, on the sea—As thy days may demand shall thy strength ever be."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, between B. C. 920 and 900. Place, Beersheba, and the wilderness of Arabia. **Persons,** Jezebel, Elijah, his servant, the angel. **Scripture Setting:** Prayer for deliverance, Psa. 64. Hatred without cause, Psa. 59:1-2. God knows, Matt. 6:25-26. Always with us, Matt. 28:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Elijah was human. 2. He was prudent. 3. He was a true patriot. 4. He was jealous for the honor of Jehovah. 5. He sorely needed to hear Jehovah's own word. 6. He needed quiet and rest. 7. He needed to get ready for the end of his ministry.

### HOW STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS BLEND.

**In the Wilderness.** Elijah had fled southward to Beersheba and beyond into the wilderness a day's journey. From Jezreel to Beersheba, by direct course, was eighty miles, increased probably to a hundred by the route taken. Beyond Beersheba lay a great stretch of wilderness, extending into Arabia, and covering the zigzag path of Moses and the hosts of Israel as they journeyed from Egypt on their way to Canaan. Leaving his servant behind at Beersheba, for what reason is not known, he pushed on alone until overcome by weariness. It seemed to have been an instinct with him, as with other great men, to be alone in the time of trouble. He had been in the midst of intense excitement for many days, and mind and body had been greatly under the strain. The journey from Jezreel had been far and swift, and it may have been in simple mercy to his servant that he was allowed to remain at Beersheba.

**The Tired Prophet.** Mind and body wear out together, and if there is heart-sorrow the end comes quickly. All three were overworked in the case of Elijah. So intense was he at Carmel and in the preparation for that great crisis that he had probably gone with insufficient food and sleep. His common mood was intense and full of vital energy. Added to physical and mental overtaxation, the heart of the prophet was full of sorrow for fear that his life-work had failed, and that Jezebel and Ahab would obstruct the reformation begun at Mt. Carmel and again lead his countrymen into idolatry. Hidden under his rough dress and austere mien was a big, warm heart that loved his country and his countrymen. The swift revulsion from excitement and daring before a great multitude, in the face of hate and death, followed by a mighty triumph, was enough to fill the brave heart with discouragement and gloom

and drive him into the desert, away from sight or sound of his fellows.

**Food and Rest.** Under a juniper tree, a bush of desert growth, reaching to a height of six or eight feet, and affording a scant protection from sun and wind and rain, the prophet lay and slept; a forlorn picture, so different from the Elijah we saw by the altar on Mt. Carmel. It was God's opportunity to deal in great love and tenderness with His favorite, and He sent an angel as His special comforter—the "trained nurse" of Heaven, who baked him bread on hot stones and brought him a cruse of cool, refreshing water, and waited near until Elijah awoke. He let him sleep and rest and partake of food such as an angel could prepare. It met precisely the need of the prophet, and taught him the comforting truth that God is everywhere—in the desert, at Carmel, or at Jezreel—and that He "knows our frame and remembers that we are as the dust." Nothing could have so soothed and restored and revived Elijah's courage and hope.

**Elijah at Horeb.** There was one more great lesson the old man needed. After being made surer than ever of God's providence, and that God was with him in love and sympathy, Elijah needed to be taught a lesson of the ways that God uses in bringing to pass His plans in the world. It was the lesson such rugged soldiers of Heaven need to learn. Peter had to learn it; Martin Luther learned it, as did Cromwell and Wesley, and others. Men of great courage and aggressiveness, of vital force and intense action, are wont to rely upon their strength and on a single method of pushing their way to the success of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, after his food and sleep and rest, the prophet was led far beyond, a journey of many days, and was miraculously kept in strength, in order that he might come face

to face with Jehovah at Horeb and learn the lesson of God's ways.

**God's Symbols.** Elijah, in the presence of Horeb, had the past of Israel before him. It was to this mountain that Moses had come as keeper of Jethro's flocks, and was greeted by the burning bush and the commission from Jehovah. Again at this place he had struck the rock and water had poured forth; and yet again he had here met Jehovah face to face.

To Elijah, the second great leader and champion of Israel, it was holy ground and it was doubtless the Divine will that he, too, should come hither to hold high communion with God as Moses had done, and as he and Moses and Jesus would in later time upon another mountain. God taught Elijah by symbols. First came the whirlwind rending the rocks, and Elijah learned that God was not always moving among men like the fierce wind. Then by an earthquake and fire Elijah was taught that these fiercer moods of nature did not represent the ways of Jehovah in extending His Kingdom. Last came the still small voice, and Elijah heard and knew and bowed before the Lord, who was trying to teach His prophet how in this quiet, gentle way men's hearts must ever be securely won.

**God's Way.** Elijah loses nothing of his greatness under the juniper tree or in the cave at Horeb. However much small critics, who ought to pass through the prophet's experiences, may prate of the prophet's weakness, Jehovah's exquisite tenderness and sympathy and method of restoring Elijah to himself gave no indication that the God of Elijah thought him a failure.

His trouble was that he was only human. He had a great optimism as to God, and his loyal soul would not consent that Israel should dishonor Him. He was no cooing dove that sits by his mate and sings of love and home. He was an eagle that soared in the storm and dwelt among the mountain peaks. His one weakness was that he took no account of the weakness of other men, but wanted all things after his own high standards. He was a giant among pygmies. But God, at Horeb, was tender to His over-wrought favorite and taught him the better and surer way of dealing with most men, and made him to understand the ways of the Kingdom and their varied application to the needs of men.

**The Seven Thousand.** There was one great surprise and comfort to the prophet. Over and over he had excused his pain of heart and despondency of spirit by saying to Jehovah, "I, even I only, am left: and they seek my life, to take it away." Even after the "still small voice" had revealed the presence of Jehovah, Elijah had said, "I, even I only, am left."

Upon the surface it certainly seemed as if he alone of all Israel had been faithful to God in the time of Israel's fearful degeneracy. Doubtless this was due largely to the fact that Elijah had been forced into seclusion and solitude for years and had not been permitted to come into fellowship with other saints of God. There were no places where the devout Israelites could gather for worship. All shrines and temples were devoted to Baal, and the light of true religion seemed wholly extinguished. It did not matter to Elijah that the multitude had shouted at Carmel for Jehovah, as he knew too well their fickleness of old. How full of surprise and comfort then must have been Jehovah's word: "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

**Elijah the King-Maker.** After the lesson of Horeb was learned, Elijah was ready to go again to Israel and finish his career. He was to come before Ahab once more and pronounce upon him the terrible doom that awaited the king, his queen and his house. He had to take up the old hard "burden" of the prophet once more and carry it to the end of life, but with a new vision of God and His Kingdom.

As he passed from the presence of Jehovah his greatest honor came to him by Divine commission. He was told to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria, and Jehu to be king over Israel in place of Ahab whose reign would endure a little longer. He was also to find and anoint his own successor and put him in training to take his place. His last work on earth was to be his greatest, and, whether he yet knew it or not, God had in reserve for him the highest honor at the end of his life ever conferred upon man.

**The Home-Coming.** So Elijah passed out of the wilderness, up the valley by the Dead Sea, and along the Jordan towards Damascus, rejuvenated and braver and more hopeful than ever, but doubtless with a more patient and gentle spirit towards bad and ungrateful men. He had learned his lesson, that God has many ways of carrying forward His Kingdom among men, but that the favorite method is by the gentle warming of their minds and hearts.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why did Elijah seek refuge in Judah and the wilderness? 2. What did Jehovah do to restore His servant? 3. What lesson did Elijah need to learn? 4. How did God recompense Elijah for his trials?

**Summing Up.** 1. The spiritual is closely interlinked with bodily conditions. 2. Rest is a vital part of true religion. 3. Great days and miracles do not always yield great religious results. 4. Man needs communion with God in solitude. 5. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord."

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

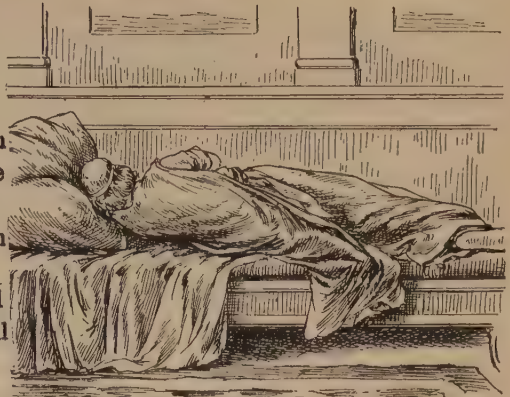


# THE STORY OF NABOTH'S VINEYARD

And Ahab came

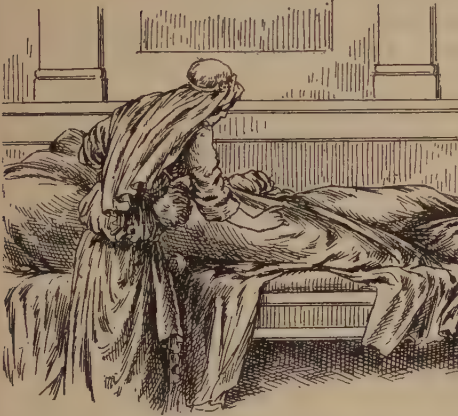


heavy and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give



thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him

and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. And Jezebel his



said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the



of Naboth the Jezreelite. \* \* \* They proclaimed a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people. And there came in two men, children of Belial, and sat before him: and the men of Belial



against him, even against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, Naboth did blaspheme God and the king. Then they carried him forth out of the city, and



with stones, that he died.

Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead.



# THE STORY OF NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 21.

**Prayer:** Grant unto us, O God, the grace of contentment in whatever lot Thou dost appoint. If it be poverty, help us patiently to endure it. If ill-health, may we learn to thank Thee even for suffering.

"Choose Thou for me my friends,  
My sickness or my health;  
Choose Thou my cares for me,  
My poverty or wealth."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 906, the 20th year of Ahab's reign. Places, Samaria the capital and Jezreel the summer home, twenty miles north. Persons, Ahab, Jezebel, Naboth, Elijah, the elders. **Scripture Setting:** The sin of covetousness, 1 Tim 6:1-19. The sin of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11. The coveting of Achan, Joshua, 7:10-26.

The coveting of Eli's sons, 1 Sam. 2:11-25. The coveting of Gehazi, 2 Kings 5:1-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Covetousness is idolatry. 2. Covetousness is ever unsatisfied. 3. A woman without a conscience is no longer woman. 4. From covetousness springs murder. 5. Blood must answer for blood.

### HOW GOD DEALS WITH CRIME.

**Elijah's Later Ministry.** After the stress of Carmel and the experiences of Horeb, Elijah seems to have been several years secluded from public service in Israel. The anointing of Hazael to be king over Syria, and of Jehu to take the place of Ahab, was left to his successor, Elisha, whom Elijah chose for himself on his journey back from the Arabian wilderness. Though hidden from the public eye, and for the time given no part in the movements of king and nation, Elijah devoted himself to a quieter form of ministry. He took to himself Elisha to be trained as his successor, and found in him his counterpart. The ruggedness of the one was in contrast with the gentleness, and even womanliness, of the other. They were two strong types, each complementing the other, and doubtless while Elisha was learning much under his honored master the elder prophet, he was also helping Elijah to learn that much-needed lesson taught at Horeb concerning the more peaceable ministries and methods of the Kingdom of God. In addition to this, Elijah was caring for the five great schools of the prophets, at Jericho, Ramah, Gilgal, Bethel and Gibeah.

**Beautiful Jezreel.** Once more, after this quiet interim of years in his life, Elijah is brought into prominence, and for the last time comes before king Ahab. Omri, father of Ahab, had contributed much to the prosperity of the kingdom in material ways. He had levied tribute, and lavished great sums of money upon buildings of all kinds. Samaria had already become famous for its great temple to Baal and its ivory palace of the king. After Samaria came the building of Jezreel, to the north of Samaria, perched upon the mountain range that sweeps north and south between the Great Sea and the Jordan. To the west was the Plain of Esdraelon and Carmel, to the east the Sea of Gennesaret and the Cañon of the Jordan—a

far-reaching and beautiful stretch of mountain, valley and sea. Jezreel was the pleasure city of Ahab and Jezebel, and Ahab especially beautified it by gardens and parks and fountains, and built himself a famous palace of luxury. Encircling the city was a wall of protection against siege of enemy.

**Ahab's Covetousness.** On the eastern slope of the hill of Jezreel, says Geikie, close to the city wall, along which one side of the palace of Ahab ran, was a vineyard which had been owned for generations by the family of one Naboth, a man of substance and position in the city. Disliking to see the ground of a private citizen so near, Ahab had determined to get possession of this, if possible, that he might turn it into a garden of flowers. But Naboth, with the sturdy independence of a Jewish landholder, was unwilling to sell it, both because it had been for generations a family possession, and especially because of a religious scruple against parting with it. "The Lord Jehovah," he said, "forbid it me." He made it an issue of conscience with the king for the sake of his religion, and was bold in saying to the king that this was his reason. It was not a question of courtesy to his king or of the large price which doubtless Ahab would give for the vineyard, but because he could not in loyalty to his God break the law of Moses.

**The Law of Land.** Very merciful and positive was the law prescribed by Jehovah through Moses as to ownership of land in Israel. It was a peculiar law, far in advance of the age in which it was divinely enacted, and is even beyond the land laws of our modern time. God Himself was in fact the owner, and the occupant by allotment or otherwise was His tenant.

To protect the family through all its successive generations it was enacted that "if any brother be waxen poor and hath sold away some of his



possession," any of his kin might demand its redemption and secure it by law; and that all land disposed of under stress of poverty or other cause should revert to the family heirs in the year of jubilee. Therefore it was both the letter and the spirit of the law that no land could be sold except in dire need, and that such sale was wholly conditioned upon the right to redeem by the legal heirs. It was under this law that Naboth refused to sell his vineyard. Read Leviticus 25:23, 24.

**Jezebel's Plot.** Ahab had set his heart upon owning Naboth's vineyard despite the plea of the owner that he could not break the law which forbade the sale of land that belonged inalienably to his family. Naboth's answer that "I am forbidden to give the inheritance of my fathers to thee," was but a spur to greater covetousness, and, like a spoiled child denied its wish, the king sulked and fretted in his palace until Jezebel contemptuously chided and mocked him, saying: "I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth." She at once wrote letters over the king's seal and sent them to her corrupt partisans in Jezreel, bidding them seize upon Naboth, charge against him blasphemy and treason, suborn witnesses to make good the charge, and, having convicted him, to put him to death. It was done as she commanded, and along with Naboth died his sons also, that every heir to the vineyard should be extinguished.

**Elijah's Advent.** Jezebel brought to Ahab the news of Naboth's death, and the king was driven in his royal chariot to the vineyard to take formal possession of the ground, now that Naboth and his sons were dead. There is not a hint in the record that either Ahab or Jezebel felt a moment's regret for the brutal murder of a good and true subject and his innocent sons.

It was at this hour of the triumph of his covetousness that brave old Elijah was sent once more to confront him and to deliver the awful judgment of Jehovah. Ahab and Elijah met in the vineyard and this is what the prophet said: "Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed and also taken possession? Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." And Ahab said to Elijah, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" And he answered, "I have found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord."

**How Ahab Died.** Back to his palace Ahab drove, with heavy heart, and remorse preying upon him. For the first time in his

life he was thoroughly frightened over his crimes—so much so that he put on sackcloth and fasted and prayed so earnestly that God's mercy for a time postponed the doom foretold by Elijah.

He lived about four years longer, at the end of which time he joined with Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, in an effort to retake Ramoth-gilead from the Syrians, though Micaiah, the prophet, warned him of sure defeat. Benhadad, the Syrian general, gave orders that Ahab, if possible, be singled out and slain. A Syrian soldier drew a bow at a venture and his arrow pierced the armor of Ahab, and in a few hours he died. The body was brought back to Samaria, and the chariot, with its blood, was washed in the town pool, and all men saw that the street dogs licked up the blood of the dead king, even as Elijah had declared.

**How Jezebel Died.** Ahab had little mourning over his death, but he partly redeemed his vicious life by the courage he displayed at the battle of Ramoth-gilead.

It was not so with Jezebel, the real demon, who had possessed the soul of Ahab. Elijah had said of her, that she should die even as she had made Naboth to die, and that her mangled body, unburied under the wall of her palace at Jezreel, as she had done to the bodies of Naboth and his sons, should be eaten by the dogs of the city after they had licked her blood. So it came to pass at the last. Jehu, avenger for Jehovah, slew the sons of Ahab and caused the painted Jezebel to be pushed to her death over the city wall, where the dogs devoured her, according to the word of Elijah. Certainly there were no mournings for this most evil woman in Bible history.

**The Word of Warning.** Covetousness is a modern vice, as powerful now as in the days of Ahab. It is by no means limited to mere money-loving, but includes the fixing of one's heart in consuming desire upon any earthly thing for its own sake. The debauchee, the demagogue, the libertine, the "popular" preacher, the gamester, the miser are all in the same class. A little thing like a plot of ground may dethrone a king and provoke the judgment of Jehovah quite as easily today as in Naboth's time. Better a morsel of bread and contentment than covetousness, which in its essence is indeed idolatry.

**Quiz:** 1. How does one explain the folly of Ahab's desire for Naboth's vineyard? 2. In what way did judgment fall upon Ahab and Jezebel? 3. Do crime and cruelty always meet with punishment in this world? 4. Wherein is Jezebel entitled to the evil fame of being the worst of all Bible characters?

**The Last Word:** 1. One who consents to sin and profits by it is no less a sinner than the actual doer of the sin. 2. Covetousness is the meanest of all sins. 3. One sows the wind and reaps the whirlwind. 4. God's justice is as certain as His mercy.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

And it came to pass, when  
the Lord would take up  
Elijah into heaven by a

that Elijah went with Elisha  
from Gilgal. And it came  
to pass, as they still went  
on, and talked that,  
behold, there appeared a

of  
fire, and  
parted  
them  
both  
asunder;  
and  
Elijah

into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father! the

of  
Israel,  
and the  
horsemen  
thereof.  
And he  
saw him  
no more:  
and he  
took hold  
of his own  
clothes,  
and

in two pieces.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS 2:1-18.

**Prayer:** When the end of life shall come to us,  
O Lord, grant to each of us a token of Thy presence  
and Thy love as we pass over the river of death.

May Thy rod and Thy staff comfort us and  
Thy hand be upon us when the hour shall come.  
Amen.

"I must needs go home by the way of the cross,  
There's no other way but this;  
I shall ne'er get sight of the Gates of Light,  
If the way of the cross I miss.

Then I bid farewell to the way of the world,  
To walk in it never more;  
For my Lord says 'Come,' and I seek my home,  
Where He waits at the open door."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Near to B. C. 900, which was about the termination of Elijah's career. Place, Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, the Jordan, and the mountains eastward. Persons, Elijah, Elisha, the sons of the prophets.

**Scripture Setting:** Enoch translated, Gen. 5:24. The death of Moses, Deut. 34:1-7. Jesus breaks the bands of death, Acts 2:29-36. The resurrection

through Christ, John 5:25. An evidence of immortality, Luke 9:28-36.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Elijah's life and labor end together. 2. The aged prophet's concern for the sons of the prophets. 3. The prophet-trainer's last lesson. 4. A stranger to death. 5. The prophet gone, another succeeds.

### THE GLORIOUS END OF A GREAT, GOOD MAN.

**Elijah's Last Days.** After the death of Ahab, little is heard of Elijah, who seemed to have devoted himself to the fellowship and training of Elisha, and to looking after the schools of the "sons of the prophets." Upon the death of Ahab, his son Ahaziah came to the throne, reigning parts of two years only. By an accident he fell from the window of his palace, and sent messengers to Baal-ze-bub to ascertain from that idol-god whether he would recover from his fall. By command of Jehovah, Elijah intercepted the messengers and made answer to the king that because of his dishonor to Jehovah in invoking Baal he should die. When Ahaziah found out that it was Elijah who sent this message, he dispatched a captain and fifty to bring the prophet before him, but they were consumed by fire from heaven, as were fifty others. In answer to the plea for mercy by the third band of fifty, Elijah spared their lives and accompanied them to the king's palace, and there denounced the king's evil course and his certain death. He was succeeded upon the throne by Jehoram, a brother, as he had left no son or heir.

**Elisha's Training.** Elijah gave much of the last years of his life to Elisha in fitting him for the great work to which he must succeed on the removal of his master. Elisha was worthy this care and training. He had promptly put himself into the hands of Elijah, as the story shows, leaving behind him a comfortable home and honored parents, and in devotion to Jehovah taking from the plow the oxen he was plowing with, and offering them in sacrifice to Him as a sign that he recognized the call to be Divine. There was much to learn. The Hebrew prophet had many duties, among which three

outranked the rest: First, he must be trained in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and be able to give instruction to the people. He must be a preacher in fact and keeper of the consciences of men. Second, he must be the compiler and custodian of the sacred annals and records of his predecessors and of his own times. Third, in most cases he must be a seer or foreteller of future events and a minister of miracle-working power.

**The Schools of the Prophets.** These were practically to the Jews what our modern theological seminaries are to us. There were at least five of these schools in Elijah's time. Samuel had instituted them, as the last of the Hebrew judges and first of the official line of the prophets. The principal schools were at Gilgal, in the territory of Ephraim, a few miles north of Bethel, which was a short distance north of Jerusalem. Another school was at Bethel, and yet another at Jericho. The young men in training at these schools were called "sons of the prophets," not with reference to literal sonship, though some of them were flesh-and-blood sons, but rather as the spiritual sons. There were several hundreds of the young men under training. They were trained in the law of the Old Testament Scriptures, and in the duties pertaining specially to the prophetic office, though very few of them were given power to foretell the future. They became in fact the preachers of Israel.

**Elijah's Educational Work.** The oversight of these "schools of the prophets" must have engaged most of Elijah's time and thought during the closing years of his life, the strenuous portion of which seems to have ended with the day he confronted Ahab as he was returning in triumph from the gar-

den wrested by blood from the hands of Naboth. Part of his prophecy of doom against the royal house was not fulfilled in his day. There seems also to have come to the heart of the prophet a realization that God's quieter way of winning men, as indicated by the "still small voice" at Horeb, was the better way with which to close his life of storm and stress. Not a few of the great leaders of the church—men like Paul and Luther and Knox and Wesley—have thus turned away from the strenuousness of their early ministry and have rounded out their lives in service to the young.

**Elijah's Last Day.** Some time, unknown to us, in the reign of Jehoram, son of Ahab, and successor of Ahaziah, his brother, the final call to duty came to Elijah. His home seems to have been at Gilgal, north of Bethel. Elisha, whom Elijah had anointed as his successor in the office of prophet, doubtless was living with and serving his master, as was the custom among young men during their years of prophetic training.

Evidently Elijah knew that his last duty was now to be done and the end of his career had come, as nothing else will explain his repeated action on this last day towards Elisha. And it seems plain also that supernatural knowledge had been communicated to the "sons of the prophets" to the effect that Jehovah would take from them their chief at this time in some miraculous way. All were expectant and waiting for an extraordinary event, and Elisha himself seemed thoroughly imbued with the idea that some strange event awaited his master.

**The Last Journey.** Leaving Gilgal, Elijah began his round among the schools of the prophets. As the prophet started forth to Bethel, at the south of Gilgal, Elisha was bidden to stay behind, but resolutely refused to be parted from his chief. As they two drew near to the school at Bethel, the young men in training, passing by in awe the great prophet, asked Elisha if he did not know that Elijah would be taken from him on that day, and were told to hold their peace. Again, after the visit to Bethel, Elijah bade Elisha remain behind, as he must go on to the school at Jericho, but Elisha, knowing that the last test of his courage and faith as successor to Elijah was being made, again refused to part company with his master, following him to Jericho.

**The Last Scene.** Once more Elijah sought to detain Elisha, saying, "Tarry here, for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan," but Elisha persisted in following the aged prophet. As they passed down to the bank

of the river, fifty sons of the prophets from the Jericho school came after the two, and taking position upon the upper bank of the Jordan, kept intense watch over the crossing over of the two prophets.

Elijah, wrapping his mantle in his hand, smote with it the waters of the river and they "divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground." When they had passed over to the mountains beyond Elijah asked Elisha, "What shall I do for thee before I am taken away from thee?" Elisha asked, as his last request, that a double portion of his master's spirit might be given to him, meaning the birthright of the first-born or twice what other sons of the prophets might receive of Divine power and prophetic knowledge. Though a "hard thing," Elijah promised to grant it on conditions.

**Elijah's Translation.** Somewhere on the high plateaus east of the Jordan, among the mountains that rise from it, the end came. Mt. Nebo, where Moses died, was one of these Perea mountains, and there is a strong conviction with some that it was on this sacred place, from where the great law-giver had looked upon the "promised land," that Elijah was translated from earth to Heaven.

While the two were talking together, suddenly there appeared the vision of chariot and horsemen out of the heights and Elijah was caught up into Heaven. Elisha, patient and watchful to the last, enduring the repeated test of Elijah, received from the ascending prophet his mantle in token that the double portion of Elijah's spirit should be the heritage of Elisha. And with that same mantle Elisha turned back the waters of the Jordan on his homeward way.

**Elijah's Greatness.** No words can exaggerate the Jewish admiration for this foremost of the line of their prophets. His fame, like that of Moses, grew greater with the passing centuries, until when Christ came asking, Whom say men that I am? the answer was, "Some say Elias." And when Jesus would hold converse with venerated spirits of national fame, two came back from the invisible world to commune with Him—Moses and Elijah.

**Quiz:** 1. Why did Elijah so severely test Elisha? 2. Wherein was it right and proper for Elisha to ask a "double portion" of Elijah's spirit? 3. What other person has been taken to Heaven without death? 4. Wherein was Elijah's end peculiarly befitting?

**Practical Truths:** 1. At times God gives premonitions of one's end. 2. "Man is immortal till his work is done." 3. The workman passes, but the work goes on. 4. God has given to every age full proof of immortality. 5. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of the least of His saints.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



## THE WIDOW'S OIL INCREASED

Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto her,

What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a



of oil. Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy



even empty vessels; borrow not a few. So she went from him, and



upon her and upon her sons, who



and she



And it came to pass, when the



that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go,



and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS II KING'S 4:1-7.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Help us ever to come to Thee with faith that Thy grace and love are sufficient for every need. We would trust Thee as did the widow of old; like her we would be obedient to Thy command and render acknowledgment for all Thy blessings. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Though troubles assail and dangers affright,  
Though friends should all fail and foes all unite,  
Yet one thing secures us whatever betide,  
The promise assures us, "The Lord will provide."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 895. Place, Probably Gilgal. Persons, Elisha, a widow, and her two sons.

**Scripture Setting:** God, our Helper. He rewards obedience, Deut. 28:2-5. His care never fails, Deut. 31:8. His children trust Him, Psa. 36:7. They may rest in His promise, Psa. 37:5-7. He hears and saves, Psa. 135:18-19. Righteousness better than revenue, Prov. 16:8. The Lord provides, Matt. 6:30-33.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The story of the widow's cruse of oil teaches 1. God never forsakes the righteous. 2. That His mercy extends to the children of those who fear Him. 3. God's Fatherhood and sympathy. 4. His readiness to help. 5. His liberality to His children. 6. His providence and provision for those who seek His aid. 7. With God nothing is impossible. Our extremity is often His opportunity.

### ELISHA SAVES TWO SONS FROM SLAVERY.

**A Farmer's Son.** The prophet, Elisha, was born and reared on a farm in a rich agricultural region near the Jordan. Elisha's father, Shaphat, was a rich farmer, and from Elisha's familiarity with the customs of city and court, we infer that the father gave his son all the advantages of his day. Though Elijah's mantle descended upon him, Elisha retained his own individuality. Elijah was the prophet of wrath and judgment, and his sudden appearance and brief prophetic career has likened him to a burning meteor, while Elisha was "like a rainbow" announcing salvation to a people in darkness. His very name meant "God is salvation." No one need fear to approach him and the most timid might feel at home with him. Indeed he united the confidence of all, and friends and neighbors deemed no request too small to prefer to the one whom they had often seen in the field behind the plow and the harrow, while the great of the land and even kings, sought help and favors from the man whose bearing proclaimed him their equal.

**An Ancient School.** At the close of the war with Moab, Elisha left the army and resumed his mission of mercy among the poor and needy, making his abode at the prophet's schools. Founded by the prophet Samuel these schools were not altogether unlike our present missionary training schools. Here young men and youths met for instruction in the Scriptures, music and prophesy, maintaining themselves by their own toil, and building their quarters with their own hands. From these students, who were known as the "sons of the prophets," God called His seers and prophets, and to them came those who wished to consult Jehovah. A prophet was always the teacher and guide of those

in training. Elisha was a favorite teacher, residing first at one place and then another, just as the teachers of half a century ago "boarded round," blessing all with words of wisdom, guiding them unto Divine truth, praying with them and joining them in joyful hymns, assisting them in their work of building and helping them in adversity. He may be said to have been their patron saint.

**In Dire Need.** Our story presents the home of a widow and her two sons who were in the direst need. The shelves which usually held the family provisions contained only a pot or earthen jar of olive oil, much used in those days. A bare table and wooden bench beside it, with pallets of straw on the floor were all the room contains, for the chamber has been stripped of its furnishings to satisfy the dead husband's heartless creditor; so great a burden is debt. Like Shylock, the man has demanded immediate payment in full, with an alternative more dreadful to the poor widowed mother than the pound of flesh,—the enslavement of her two sons for seven years that their labor might pay the debt incurred by their father.

Though the black cloud of debt hangs like a pall over the little home and poverty is their sole portion, the husband and father left his family a splendid inheritance. He was ever a true servant of God. According to Jewish legend, he was no other than Obadiah, who hid one hundred sons of the prophets in caverns and fed them, thus saving their lives when the wicked Jezebel would have destroyed all the Lord's prophets. The act not only cost him his position in court but left him financially embarrassed. He found a refuge from the wicked queen's wrath at the school of the prophets, where he hoped that with his hands he might earn enough to provide for his family and discharge the debt incurred through his benevolent act, when death blasted all his hopes. Whether or not the legend has any foundation of fact, the little home was



sorely menaced, and the widowed mother in desperate straits.

**A Widow's Appeal.** Broken-hearted as she is, the servant of God is not utterly cast down; though her poverty and perverted Jewish custom make it possible for a heartless creditor to enforce his unjust demand and outrage the higher law of Jehovah, which said, "Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry." She remembers the promise and tells her boys to wait while she seeks Elisha, the prophet of God. She hurries to him, her eyes still red with weeping and sobbingly presents her need. "Thy servant, my husband is dead."

Whoever the departed one, he was known to Elisha, for she continues, "And thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord." It is all the claim she proffers, but it is enough, for God has promised that He will not only provide for the righteous, but even for his children's children. Elisha asks, "What shall I do for thee? Tell me, what hast thou in the house?" The query causes a sinking of heart. Perhaps in the earlier days of their acquaintance they had lived in such affluence that Elisha hoped to save enough from the wreck of their fortunes to meet the creditor's demand. Alas, he did not know that there was only a pot of oil in the house. However, the prophet does not seem at all appalled by this declaration of her poverty: he knows what the Lord can do with the least we may bring to Him.

**The Lord Provides.** Elisha commands her to go borrow from her neighbors all the empty vessels she can. Since it is to be a demonstration of the power of One who loves to deal liberally with His servant, she is to borrow, not a few, but many. It would have seemed a strange command to one of less faith, especially when she learns that all these many vessels are to be filled from the one little pot of oil—the sole content of her larder. But never for a moment does the praying mother doubt or hesitate, though she does not yet comprehend how her sons are to be rescued from slavery by Elisha's plan. She trusts God so simply and fully that she hastens home with winged feet and without stopping to tell them why, sends her boys out to borrow the empty vessels.

When she had absolutely nothing with

which to fill them! When they have carried home every empty vessel obtainable, the mother shuts the door of the little home, for the occasion is too sacred for scornful or curious eyes. Then, her face irradiated with faith, she tells her sons to bring the vessels, while she fills them from that one pot of oil. And such is the power of a believing mother that they obey her. All around them are the empty vessels, great and small; the mother holds the pitcher of oil, and in the name of the God of the widow and the fatherless, she begins to pour the golden oil from the vessel in her hands. Though some are ten times as large as the pitcher from which the oil flows, every empty vessel is filled, and so rapidly that the two boys can hardly replace them quickly enough. Vessels full of oil fill the table, stand on the bench and cover the floor, and still the oil flows from that one small jar. God's promise has been upheld. His power is only limited by the capacity of His children to receive, and only when every vessel is filled and the sons say there is not another empty one does the supply cease.

**The Debt is Paid.** The widow hastens to Elisha, who commands her to go, sell the oil, which has a market value, and pay her debt, since however exorbitant and unjust the demands of her creditor, a just obligation may not be repudiated. The same God who has made a way for her to meet the debt has provided for the future support of herself and children, for the balance after cancelling her debt, is sufficient for their permanent relief. Then the widow knew that the great Jehovah did not forget those who serve Him, and that His ear is always open to the cry of the righteous.

**Quiz.** 1. What great prophet before Elisha helped a poor widow? 2. Upon what ground did the widow of our story base her appeal for help? 3. Give two promises which she could claim. 4. What is David's testimony concerning God's care of the righteous? 5. Have we the same right to trust Him?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. A righteous record is a man's best legacy to his children. 2. A good man's deeds live after him. 3. The soul that depends on God's promises is never utterly cast down. 4. To enter the service of the One who holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands is the surest poverty cure. 5. God's children may not be feasted, but they will always be fed. 6. God stands ready to fill every empty vessel. 7. He always gives an overflowing measure. 8. His deliverance is sure.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE SHUNAMITE'S SON

Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?  
Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and



in thine  
hand, and  
go thy  
way: if  
thou meet  
any man,  
salute  
him not;  
and if any



thee, answer him not  
again: and lay my staff  
upon the face of the child.  
And the mother of the  
child said, As the Lord  
liveth, and as thy soul  
liveth, I will not leave  
thee. And he arose, and



And Gehazi passed on  
before them, and



but  
there  
was  
neither  
voice,  
nor  
hearing:  
Where-  
fore he  
went  
again to



and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. And when Elisha was come



behold,  
the  
child  
was  
dead,  
and



He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.



THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS II KINGS 4:3-37—READ ALSO II KINGS 8:1-6.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Grant us such faith in Thee that we may recognize in all Thy dealings with us the hand of a loving Father. Even in sorest affliction may we have the assurance that all is well.

Open the eyes of all bereaved ones to the knowledge that through faith in Jesus their departed shall live again and be restored to them. Amen.

What cheering words are these;  
Their sweetness who can tell?  
In time, and to eternal days,  
" 'Tis with the righteous well!"  
'Tis well when joys arise,  
'Tis well when sorrows flow,  
'Tis well when darkness veils the skies,  
Because He loves me so.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 895. Place, Shunem. Persons, Elisha, Gehazi, his servant; a Shunamite woman, her husband and child.

**Scripture Setting:** The Power of God over Life and Death. God's presence in death, Psa. 23:4. Our Guide in death, Psa. 48:14. Looses those appointed to death, Psa. 102:20. Ransoms from the power of the grave, Hos. 13:14. Holds the issues of death, Psa. 68:20. Holds the keys of death, Rev. 1:18. Delivers from fear of death, Heb. 2:14-15. Victorious over death, Isa. 25:8. Death abolished by Christ, 2 Tim. 1:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This lesson teaches us that, 1. Elisha is known as a man of God through his daily walk and converse. 2. Kindness to one of God's servants is rewarded. 3. God claims what He has given. 4. The mother seeks God in her bereavement and her faith triumphs over her sense of loss. 5. The unconverted Gehazi finds no power in Elisha's staff. 6. Only through prayer and repeated personal endeavor is Elisha able to restore the child to life. 7. The mother receives again the child whom God had given and taken away.

THE TRIUMPH OF A MOTHER'S FAITH.

**A Great Lady.** The little town of Shunem was only a few days' journey from Jerusalem, situated in the midst of evergreen olive groves, waving cornfields and purple vineyards. All its homes were prosperous. The mistress of the finest house in the village, who was a great lady not only because of her possessions, but great in character and faith was so eager to minister to God's servant, that she would actually watch for Elisha's coming, and upon his appearance hasten to greet him and constrain him to enter her home and eat. Her hospitality was so genuine that "As oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat."

Elisha lived his religion in the home. His gentleness, kindness, and habit of prayer caused his hostess to tell her husband that she was convinced that Elisha was not only in name, but in reality a "holy man of God," and she proposed that they build a sleeping chamber for his especial use. Accordingly an "aliyah" or chamber was built, resting partly on the wall of the house and projecting beyond it like a balcony, with a latticed window opening to the street. It was furnished with a bed, a seat, a table, and candlestick, that the prophet might write; and the little room devoted to God's prophet became to the hostess, God's sanctuary.

**Hospitality Rewarded.** One morning after a night's rest and repose in the prophet's chamber, Elisha sent Gehazi, the young student who served as his attendant, to his hostess to find what he might do in return for her hospitality, even offering to use his great power with the king in her behalf. But the

woman was too great to desire the petty benefits of court and she replied to Elisha's offer with quiet dignity, "I dwell among mine own people." Gehazi carried back her answer, and Elisha conferred with his young attendant, who suggested that the home was childless. Their hostess might disdain the king's favor, but deep down in her heart was the longing of every true woman for a child of her own. "Call her," said Elisha. The woman came in answer to his summons, stopping reverently at the threshold. Gehazi had guessed aright. When told that in time a child would be born into the home, her joy was so great she could hardly believe the prophet's assertion. Yet scarcely a year elapsed before she was a happy mother.

**An Unexpected Blow.** Several years passed; the child God had given them grew from infancy to boyhood. He was the joy and delight of the home, growing daily and hourly dearer to his parents. It was hard to tell which welcomed his sunny presence most, the mother in the home or the father in the field. No morning could have been brighter and fairer than that summer morn when the mother watched her boy run eagerly to the harvest field where the father was at work, that he might watch the men reap the grain and bind it into sheaves. After playing awhile in the harvest field the little fellow turned a white face to the father, and exclaimed, "My head! my head!" To the busy father it seemed only a passing illness and he ordered one of the young men to carry the child home to his mother. All the healing arts of that ancient time proved

unavailing, and we have a pathetic picture of the mother, powerless to stay the death angel's destroying touch, as her boy breathes his last upon her knees.

**It Is Well.** Quietly, and as if her darling were asleep, she carried the still form up to the prophet's chamber and laid her precious burden "On the bed of the man of God and shut the door upon him and went out," thus committing her child to God who had given and who would restore. So great was her faith, that she evaded her husband's questioning and even withheld the knowledge of the boy's death from him. Why incur useless sorrow when eventually, "It shall be well?"

Her one desire was to run to the man of God. She could not wait for the servant, but with trembling, eager fingers saddled the ass herself, and urged the servant whose duty is to run behind and goad the animal forward, "Drive and go forward." He is not to consider her comfort, but whip the animal into utmost speed, for moments seem hours to the bereaved mother. The man of God saw her afar off and sent his servant to meet her. To Gehazi's query, "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? Is it well with the child?" she answered, "It is well." Marvelous faith of the woman, triumphant over the greatest loss and utmost bereavement that may pierce a woman's heart!

**A Mother's Anguish.** Her soul had risen to mountain heights of faith, but the mother's heart would overflow. Hastily dismounting, she threw herself down before the prophet and caught his feet. The attendant would have thrust her aside, but Elisha's tender heart was touched by the anguished woman's appeal. "Did I desire a son of my lord?" It is the question asked by bereft mothers ever since. Why had God given her this treasure, and then snatched His gift from her? It were better the home had remained forever childless.

**Man's Failure and God's Power.** Elisha commissioned Gehazi to take his staff, gird his loins, and without stopping to exchange salutations with anyone lay Elisha's staff upon the child. But alas, there was no virtue in the prophet's staff except as God endowed it with power. Gehazi journeyed to Shunem and laid the prophet's staff upon the face of the child, but he did not awaken. The task needed the prophet's deep consecration and dependence on God as well as his staff. Elisha entered the wall chamber and, shutting out the mother and Gehazi, he prayed unto the Lord, and then he went and lay upon the child, mouth upon mouth,

hands upon hands, his eyes upon the closed eyes of the dead until the dead and the living were one. He felt the child's flesh. It was warm! But Elisha was only a man and his faith so small that the task demanded another effort. Pacing the floor, walking from one room to another and communing with God, he finally returned to the chamber of death, and when he stretched himself upon the child, the child sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. The mother's faith had triumphed. All was well!

**The Mother Receives Her Child Again.** Opening the chamber door, the prophet called Gehazi and sent him for the mother. Never did the mother forget that moment. In the bliss of that reunion she realized that it was the hand of love which for a short time had withdrawn her child from her. No moment of her life, not even when the baby head first nestled against her breast, was ever so filled with bliss as this. Dearer and closer than ever before was the tie between mother and child, for had she not known both loss and restoration! And her child was a thousand times more precious because of that cruel time of separation. In an excess of joy she fell at Elisha's feet and bowed herself to the ground in adoration of the goodness of God, then she took up the son who had been restored to her from death itself and went out.

Was she not a type of the great company of mothers who gather at the throne of God, and fall at His feet to receive from the One who was victorious over death, the dear children who are restored to them, not for a season as was the Shunamites' son, but forever.

**Quiz.** 1. What miracle of Elisha was similar to this? 2. Name three characteristics of the Shunamite woman which made her great. 3. How was her hospitality manifest? 4. How did she show herself superior to social ambition? 5. How did she exhibit a firm trust in God? 6. What comfort does this story bring to bereaved mothers?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. One's life is the best proof of Christian calling. 2. He is truly great who is content. 3. Good men carry a blessing everywhere. 4. One loses nothing but gains much through hospitality. 5. A mother's faith in God often saves her boy from worse evils than death. 6. Prayer was more powerful than Elisha's staff. 7. Great trials should be patiently endured. 8. Our trials have often a blessed end. 9. Gehazi entered the chamber of death alone and was powerless to help. 10. Elisha carried the Creator of life with him and conquered death. 12. All mothers may trust God to restore their child to them.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# NAAMAN THE LEPER

And it was so, when Elisha the man of God had heard that the king of Israel had



that he sent  
to the king,  
saying,  
Wherefore  
hast thou  
rent thy  
clothes? let  
him come  
now to  
me, and  
he shall  
know that  
there is a



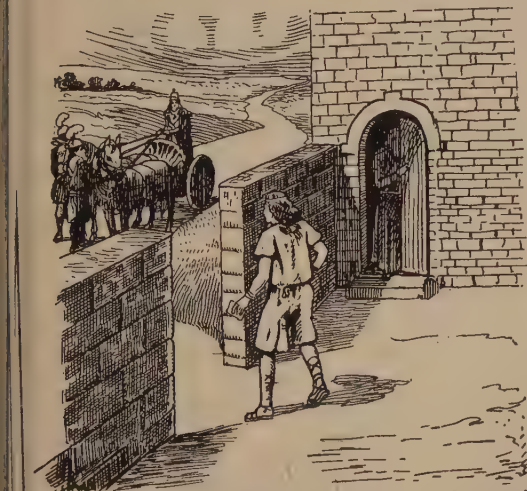
in Israel. So Naaman came with his



and



of the house of Elisha. And Elisha



unto him,  
saying, Go  
and wash  
in Jordan  
seven  
times, and  
thy flesh  
shall come  
again to  
thee, and  
thou shalt  
be clean.  
Then went  
he down,  
and



seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS 5:1-19.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we thank Thee that the least of Thy servants may proclaim Thy power, and that Thou dost not work through kings and princes, but that Thou are ever easy of access to all who humbly come to Thee for cleansing. We rejoice in the cleansing power of the blood of Thy dear Son and render grateful thanks for His cleansing. Amen.

There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plung'd beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.

E'er since by faith I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 894. Places, Damascus, Jericho and the river Jordan. **Persons,** A little slave girl; Naaman, a captain of the Syrian army; Elisha, the prophet; Gehazi, his servant.

**Scripture Setting:** **The Cleansing Power of Christ.** The blood of Christ cleanses from sin, 1 John 1:7-9. Its power, Isa. 1:16-18. Cleanses from sin, Psa. 51:2. A thorough cleansing, Ezek. 36:25-27. Christ's willingness to cleanse, Mark 1:40-41. A condition of discipleship, John 13:8. Cleanses the church, Eph. 5:26. He washes away our sins, Rev. 1:5. His cleansing is efficacious, Psa. 51:7. Sanctifies, 1 Cor. 6:11. Saves, Titus 3:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. With all the world can give Naaman is not secure from the greatest misfortune. 2. Through her testimony and faith in God, a little slave girl points the way to Naaman's cure and salvation. 3. Naaman learns that God's favor is not through kingly influence. 4. Elisha, the man of God, is impervious to the ostentation and show of a worldling. 5. Simple as is the mode prescribed for Naaman cleansing, he finds no other way save obedience to the Divine command. 6. Once cleansed and restored Naaman becomes a humble, grateful and generous follower of the one true God.

### A LITTLE MAID AND A GREAT SOLDIER.

**A Great Soldier.** The scene opens in the ancient heathen metropolis of Damascus; Benhadad, the insolent and powerful foe of Israel, is on the throne. His favorite general is commander-in-chief of all the royal forces, though Naaman owes his high position to his own deeds of valor as well as to kingly favor. His fine face and soldierly bearing are worthy of the name of Naaman, which means beautiful; high rank, unlimited authority, and immense wealth render his position enviable. But worldly honor is never without alloy: Naaman is a leper, and leprosy is so loathsome and hideous a disease that nothing save sin is so blighting and fatal.

**A Captive Slave Girl.** In one of the many sorties of the Syrians into Israelitish territory, a division of the Syrian army had borne down upon a village, plundering it and carrying its inhabitants into slavery. A little girl was torn from her parents and dragged across the border onto Syrian soil, where, desiring to ingratiate themselves into the favor of their commander-in-chief, her captors presented her to Naaman. He gave her to his wife, never dreaming of the great blessing the insignificant little slave girl was to bring to him.

Despite misfortune, the child retained her trust in God, accepted His strange providence and faithfully served her mistress, even sharing her sorrow over her husband's unfortunate malady. One day when the mistress was unusually downcast, the little maid

exclaimed, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria, for he would recover him of his leprosy." It required all the child's courage to speak to the great lady, but the little slave girl could not lose this opportunity to testify to the power of God.

**A Royal Message.** Her mistress thought the girl's word too foolish to tell her husband, but one of the upper servants repeated the little slave's word to the great Naaman, and he made them known to the great king of Syria, who urged his favorite to "Go to, and I will send a letter unto the king of Israel." The great man's cure was to be obtained through royal authority and the power of money. Accordingly Naaman set forth on his journey with a retinue of attendants, the king's letter and ten splendid robes and silver and gold to the value of more than fifty thousand dollars of our money, to bestow upon the fortunate one who should effect his cure.

Benhadad's letter made no mention of the true God or Elisha his prophet. He took it for granted that just as he had magi who were at his beck and call, so Jehoram was the fortunate possessor of a high priest of magic who could cure leprosy at his royal master's command, and with his old-time insolence of power, Benhadad demanded Naaman's cure of the king of Israel. When Jehoram read Benhadad's impossible demand he thought the wily Benhadad was only seeking a quarrel with him that he might declare war against Israel, and he rent his royal mantle in token of his distress and cried, "Am I God to kill and to make alive?" For so hopeless was the dread disease that the Hebrews regarded a leper as one dead.



**Help Appears.** In the midst of the panic a messenger appeared from Elisha. His first question was a rebuke from the prophet to the king: "Why hast thou rent thy clothes?" Though Benhadad's demand exceeded the royal authority, it was not beyond the power of Israel's God, who can kill and make alive. "Let him come to me," was Elisha's command. The king gladly dispatched his unwelcome and embarrassing guest to the prophet, and Naaman and his gorgeous retinue appeared before Elisha's humble abode. The Syrian commander had a high sense of his own importance, and he confidently expected the prophet to come out of his house and greet him with humble obedience, but Elisha knew that Naaman would have to lose all his pride before God could help him; so though the most accessible of men, he only sent a messenger to tell the haughty Syrian captain to, Go wash in the Jordan (which was twenty miles away), not once, but seven times, if he would be cleansed from his leprosy. Surely, the prophet did not know what a great man was at his door!

**Pride Is Humbled.** Naaman expected that an obsequious prophet would bow low before him, calling on his God and magically working the great man's cure, which obligation Naaman would discharge by so loading the magic worker with gold, silver and costly apparel that not God, but the great Syrian commander, would be the benefactor. Instead, to be treated as though he were a common suppliant—a beggar—Naaman was very angry. Were there not rivers in Damascus, whose crystal waters, flowing down from the mountains, were cool and ideal for bathing?

The haughty soldier turned away in a rage, vowing that if wash he must, he would at least wash in one of the rivers of his own land instead of the muddy, sluggish Jordan. He ordered his chariot to drive away, and the cavalcade moved forward, when one of his attendants approached him, addressing Naaman with Oriental deference as "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? How much rather when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean?" Anger always dethrones judgment and the camel driver's timed remonstrance restored Naaman's reason. If he went away in a dudgeon there remained nothing for him but final death from a most loathsome disease, while if he obeyed the prophet's command there was a possibility of cure. For the first time there came to the mighty Syrian a realizing knowledge of his condition. What availed power and rank, wealth and pomp of station if he was a leper?

**The Cleansing Stream.** His decision is

made, and he orders the cavalcade to the Jordan. It is a drive of twenty miles or more, but since he has yielded his pride there is a simple dependence on the prophet's words, quite foreign to the hitherto imperious commander. He urges his attendants on with eager haste, for all his hopes are now fixed upon the once despised Jordan. The cavalcade reaches the river, whose clayey banks have so discolored the stream that it reminds one of blood.

An awed silence falls upon the company as Naaman stands by the river's brink. Expectation is on the faces of some, while others try hard to hide the sneer at their captain's folly. He plunges into the water and rises to the surface. The mighty Syrian has participated in many battles and great councils, but this is the most important moment of his life. There is no change in the leper's appearance; a second and third time he enters the water, but the same signs of leprosy cling to him. Now he goes under for the sixth time. Surely if there is any efficacy in the waters of the Jordan some signs of cure will be apparent. But no, the man is as leprous as when the command was issued. Naaman's heart is heavy. As never before he feels the burden of his leprosy.

But stay,—the command was seven times and God exacts implicit obedience from those who would receive His benefits. The heathen soldier prays to the one true God; the seventh time he plunges under the wave. His prayer is answered; the health-giving hand of God has touched his leprous body and he is clean. The light of God's countenance has dispelled the darkness of heathenism. Not since he was a child have arm and thigh shown such firmness and glowing health. A soul has been born under the Jordan, and instead of the leprous creature who sought healing in its waters a new creature stands upon its strand, praising God for his restoration and cleansing. As he reappears among them, there is a shout of joy from those who line the river bank. Naaman is no longer a leper.

**Quiz:** 1. To what former king of Israel did Benhadad send an insolent message? 2. What great virtue was manifested by the little slave girl? 3. Did Naaman's gold prove efficacious? 4. What does the psalmist say concerning the help of princes? 5. Do you think there was any healing power in Jordan's waters? 6. What might this story typify?

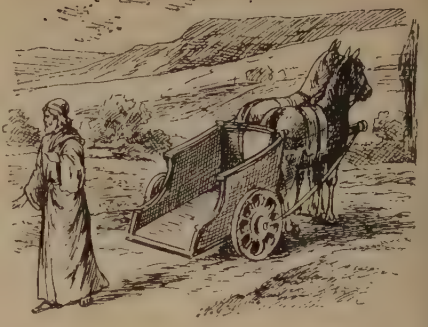
**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Earthly happiness is always incomplete. 2. The little maid carried her religion with her. 3. Testimony for God is never lost. 4. The words of a slave may outweigh the letter of a king. 5. He who prescribes the form of blessing he shall receive from God, is often disappointed. 6. God does not ask great things of us, but he demands that we do whatsoever He asks. 7. Many men think they can buy God's help with gifts and money. 8. God cannot help those who refuse to obey Him. 9. The worldly wise reject God's plans because they are simple. 10. The blood of Christ is a cleansing fountain.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# GEHAZI THE LEPER

But he went in, and

his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from



to meet thee? Is it a time to receive



and to receive



and



and



and



and



and



and



The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT 'S 2 KINGS 5:20-27.

**Prayer:** Lord deliver us from the sin of covetousness and falsehood. Let not the leprous blight of these sins fall upon us, but may we ever be loyal, disinterested servants of Thine, seeking first and always the advancement of Thy Kingdom. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"How sad our state by nature is!  
Our sin—how deep it stains!  
And Satan holds our captive minds  
Fast in his slavish chains."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time, B. C. 894. Place, Jericho. Persons, Elisha, Naaman and Gehazi.

**Scripture Setting:** The Sin of Covetousness. Eve's sin, Gen. 3:6. Covetousness forbidden, Ex. 20:17. Abhorrent to God, Psa. 10:3. Evil consequences, Prov. 15:27. Covetousness and righteousness contrasted, Prov. 21:26. Causes disobedience, Ezek. 33:31. Woe to the covetous, Hab. 2:9. Its kindred vices, Mark 7:22. Christ's warning against covetousness, Luke 12:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson: 1.

We observe the contrast between a liberal, righteous soul and one covetous and wicked. 2. With true grandeur and loyalty Elisha refuses to be recompensed for a cure wrought by God. 3. Gehazi covets the gold and costly apparel his master has refused. 4. This covetousness makes him a liar and libeller of Elisha. 5. He seeks to hide his dishonesty from the man of God and fails. 6. The prophet declares Naaman's cure and conversion too sacred an occasion for material recompense. 7. Naaman's leprosy falls upon Gehazi.

### A COVETOUS MAN'S FOLLY.

**The New Convert.** Even though it entailed a detour of fifty miles to return to Jericho, Naaman was too great a soul to go back to Damascus without manifesting his gratitude to Elisha, so we find the gorgeous cavalcade returning to Jericho. It was a triumphal procession, proclaiming Naaman's recovery to the throng that lined the streets. It was a spectacular public demonstration that Israel's God and His prophet were greater than Israel's panic-stricken king.

The great procession, which has almost kingly pomp, does not stop at the palace. Naaman has done with royalty. His allegiance has been transferred to One greater than any earthly king, for the miracle has been inward as well as outward. The physical change is less striking than the change in the real Naaman. Pride is gone, all sense of caste has disappeared; instead of waiting outside for the prophet of God to come out and render obeisance to him, Naaman dismounts from his chariot, knocks humbly at Elisha's door and stands before him with bowed head while he imparts a wonderful piece of information. "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel." The Syrian has traveled a greater distance than from Damascus to Samaria, farther than from Jericho to Jordan. He has come from darkness to light, from heathenism to God, from spiritual death to spiritual life.

**True Greatness.** He calls to his attendants to bring the gifts of money and apparel that had seemed so great when he started on his quest for health, but which now seem small in comparison with the benefit he has received, and humbly begs the man of God to accept them. The kindly face of the

prophet glowed with simple joy at Naaman's declaration of faith in the true God, but Elijah's rugged grandeur was never more impressive than the air of quiet majesty with which Elisha disposed of the Syrian commander's gifts. Perhaps it required as great heroism to refuse glory and honor and reward for himself as it did to defy a king or confront the prophets of Baal. Gehazi, the prophet's attendant, looked longingly at the richly woven robes and the treasure of silver and gold, but Elisha would rather exalt God than to enrich himself. He wanted Naaman to know that his cure was of God and not of man. Elisha was jealous also for the honor of his profession. Naaman had come expecting to find a common magic worker; he must learn that a true prophet of God served for a higher reward than money. Moreover, Elisha was too great a patriot to accept emoluments from his country's foe. Perhaps he wanted Naaman to learn the worthlessness of aught he had, in comparison with what God could give, so Elisha waved aside the silver and gold and costly raiment with the declaration, "As the Lord liveth before whom I stand, I will receive none."

**The Great Man Departs.** The Irish peasant carries a bit of native soil with him across the ocean and plants the bit of turf under his door-step that he may feel at home in a strange land. So the ancient Jews transferred earth from Jerusalem to Babylon to build a temple on it, that it might seem as though they were worshipping on their own sacred land. Naaman felt that he was in the land of the true God, and that the very soil was holy, and he begged for a few loads of earth to carry back to Damascus, on which to build an altar to the true God, whom he

will serve save when compelled to accompany king Benhadad to a house of idol worship, when etiquette and custom demand that he shall bow before the idols; for strong and fine as is Naaman's character, he has not courage to go contrary to common custom, even though his conscience tells him it is a sin. Elisha sent the new convert away with the fatherly benediction, "Go in peace," and Naaman departed.

**Evil Thoughts.** Gehazi watched the splendid cavalcade, noted the rich camel trappings, magnificent chariots and richly apparelled retinue of attendants, and contrasted this display of wealth with the austere life of his master and himself. It was a mistake on Elisha's part to have refused the Syrian's gifts; Gehazi even convinced himself that it was his duty to look after his master's interest. Of course he would not accept all the great man had offered his master, but a little to lighten their necessities. Having convinced himself of the legitimacy of such an act, we find the youth employing the name of God and in such haste to put his plan into execution that he ran after Naaman.

As the converted Syrian hurried from his chariot and apprehensively asked, "Is all well?" Gehazi framed a lie, saying, "My master hath sent me," and in Elisha's name he proffered a request for a talent of silver and two changes of raiment for two imaginary young men, whom he piously averred were sons of the prophets. It was a modest request, but it maligned his master, since it raised a doubt as to the sincerity of the prophet's former refusal of the gifts. But Gehazi covets the splendid robes which he saw spread before his master, and he cares nothing for the impression as to Elisha's honesty which he may leave with the Syrian.

**Deeper in Sin.** The grateful Naaman, rejoicing in the opportunity to serve his benefactor, insisted and even forced two talents of silver and two changes of garments upon Elisha's attendant, sending two of his own servants with Gehazi to carry the treasure to the house. Fearing to let his master see him with the gifts, Gehazi dismissed the two men at the gateway, and stealthily hid the garments and bags in the house.

What a contrast to his master was the covetous Gehazi, with a lie on his lips, disloyalty in his heart and disposing of his booty like a thief! It

was a difference of heart; the heart of one was fixed on God until Elisha's life was as beneficent as a palm tree in the desert which affords drink, food and shade, to all who seek its shelter. The heart of the other was fixed on worldly things until it became as deadly to himself and others as the noxious vine that poisons all who come in contact with it.

Having hidden his treasure, Gehazi "went in and stood before his master, and Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" The sin of covetousness prompted the lie to Naaman; the fear of discovery leads to the second lie, when the culprit declares to his master, "Thy servant went no whither."

**The Wages of Sin.** Gehazi hopes to deceive Elisha, but the prophet's vision had reached out to the meeting of Naaman and the receipts of his gifts—gifts which might have been acceptable at another time and under other circumstances. This was not a time "to receive money and to receive garments, and olive yards, and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and men servants and maid servants," graft which Gehazi had received and of which he hoped to keep his master in ignorance.

We have evidence that the warm-hearted Elisha loved his young attendant and sadly and slowly he pronounced the culprit's sentence, "The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and to thy seed forever." The youth stood with downcast eyes and as his glance fell upon his hands for the first time, he realized the hideousness of sin; already the flush of health had gone, the skin was dry and hands and arms bore the awful deadly whiteness of leprosy and as his sin had grown from a covetous thought to lying dishonesty, so now the leprosy was spreading over his entire body. Never again would he feel the rich, warm pulsing of healthy blood through his body, and saddest of all, the curse of his sin would be transmitted to his children's children and their children's children forever, so unending are the consequences of sin, and so terrible its punishment.

**Quiz:** 1. Name three other examples of covetousness given in the Bible. 2. Why did it require heroism to refuse Naaman's gifts? 3. Where did Gehazi's sin begin? 4. Is it possible to commit a single sin or does one sin beget another? 5. Name some of the sins that result from covetousness.

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Gratitude is the sign of a great soul. 2. The soul that has met God is always humbled. 3. It is easier to overcome an enemy than to overcome temptation. 4. Many people run into sin. 5. Satan is a master of evil invention. 6. Ill-gotten wealth always proves a curse. 7. There is always a day of judgment. 8. As one vibration of light travels millions of miles, so one sin may cover centuries. 9. We live not only for ourselves, but for those who come after.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



And the



of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself, there, not once nor twice. Therefore the heart of the



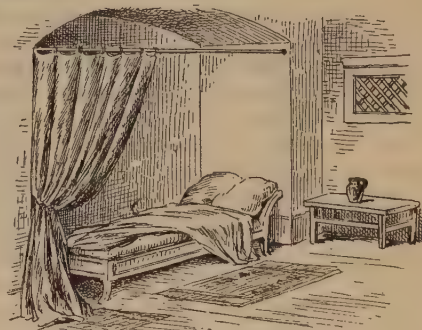
of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his



and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the



that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy



And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither



and a great



and they came by night, and compassed the city about.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS 6:8-18.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We thank Thee for Thy presence and guardianship; for the angel of the Lord that encampeth round about them that fear Thee. May we ever trust Thee in the hour of danger. Open our eyes to the spiritual world about us, that we may realize Thy presence with us, and

Thy watchful care over us. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Onward, Christian, though the region  
Where thou art be drear and lone;  
God has sent a guardian legion  
Very near thee, press thou on.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 890. Place, Dothan. Persons, Elisha, his servants, and the Syrian host.

**Scripture Setting:** The Invisible Host. An innumerable army, Job 25:3. Commanded by God, Psa. 68:17. A Heavenly host, 1 Kings 22:19. Greater than the enemy, 2 Chron. 32:7, 8. They visit the earth, Gen. 28:12, 32:2. Their mission, Psa. 34:7. Empowered by God, Psa. 91:11-12. Angels watch us, Heb. 12:1. Control the elements, Rev. 7:1-3. Around the throne of God, Rev. 22:3-4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This is one of the most beautiful and comforting stories of the Bible.

1. Though the king and his court disregard him, Elisha seeks their safety by sending warning to the ungodly king of Israel. 2. By such warning he endangers his own safety and the king of Syria seeks to take him captive. 3. A great army is sent out against one man. 4. Elisha's servant is affrighted by the enemy's forces. 5. In response to the prophet's prayer, his eyes are opened that he may see the great angelic host which God has sent for their defence. 6. The magnanimity of the man of God is manifested toward his intended captors who fall into his power.

## OUR UNSEEN HELPERS.

**Prophetic Warnings.** The miraculous cure of the commander-in-chief of the Syrian forces, and the kindness manifested by Israel's prophet, should have deterred Benhadad from further warfare with that country, but the gratitude of kings is short-lived, and within a few years hostilities were renewed. Benhadad held secret councils of war and planned ambushes so that he might surprise the enemy. But God manifested His protecting care over His people through Elisha, who would warn the king of Israel, "Beware that thou pass not such a place, for thither the Syrians are come down." The scouts sent out by Jehoram upon the receipt of these messages always found Elisha's warnings well founded. Thrice the prophet saved king Jehoram and his army from surprise and disaster.

**The Mystery Explained.** Benhadad did not know that these warnings were from God, and he was troubled. Indeed, he was terrible in his wrath; there must be a traitor in the camp, for how else could the king of Israel obtain his knowledge of the plans of the Syrians, and be prepared for every sortie? But his favorite commander declared, "None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed chamber."

The explanation seemed feasible, for Benhadad remembered Naaman's miraculous cure, and was willing to believe that a man who possessed the magic power to cure leprosy could also read the king's thoughts in his bed chamber. Immediately the wily Benhadad thought to outwit God by mak-

ing a captive of His prophet and bringing him to Samaria, where he could do no further mischief. The king turned toward the officer who had proffered the explanation, and ordered him to "Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him."

**An Unfortunate Dilemma.** Though he is not mentioned, it must have been Naaman himself who stood before the king, since no one else had such definite knowledge of Israel's prophet, and such an order would only be given to the commander of the Syrian forces, which position Naaman held.

Without doubt, the Syrian's gratitude and conversion were unfeigned, but he was an ambitious man, and in order to retain the favor of his royal master he had desired immunity to bow before idols when in the king's presence. The privilege was not granted, though the prophet bade him "Go in peace." Perhaps Elisha hoped the new convert would gain sufficient courage to openly avow God before Benhadad and his court, but cowardice grows like any other sin, and we find no record of such an avowal on Naaman's part. In fact, concealment has caused the Syrian commander to grow so faint-hearted that the man who feared to confess God is now afraid to avow his friendship for Elisha.

It may have been one of the sad consequences of Gehazi's sin that his importunity and acceptance of Naaman's gifts created a distrust of Elisha's sincerity, causing the Syrian to believe that the prophet was, after all, only a magic worker of superior power, and cooling Naaman's ardor and zeal for the true God. If his sin caused a new con-



vert to stumble, we can better understand the severity of Gehazi's punishment. Once more, with horses and chariots, Naaman starts out to find Israel's prophet, prepared to besiege Dothan, where Elisha is temporarily residing, and even to raze it to the ground in the attempt to capture the man to whose good offices he is indebted for health, life, and all he enjoys. It is an unwelcome duty, but he dare not oppose his royal master. However, Naaman need not fear, for God will take care of His own.

**True Courage.** Under cover of night, the Syrian host encamped upon the plains about Dothan. The young man who was Elisha's attendant rose early and when he went forth on his duties, "Behold, an host compassed the city with horses and chariots." As the servant of Elisha, the young man undoubtedly believed in God, but when his belief was put to a practical test, and he saw the enemy encamped about the town, and learned their errand, he was panic-stricken, and rushed in to Elisha, crying, "Alas, my master, what shall we do?" The poor youth thought salvation from the danger that threatened them depended on their own effort. But Elisha knew that his God was near, and though the Syrian king's army were ten times as great, it could not thwart God's purpose.

With that quiet, kingly dignity which distinguished him, he soothed the youth's fears, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." What could the prophet mean? Did he not know that the village of Dothan could not turn out a hundred able-bodied men? Why, then, did his master make such a boast? The youth turned his incredulous gaze upon the prophet, and was abashed by Elisha's calmness in the face of such danger.

**Eyes Opened.** The prophet was unmoved because he knew whence help cometh. With his physical vision he could see no farther than his young attendant. But he knew that God would not desert him in the time of peril, and he was confident that where there was danger, there was deliverance. Elisha's faith did not need to be strengthened by a Heavenly vision, but for the sake of his attendant he prayed, "Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see." Wonderful faith of the man of God, who did not pray that help should be sent. He knew it was there.

"And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw; and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." With eyes opened the youth saw the spiritual help sent by God and to him. It bore a

resemblance to the earthly force which menaced them, only superior in brightness and splendor and numbers. Ah, the comfort and strength and protection we all might derive from the spiritual forces about us, if we could but see! Never again would the youth doubt God's power to protect and defend His own. Now he knows why the quiet man by his side is unmoved by the number and strength of the enemy. He realizes why this unpretentious man of God is able to work miracles, even to cleanse the leper and raise the dead. Did he not live so near to God that all the host of God wrought with him?

**Eyes Closed.** As the Syrians marched toward the two, Elisha prayed a second time, and this time he asked, "Smite this people, I pray Thee, with blindness," and they became as men who could not see, and followed their prophet-guide ten miles to Samaria, where, in answer to Elisha's prayer, their eyes were opened, and they saw how God had outwitted the machinations of man. Instead of the prophet being their prisoner, they were in his power, and he led them into the very presence of the king of Israel, where the great-hearted Elisha refused to take advantage of the helplessness of those who would have taken him captive. When the king would have slain them, the prophet declared that the lives of men who had been placed in their hands through the power of God should be considered sacred.

If Naaman was indeed the leader of the Syrian forces on this expedition, we may imagine his guilty consternation at this miracle. How he must have seen his own blindness, in failing to fearlessly and openly avow God! How black his own temerity in obeying the king's order against his old-time benefactor, must have seemed in contrast with the prophet's magnanimity! At Elisha's command they were feasted by the king of Israel and sent on their way to Damascus. "So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel." May it not have been due to the intervention of Naaman, who, in gratitude for the long sufferance of God, returned to his king with renewed allegiance to the true God, and unwonted courage to stand firmly for the right?

**Quiz:** 1. How did Elisha become cognizant of the movements of the Syrian army? 2. Why was the prophet unaffrighted? 3. Does the Bible teach a belief in angels? 4. What great realm was opened to the young attendant's vision? 5. May we likewise claim God's protecting care?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Thoughts cannot be hidden from God. 2. One man and God are greater than all the king's armies. 3. Elisha did not need to see the angels; he knew they were there. 4. There is a greater and more beautiful world than the one seen through human vision. 5. Every true believer is surrounded by the same spiritual force that defended the prophet of old. 6. It is but a thin partition that divides the material from the spiritual. 7. The servant of God need not fear if he is in the performance of duty. 8. "The best laid plans of mice and men, gang aft a'glee."

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## THE FAMINE IN SAMARIA.

And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the



and they  
said one  
to another,  
Why sit we  
here until  
we die?  
If we say,  
We will  
enter into  
the city,  
then the  
famine is  
in the



and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us  
fall unto the

of the Syrians: if they save us alive



we shall  
live;  
and if  
they  
kill us,  
we shall  
but die.



And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the

of the Syrians: and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold,  
there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of



and a noise  
of horses,  
even the  
noise of a  
great host:  
and they  
said one to  
another, Lo,  
the king of  
Israel hath  
hired against  
us the



of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS, 7:1-16.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Give us believing hearts that we may trust Thee not only to give bread in time of famine, but for the spiritual bread with which to feed our famished souls. However dark and distressing the times, may we never doubt Thy Word. We ask it for Thy glory. Amen.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan His work in vain;  
God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about 886 B. C. Place, Samaria. Persons, The king of Israel, Elisha, a Samaritan lord, and some lepers.

**Scripture Setting:** The Scoffer. Numbered with the unrighteous, Psa. 1:1. A sign of folly, Prov. 1:22. The sin of scoffing, Prov. 24:9. Punishment of the scoffer, Isa. 29:20. Wilful ignorance of scoffers, 2 Pet. 3:3-5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In the siege of Sa-

maria we find: 1. A vivid picture of the horrors of war. 2. A faithless and fickle king. 3. A true servant of the living God, who is unmoved in the midst of famine and danger. 4. A scoffer re-proved. 5. A manifestation of the Lord's mercy to His people even though undeserving. 6. Famine superseded by plenty through the Word of God. 7. The high and the humble used to fulfill His purpose. 8. The scoffer's punishment.

### A FAMINE ENDED IN A NIGHT.

**The Besieged City.** Again Benhadad made war upon Israel, directing his energies against Samaria. The once proud city was in a pitiable condition. Outside its gates a besieging army lived in splendor and luxury; within its walls, famine and starvation. For months the great Syrian host had encamped without the city, foraging and impoverishing the surrounding country and cutting off all supplies from Samaria. With an exhausted treasury and without reinforcements or allies and with pestilence and death denuding its population, from human viewpoint, the city was doomed.

A siege is not an uncommon method of warfare, but only one who has undergone the experience can realize its horrors, for the moral consequences of a prolonged siege are unspeakable. Hunger unmans and starvation brutalizes a human being. It is not for naught that we pray, "Give us our daily bread," for the lack of bread destroys all natural affection. In Samaria, as King Jehoram learned during a walk through its streets, under the brutalizing dominion of hunger, mothers had eaten their own children and were trading in the flesh of their offspring.

**A Weak King.** The dreadful story so astounded the king that he rent his clothes, revealing the sackcloth which he was wearing underneath to appease God and win His favor and succor. But under the sackcloth was a heart that was hard, unjust and impenitent. In an outburst of passion, the royal wearer of sackcloth charged Elisha with their misfortunes and swore with an oath that the prophet's head should come off that very day, and even sent a messenger to fulfill the threat. It was in accordance with the changeful nature of Jehoram

that ere the messenger reached Elisha, the king had repented of his threat and himself set out with his royal retinue, to countermand the order, arriving at Elisha's house shortly after the messenger.

**King and Prophet Meet.** Just as God enabled him to read Benhadad's thoughts in his bed chamber, as soon as it was uttered, the king's threat was known to Elisha, who sat in his house discoursing with the elders of Samaria, as unmoved as when the Syrian host was encamped about Dothan to take him prisoner. As he stood in Elisha's presence, the unstable Jehoram charged the consequences of his own sin, and incapacity upon God, and irritably exclaimed, "Behold this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?"

The calm, courageous man of God turned upon the childish, petulant king. It was a tragic moment; the man who confronted royalty so calmly was under sentence of death: the executioner was present; the king stood leaning on the arm of one of his courtiers irresolute as to whether to order the execution or not, while the elders had retired to the background to await the outcome. The utmost indifference and calmness marked the man whose life hung in the balance. He seemed enveloped in unconscious grandeur and at the sound of his voice, a deep solemnity fell upon those present, "Hear ye the Word of the Lord."

**Beyond Reason.** "Tomorrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria." A measure or "seel" was equal to about a peck and a half, and a shekel to two dollars and a half. It was a bold declaration, that within a day there should be such a drop

in the price of flour and barley, when the cost of these commodities had been absolutely prohibitive throughout the siege. Such a thing was impossible. Nevertheless it was the Word of the Lord. God had spoken through His prophet and the tidings should have brought joy and praise and thanksgiving.

Jehoram, for whose deliverance the power of God had been so often manifest and who had been relieved from many emergencies by Elisha, received the prophet's message in silence, and even permitted his court favorite to scoff and jeer at the promise of God. The nobleman turned sneeringly to Elisha, "Behold if the Lord would make windows in Heaven, might this thing be?" Elisha had borne with the honest doubts of his young attendant and prayed for his enlightenment, but here was a scoffer, who not only doubted but rejected and reviled God's Word, setting his own understanding above that of the Almighty. He turned to the haughty lord and slowly uttered these words, "Behold thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof."

**Risking the Chances.** The four despised lepers who sat at the entrance of the city gate, discussing what method would most surely prolong their miserable existence, had no idea that God was using them for the fulfillment of prophecy. Poor, pitiable objects they were, subsisting upon the refuse thrown outside the city wall. Famine had left them to die of starvation. Lepers were not allowed inside the city, but driven desperate by hunger, they were tempted to defy the law which made them outcasts and enter the city in search of food, for "Why should they sit there and die?" If they entered the city they would find naught save famine and death. There was just one chance. They might desert to the Syrians with a possibility that they might be received in the camp; even if the Syrians should fall upon them and kill them, they could but die, and any death would be preferable to the slow torture of starvation.

**How It Came to Pass.** Now at the very time the lepers stole out to seek the Syrians the Lord caused a great noise to be heard in the Syrian camp, which sounded like the noise of horses and chariots and of a great host of soldiery. Thinking it was caused by the arrival of reinforcements for the beleaguered city, the great Syrian army fled to a man. They even left their army ac-

countrements, tents and animals and fled for their lives.

Silently and under cover of night the four lepers stole into the Syrian camp. Tent after tent was deserted, with the evening meal untouched. They ate and drank, satisfying their hunger, then seeing the rich furniture, the golden bowls and drinking cups, the gold bracelets and chains worn by military dandies, and even bags of gold and silver coin, they eagerly gathered up what booty they could, hiding it and returning for more until shame and fear drove them back to the city to spread the good tidings.

**Prophecy Fulfilled.** The news spread like wildfire and was carried to the king, in the middle of the night. Despite Elisha's prophecy of the day before, Jehoram persisted in thinking it a ruse of the enemy, and was reluctant to send messengers to verify the truth of the lepers' story. But it was true. The Lord had fulfilled His Word spoken by His prophet. People and soldiery were soon carrying off Syrian booty, not only the silver and gold, but what was at the time more precious—stores of provisions, selling food inside the city gate or market place. "So a measure of flour was sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the prophet."

"Truly God is no respecter of persons. As He used the loathsome, repulsive lepers to fulfil His Word so He made king Jehoram the instrument through which Elisha's words concerning the king's favorite should come to pass. Anticipating the rush for food, Jehoram appointed that nobleman to superintend the distribution of the provisions, and so great was the press that he was trampled under foot by the eager rushing crowd and died. The scoffer had seen the Word of God verified, but it had availed him nothing. All too true had proved the prophet's words, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes but shalt not eat thereof."

**Quiz.** 1. Was Jehoram a weak or a strong king? 2. Why did he impute their misfortunes to Elisha? 3. Was this just? 4. Why is it wrong to scoff at religion? 5. Name other scoffers in the Bible and state their end. 6. Why may we always trust the promises of the Lord?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. War is always brutalizing. 2. A comparison between a weak king and a strong man is always advantageous to the latter. 3. There is a great difference between a doubter and a scoffer; the one seeks wisdom, the other repudiates it. 4. He who scoffs at sacred things always ends disastrously. 5. God's promises are always realized. 6. He who could end a food famine can relieve soul hunger. 7. God not only gives fine flour and barley in plentitude, but is Himself the bread of life to famishing souls.

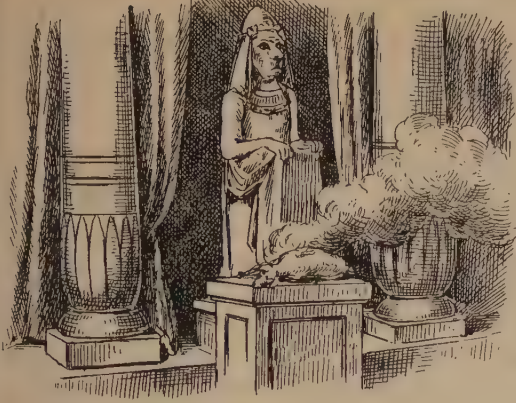
MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# JEHU THE KING

And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the

that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains,



Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they

with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal. And they



out  
of the  
house  
of  
Baal,  
and



And they brake down the:



of  
Baal,  
and



of Baal, and made it a draught house unto this day. Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS, 10:15-28.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We thank Thee that we live under the reign of love; that Christ's coming has brought peace on earth and turned the tyranny of kings. May we never mistake zeal and self-interest for true piety, nor render Thee half-hearted service. We ask it in the name of Christ. Amen.

The love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 882. Place, Samaria. Persons, Jehu, king of Israel; Jehonadab, the Rechabite; and worshippers of Baal.

**Scripture Setting:** The Sin of Idolatry. Commandments against idol worship, Ex. 20:3-5. Idolatry forbidden, Lev. 26:1. Forms of idolatry, Deut. 4:15-19. Death penalty, Deut. 17:2-7. Idolators confounded, Psa. 97:7. Warning against idolatry, 1 Cor. 10:14; 1 John 5:21. Idolatry defined, Col. 3:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson, 1. Jehu, an unscrupulous zealot, combines selfish interests with religious zeal. 2. Fearing Elisha's disapproval Jehu avoids the prophet and seeks

the support of the good but bigoted Jehonadab. 3. Professing zeal for God, but largely influenced by the desire to secure his own dynasty, he plans to destroy the worshippers of Baal. 4. Instead of following the God-inspired Elijah's bold defiance of Baal's prophets, Jehu uses duplicity and entraps the idolators. 5. He orders their massacre, thereby gaining complete riddance of the supporters of Ahab. 6. He proves the falsity of his claim to act as God's agent, by worshipping the golden calves at Bethel and Dan. 7. Good is wrought out of evil in the downfall of Baal worship throughout Israel.

### AN UNSCRUPULOUS ZEALOT.

**Jehu the King.** How many who speak of "driving like Jehu" know that they are using a phrase extant three thousand years ago, concerning a man noted for his furious and reckless driving? The Jehu, whose mode of driving thus has become immortalized, is the chief personage of our lesson. Whatever his faults and crime, no one can doubt Jehu's strength of character. He was a man of action rather than of words. His unbounding energy, desperate courage, decision, firmness and thoroughness made him a marked man very early in his career, and while he was still a young man, God chose him for the overthrow of the house of Ahab, and told Elijah to anoint him as the future king of Israel. But the anointing was deferred many years and finally performed by Elisha through a young prophet.

He was anointed for stern and harsh duty. The occasion demanded a patriot, destitute of self-interest, humbly obedient to God and an example of righteousness to his countrymen. Had Jehu been such a man, today his name might stand with William of Orange, Luther and Washington instead of being significant only of reckless driving. For there can be no doubt that at the time of his call, Jehu was a worshipper of Jehovah, with unusual fitness for the great responsibilities imposed upon him; but he regarded the trust as only an opportunity for self-advancement and self-aggrandizement. It was all too apparent that in his dealings with Ahab's descendants he acted not so much as the executioner of God's judgment against a wicked dynasty, as for his own self-protection.

**Jehu and Jehonadab.** But though actuated by self-interest, Jehu was performing God's judgment upon the wicked Ahab and the vacillating Jehoram fell a victim to his treachery. When Ahab's descendants were utterly destroyed, Jehu planned a greater strategy. Ahab had identified himself with Baal worship and naturally the adherents of that form of idolatry were friendly to his dynasty. If Jehu could effect their extermination he would be wholly rid of every unfriendly influence, while he would gain a name for piety through the destruction of Baal worshipers in the land of Israel.

Fearless and self-reliant as Jehu was, he felt the need of an ally whose reputation for piety would give countenance to so questionable an undertaking. He dared not send for Elisha, for he well knew that the prophet would not uphold falsehood and treachery. Driving to Samaria with his usual furious haste, he met Jehonadab, the son of Rechab. There could not have been a greater contrast than that between these two men. Jehu was an unscrupulous, ambitious man of the world, while Jehonadab had withdrawn from the world in protest against its corruption and luxury; as chieftain of the Rechabites, he laid the entire tribe under a vow that they would drink no wine, plant no vineyards, avoid the evils of city life, and keep themselves free from worldly entanglements by dwelling in tents all their days. And this remarkable man impressed his views so strongly upon his followers that they adhered to the vow for centuries, and to this day there are those who follow his austere example.



As the royal chariot dashed along at the usual mad rate, they came upon the desert sheik, who was on his way to meet Jehu. With his usual promptitude and brevity, Jehu saluted him and asked with blunt directness, "Is thine heart right as my heart is with thy heart?" With even greater brevity the stern-faced tribesman replied, "It is." Ratifying the covenant of friendship with a hand clasp, Jehu took Jehonadab into his chariot and sought to ingratiate himself with him by boasting of his piety, saying, "Come with me and see my zeal for the Lord."

**The Zeal of Jehu.** So subtle a vice is self-deception that Jehu had actually convinced himself that he was a disinterested patriot acting only in obedience to God, as he planned the massacre of all the Baal worshippers. It is true that God demanded the uprooting of idolatry from among the Israelites, in order that they might perpetuate the worship of the true God. But how much more it would have been in accordance with the long sufferance and mercy of God if Jehu had called upon the people to repent and return to the true God, and have executed judgment only on those who persisted in cleaving to their idols. Instead Jehu conceived a plan so treacherous and evil that God has condemned it through His prophet, Hosea. Did he think that God needed man's lies, that he began with a lie on his lips? "Ahab served Baal a little; but Jehu will serve him much." Then he appointed a great day of sacrifice to Baal and sent a proclamation broadcast through the land, accompanied with the threat that all who should absent themselves should not live.

**The Assemblage.** There had been much conjecture and no little apprehension as to the new king's religion. For though anointed by Jehovah's prophet, like many professors of religion, he was seldom or never seen in the Lord's house, and served God only when it advanced his own interest. The followers of Baal were triumphant over the proclamation, whose brevity and boldness were so characteristic of the real Jehu.

Many who formerly worshipped Baal secretly now came out in the open, and on the great day the house of Baal was full from one end to the other. Every precaution was taken to have only Baal's worshippers, and they were given special robes for the occasion that they might be distinguished from worshippers of the true God. Amid an uproar of applause, Jehu and Jehonadab entered the vast assemblage; it was evident to the multitude that Baal's ranks were to be recruited by the accession of the austere chieftain, else why was he present on such an occasion? Why, indeed,

unless inspired by ignorance of the love of God?

**The Massacre.** Jehu so little understood what it meant to be a true follower of Jehovah that he took added precautions to assure himself that none of the servants of the Lord were present. Having reassured himself that only the followers of Baal were there, he assembled his guards and warned them on the peril of their lives to let no man escape.

Again there is shouting, and great acclamation. The king serves as high priest to Baal, offering in all probability human sacrifice! It was Baal's hour of triumph. The burnt offering is ended and the treacherous Jehu drives captains and guard, fast and furiously as he drives his chariot, "Go in and slay them; let none come forth." Let a curtain be drawn mercifully over the awful scene. We can only thank the tender Saviour that we are privileged to live under the dispensation of love, and that God's followers have learned that the heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.

**The Outcome.** Jehu was never a man to leave things half done. The destruction of Baal was complete. The images were torn down from the house of Baal and burned. The pillar of Baal which was of stone could not be burned and was therefore broken to pieces. Even the house of Baal was partly destroyed, only a portion remaining as a memorial of sin and a warning of its punishment, and even that which remained was put to the greatest possible desecration; they made it a draft house to be used as a depository for the filth of the city. "Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel."

Having accomplished his own ends, Jehu's zeal disappeared and instead of trying to lead Israel back to the true God, he worshipped the golden calves of Dan and Bethel because calf worship was essential to the maintenance of a divided kingdom. If it were abolished there would be no reason why Israel and Judah could not unite under one government and Jehu would become a king without a throne. Was it not another proof that Jehu was not so anxious to avenge Jehovah as he was to serve his own interests? It is a sign of the sovereignty of God that instead of allowing evil to thwart His ends the Lord utilizes evil for the fulfillment of His purpose, often making evil men the unintentional instruments in building up His Kingdom, and in this instance, Jehu's sin wrought good through the destruction of Baal worship in Israel.

**Quiz.** 1. What dynasty did Jehu overthrow? 2. What kings did he slay? 3. What great faults tainted Jehu's zeal? 4. What good result was achieved through his perfidy? 5. Name two famous massacres of modern history perpetrated under the guise of religion?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Some men's religion is so mixed with self-interest that its savor is destroyed. 2. It is not hard to serve God when inclination and duty go together. 3. Some men lay all their meanness on God. 4. God is never served by a lie. 5. God is truth and He demands truth in His servants. 6. In His work of destruction God sometimes uses evil men, but never to build up His kingdom. 7. It is only sanctified zeal that counts. 8. There are still some men who cease to be Christians when they have attained their own ends.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



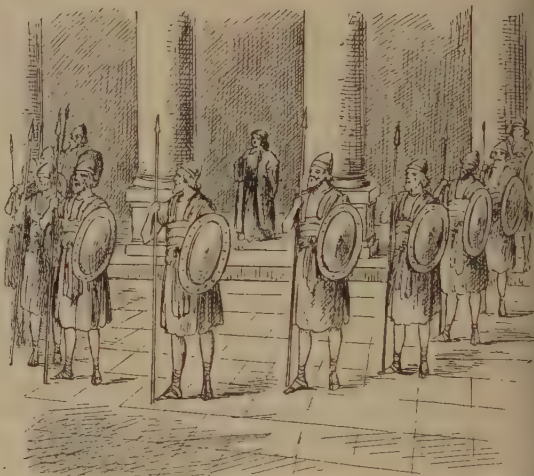
And the captains over the hundreds did according to all things that Jehoiada the



commanded: and they took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest. And to the captains over hundreds did the priest give King David's



that were in the temple of the Lord. And the guard stood, every man with his



round about the king, from the right corner of the temple to the left corner of the temple, along by the altar and the temple And he brought forth the king's son, and put the



and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they



and said, God save the king.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS, 11:9-17. ALSO 2 CHRON. 23:1-16.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We thank Thee that Thou hast preserved us in the years of helpless infancy and childhood. May we ever remember with gratitude those who ministered to us during those years. Help us to honor their teaching and Thy name. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

See Israel's gentle Shepherd stands,  
With all engaging charms!  
Hark! how He calls the tender lambs,  
And folds them in His arms.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 877. Place, The temple, Jerusalem. **Persons,** Joash, the child king; Jehoiada, the priest; Athaliah, Joash's grandmother; Jehosheba, his aunt.

**Scripture Setting:** Youthful Servants of the Lord. Abel, Gen. 4:4. Joseph, Gen. 39:3. Moses, Heb. 11:23-24. David, 1 Sam. 16:11-12. John, Luke 1:66, 80. Timothy, 2 Tim. 1:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The history of Joash records 1. God's preserving care over dangers that beset infancy. 2. The contrast between a good and a bad woman. 3. The devoted and faithful service of Jehoiada, the priest of God. 4. The crowning of the boy king. 5. The retribution which befell Athaliah, the usurper. 6. The triple covenant with God, the king and people.

### A BOY RULER.

**A Child of Royalty.** Only recently the world was watching the boy king of Spain; and the baby emperor of China with the government of two hundred million people resting on his puny infant shoulders, has been a pathetic and interesting figure. The remarkable preservation of his infant life and his youth when crowned, makes Joash one of the most interesting of Judah's kings. Never did a child have greater handicaps and greater advantages. He was the great-grandson of that wicked royal couple, king Ahab and queen Jezebel; with a grandfather so weak and wicked and such a failure as king that he was buried without kingly honors, while his grandmother excelled both her wicked parents in cruelty and sin. His father, who was no better than his evil ancestors, was slain by Jehu, at the early age of twenty-two. In order to secure the throne for herself, his grandmother ordered the massacre of every one even remotely descended from David, not even sparing her own grandchildren. Surely there could be no greater misfortune than descent from such a line; besides the sentence of death hung over his baby head. But we shall see how God manifested His protecting power in behalf of this unhappy child of royalty.

**The Deliverance.** The heathen queen had planned with cruel certitude, but she had neglected to take into account Jehovah's promise of the perpetuity of the throne of David. Ahaziah, the baby's father, had a half-sister, Jehosheba, who was the wife of Jehoiada, a priest of God. They were a godly couple and Jehosheba's heart had not been corrupted and calloused by the court. The two months' old baby under cruel sentence of death appealed to her compassion, and she resolved to save it. As a king's daughter, sister of the former king, and aunt of

the royal children, she had access to the palace at all times. Taking the child's nurse into her confidence, she stole out with baby and nurse and hid both in a room in the palace where mattresses and coverlets are stored. Every Oriental palace contained such a store chamber, and as it was never used for aught else, they were comparatively secure from discovery, though a baby's cry might have revealed its hiding place and thereby cost the life of its rescuer.

The wicked Athaliah was neither a good wife nor a good mother. The Scriptures attribute her husband's sinful career to the fact that he "had the daughter of Ahab to wife," and declare that Ahaziah did wrong because "his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly," and her grandchildren were destroyed by her. Jehosheba was not only a good wife and mother, rearing a godly son, but also loyal in every relationship, risking her own life to save a baby nephew.

**What Came of a Merciful Deed.** In a few days Jehosheba took the child and its nurse from its temporary hiding place, and stole from the royal palace to the temple where, with her husband's assistance, the babe was hidden away from its murderous grandmother, and the impending massacre. Thus by her merciful act, Jehosheba became a co-worker with God, assisting in the fulfillment of prophecy and prolonging the line of David unto Mary and Joseph.

Could Jehosheba know that centuries to come, another woman would with her husband's assistance, flee from a wicked king's edict and hide a Child of the house of David from another slaughter of the innocents? Though nearly a thousand years apart, the two episodes were closely allied. For only the frail infant in Jehosheba's arms stood against the extinction of the line of David; its slender thread of life held together the genealogy of the Child in Mary's arms. But Jehosheba was all unconscious that the service she rendered to

one of His little ones, was in very deed unto the promised Prince of the house of David.

If the infant Joash was unfortunate in his heredity, compensation was given him; what other child was ever permitted to spend his infant years in the temple of the Lord, or was so carefully nurtured and instructed by the high priest of God?

**Planning the Usurper's Overthrow.** Meanwhile a heathen queen ruled over the city of David and the land of Judah, and as far as known, the royal line of David was extinct. The splendid temple erected by Solomon was neglected and in disrepair, while under its shadow a temple was built to Baal whose worship Athaliah sought to establish in the holy city and sacred land.

After six years of impatient waiting, Jehoida felt that the time was ripe to throw off the idolatrous yoke of the usurper. Joash was now a boy of seven and according to Oriental custom, of an age to be proclaimed king. Jehoida had already won the adherence of the officers of the queen's bodyguard and the five captains of the royal guards, with whom he held a secret conference in the temple, and binding them by a secret, solemn oath to fidelity to the cause of the little king, he showed them the young descendant of David. The priests, Levites and other faithful followers of Jehovah were then invited to Jerusalem. After being sworn to secrecy, they also were shown into the presence of the boy Joash, and took the oath of fealty. Guards were skillfully posted about the temple and the palace. Spears and shields which David had won in many battles and which had reposed in the temple for 150 years were brought out and given to the captains of the guard.

**Long Live the King.** When all was ready the little Joash was led forth to the raised platform which the kings of his line were in the habit of occupying in the temple. It was fitting that the coronation should take place on a Sabbath day, for it was a religious ceremony prompted by the highest patriotism. In the sight of all the people, Jehoida crowned the boy king, and then to show that the king was to rule by law and not according to his own will, the high priest laid a roll of the law of Moses on the child's head. Once again God's priest had anointed a lad, and the boy descendant of the ruddy faced shepherd lad was proclaimed king.

Words would fail to describe the emotion of that assemblage of tried and true followers of Jehovah. Many times in the temple, they had mournfully chanted the words

of the psalmist, "Lord, how long shall the wicked triumph?" Now might they sing in triumph, "The Lord will not cast off His people, neither will He forsake His inheritance." Truly God still reigned, for the psalmist's offspring sat upon the throne. "And they clapped their hands and said, God save the king."

**The Triple Covenant.** The walls of the temple resounded with the shouts of God's people; the cheering rang across the open space to the palace, and was Athaliah's first intimation of danger. Hurrying to the temple to learn the cause of the uproar, she saw the young king crowned, and on the platform surrounded by the royal officers and captains of her own guards; the Levite choir was chanting the coronation psalm; the temple band was playing, and trumpeters and people were joyfully acclaiming Joash king.

Small wonder that the wretched Athaliah rent her clothes and cried, Treason! Treason! But was it treason that a heathen usurper and murderess should meet her doom, Baal be overthrown and the throne of David revert to its rightful owner? Jehoida, the faithful high priest of God, had not inaugurated a revolution merely to set his wife's nephew upon the throne, but to reinstate the worship of Jehovah, and the most solemn and sacred feature of the coronation was to follow. "And Jehoida made a covenant between the Lord and the king and the people, that they should be the Lord's people; between the king also and the people." King and people were to worship God and be faithful to Him and He would protect and keep them. In token of their sincerity, the people destroyed the house of Baal, its altars and images, and the worship of the true God was restored. Thus this peaceful revolution accomplished more than Jehu's coup d'état of treachery and slaughter.

That "Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoida the priest," and after the good man's death, was led into sin through evil companions, even conniving at the death of the son of his benefactors, shows that association is more powerful than heredity.

**Quiz.** 1. What other boy was anointed king by a prophet and priest of God? 2. What other babe in the Old Testament was saved from death by hiding it? 3. What king ordered a slaughter of innocents? 4. How was the life of the Child Jesus preserved? 5. Does God still exert a guardian care over children? 6. Which was the truest reformer, Jehu or Jehoida?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Perils and danger face every infant life. 2. Jehovah guards the cradle of every slumbering babe. 3. A bad woman destroys, a good woman preserves life. 4. An evil heredity does not predestine its possessor to evil. 5. Heredity may be overcome by education and environment. 6. We cannot choose our ancestry, but we may pick our associates. 7. Retribution always overtakes and overtakes the criminal. 8. A royal dynasty was saved from destruction and God's Word upheld, through one merciful act.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE DEATH OF ELISHA

Now Elisha was fallen



of his  
sickness  
whereof  
he died.  
And Joash  
the king of  
Israel came  
down unto  
him, and



over his face, and said,  
O my father, my father,  
the chariot of Israel,  
and the horsemen thereof.

And Elisha said unto  
him, Take bow and arrows.  
And he took unto him



And he said to the king  
of Israel, Put thine hand  
upon the bow. And he



and  
Elisha  
put  
his  
hands



And he said, Open the window eastward. And



Then  
Elisha  
said,  
Shoot.  
And



And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria:  
for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 2 KINGS, 13:14-21.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Grant us grace to meet Thy summons calmly. May it find us prepared and ready. Help us so to live, that even after death, our influence shall live on and have a vivifying effect upon souls that are dead in sin. For Thy glory. Amen.

"Lives of great men all remind us,  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And, departing, leave behind us  
Footprints on the sands of time."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 842. Place, Shunem. Persons, Elisha and Joash, king of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** The Death of the Righteous. Greatly to be desired, Num. 23:10. Precious in the sight of the Lord, Psa. 116:15. They enter into peace, Isa. 57:1-2. They have hope in death, Prov. 14:32. Are sustained and comforted in death, Psa. 23:4. God's presence in death, Psa. 48:14. Victorious in death, Isa. 5:8, 1 Cor. 15:56-57. Shall live again, Isa. 26:19. Depart to be with Christ, Phil. 1:21-23. Borne to Heaven by angels, Luke 16:22. Their Heavenly reward, Dan. 12:2-3. They receive a crown of righteousness, 2 Tim. 4:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this beautiful account of the death of God's servant, 1. Elisha's greatness is manifested in death as in life. 2. Royalty visits him and mourns his departure. 3. The prophet sees visions unto the last. 4. He tries to comfort the king who grieves for him and to inspire him with his own courage and determination. 5. Joash is too easily satisfied. 6. The dying prophet has courage still to rebuke a king. 7. The greatest and godliest man in Israel meets the common lot of all. 8. Elisha's miraculous power extends beyond the confines of death. 9. The dead prophet's touch restores life.

### THE DEPARTURE OF A GREAT MAN.

**The End Approaches.** The greatest man in all Israel lay dying. It is doubtful if there is a darker record in all the pages of history than is contained in the two books of the Kings. Murder and treason, craft and greed, deadly ambition and cruel ingratitude, lust and jealousy, fury and hate, are all marshaled before us. Even the tragedies of Shakespeare pale before the unbridled lust depicted in the ancient Hebrew record. And nowhere is there such a record of great men: the wisest of all times, master builders, great military commanders, real heroes and good soldiers, statesmen unexcelled in our present day, diplomats and financiers; but the unvarnished and truthful record reveals some fatal weakness, or a strain of evil in the greatest and best.

History testifies that sinful and black as is the record of God's chosen people, the rest of mankind were unspeakably worse and the outside world infinitely blacker. The dark pages of the two sacred books are illumined by two characters, whose spotlessness and moral grandeur are in striking contrast to their times. Both were prophets of God. The one, austere and solitary, seemed not of ordinary flesh and blood and in his departure was untouched by death, ascending to Heaven by way of the fiery chariot instead of the tomb.

But the other was so intensely human, so broad in his sympathies, so lowly of heart, so ready to help, so simple and open in his life, that he was not only the greatest, but the best loved man in the entire nation. He was a "man who lived by the roadside," and the lives of the humble and great con-

verged at his door. Now he was sick unto death. The one to whom kings had come for deliverance; at whose command nature had reversed her laws; and to whom death itself had yielded its prey, must fulfill the common law of man and die. Like the Holy One in whose power he wrought, though, "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

**A Royal Visitor.** To live so that one will be mourned by one's enemies as well as by one's friends, and by the heads of the nation in unison with the simple folk of the community, proves a life well spent. Elisha lay in the chamber which had been built for him by the Shunamite couple and was the object of their loving ministration, while the entire community joined with the great lady of Shunem in mourning his fast approaching end. It was the close of a long life. More than sixty years ago, he had left the plow at Elijah's call and now he was past eighty. He had not been active in public affairs lately, for Jehu had ignored him, and though Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, must have come to Elisha in defeat, when the great-hearted prophet besought and won God's help for him, the ungrateful king who so easily forgot his Divine Benefactor, soon slighted His prophet.

And now king Joash, grandson of Jehu, reigned in Israel. Though an evil man, Joash mourned Elisha's illness and came down from Samaria to Shunem to visit the dying prophet. Doubtless many times the king had been angry and smarted under the prophet's rebuke; but as he looked at the wan face and gaunt and pain-racked body, and noted the evidence of approaching death, the king threw himself down by the bedside and bent over the glorified face of the man of God until it was wet with his own hot tears.



**A King's Tribute.** Infinitely tender was the tribute of the worldly but sorrowing king. "O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horseman thereof." Strangely enough it was the very expression which Elisha had used when, sixty years ago, he had seen Elijah, his beloved master, ascending to Heaven in a chariot of fire. Then, it had seemed to the bereft young prophet as if Israel had been shorn of its protection; as if the horses and chariot and armies of Israel were naught since he who wrought their victories was gone. Faithfully the youthful follower of Elijah had tried to wear his master's mantle, fill his place and perform the office of prophet to his people, and now in his old age and ere his departure, king Joash's exclamation was the assurance of his success. And were the king's eyes opened, even as the young attendant's had been? And was the chariot of God not nigh to protect His servant in death as in life?

**His Last Prophecy.** Like God, who hates sin and loves the sinner, Elisha's heart was filled with compassion for the man by his side. Was not Joash his king, and did not the salvation of Israel depend upon his determination, courage and persistence against its foes?

Elisha was no selfish recluse, and dying though he was he still had the welfare of his country at heart. Magnificent courage, that with the death damp gathering on his forehead, leads the prophet to rouse the king, energizes him and inspires him with hope and courage. Dying, Elisha was more alive than Joash. Summoning all his fast waning strength, he raised up on the bed, and with eyes alight with prophetic fire, he bade the young and stalwart king take his bow and arrows, and the king obeyed. "Put thine hand upon the bow." The words rang with the old authority, and the king did as he was told. Then Elisha put his own hands upon the king's hands, for Joash must not think he can win without God's help. The window was opened and the king awaited orders. "Shoot. And he shot." It was an ancient method of declaring war; when an arrow shot by a herald, or spear thrown into the country to be invaded with the words, "I wage war against you," was sufficient declaration of warlike intentions.

**The Rebuke.** Wonderingly Joash turned to Elisha, who explained that the arrow shot eastward into the air was the arrow of the Lord's deliverance, pledging deliverance from the yoke of Syria. The prophet bade the king smite with other arrows, this time to the ground, as if smiting something to the earth. Joash smote as commanded once, twice, thrice, and then possibly regarding the whole proceeding as a sick man's fancy, he stopped. Terrible in his indignation was

the dying prophet, who, fearless to the end, again rebuked royalty. "Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." His quiver was not empty. If Joash had believed the promise of God, he would have used every arrow, for was not the power of God behind his every effort?

**Outlives Death.** Perhaps this one supreme effort in behalf of his country hastened the end, for shortly after, death claimed the greatest man of all Israel. Every honor was paid the dead prophet and his body reposed in a great vaulted sepulchre hewn out of solid rock. Josephus tells us he had a magnificent funeral and burial. But greater honor than his people could give was accorded him later, for God attested the genuineness of his calling. A remarkable miracle was wrought to proclaim to Israel that the word and work of a truly good man outlives death.

While ravaging the country a band of marauding Moabites came suddenly upon a funeral. According to Israelitish custom, the dead man was wrapped in linen cloths and was being borne to the tomb by his friends. But alas, they could not hope to escape if they carried the corpse to the grave prepared for it. Elisha's sepulchre was hard by. The distressed mourners quickly rolled away the stone and hastily thrust in the dead body. And, miraculous power of God, triumphant over death;—as soon as the dead touched the uncoffined bones of the prophet he was restored to life and stood upon his feet! The miracle which in life the man of God had wrought only after much prayer and entreaty, was now accomplished without effort. Moreover the prophet's prediction to Joash was literally fulfilled. Three times, and three times only, did Joash defeat the Syrians. Death was powerless to stay the word and work of a true servant of God.

**Quiz.** 1. How did Elisha depart from the world? 2. How much longer did Elisha serve as prophet than Elijah. 3. Was the king Joash of our lesson the Joash crowned king by Jehoida? 4. How long a period were the two kings of the same name contemporary rulers? 5. What weakness did Joash betray in failing to shoot longer?

**Seed Truths.** 1. He who trusts God may meet both danger and death unafraid. 2. Even the wicked are compelled to pay tribute to a truly good man. 3. That man has lived well whose enemies weep over his departure. 4. The arrow of the Lord's deliverance is always winged in behalf of His people. 5. Joash only asked for three victories and he got only three; had he asked for more, he would have got more. 6. Many a professed Christian stops his own efforts to reform ere God has completed His work of grace. 7. God is always ready to do more for us than we are willing to accept. 8. All Christian victories and reforms have been gained only through the perseverance of the saints. 9. A man's influence and works do not die with him.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# CAPTIVITY OF THE TEN TRIBES

Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and



it three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and



Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the



of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. For so it was,

that the children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which hath brought them up



from under the hand of



king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, And walked in the statutes of the



whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II KINGS 17:1-23.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, Make us to know Thy will in national ways, and help us to do it. Thy ancient people are examples to us. Their sins and their punishments were alike dreadful. May the idolatries of wealth and the luxuries of life not ensnare us, and may we ever heed Thy calls and love Thy worship. As we read of war and devastation our hearts turn to the Prince of peace.

In His name may we gain the victories of peace. For His dear sake. Amen.

"Who is wise and he shall understand these things? Prudent, and he shall know them? For the ways of the Lord are right, And the just shall walk in them; But transgressors shall fall therein."—Hosea 14:9.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 722-1 B. C. Place, Samaria, the capital of Israel. Persons, Hoshea the king of Israel, Hezekiah the king of Judah, Shalmaneser IV king of Assyria 727 to 722 B. C., Sargon king of Assyria 721 to 702 B. C. So king of Egypt, twenty-fifth dynasty. Hosea and Isaiah prophets.

**Scripture Setting:** The sadness and Divine warnings of the lesson cannot be understood without the help of the great prophets of the period. Read The drunkards of Ephraim, Isa. 28. The seven-fold woe, Isa. 6:8-28. God's controversy with Israel, Hosea 4:1-10. Reaping the whirlwind, Hosea 7 and 8. The commandment against idolatry, Exodus 20:1-6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This lesson is peculiarly sad because it brings us to the end of a long period of wrongdoing on the part of the northern kingdom. And it is peculiarly rich in value as a warning against national wrongdoing, for as an evil tree bears bitter fruit so a sinful nation must come to a bad end. It was a political blunder on the part of king Hoshea that brought the climax just as a touch may spring a trap that has long been set. He refused his yearly tribute to the king of Assyria, and foolishly sought the help of Egypt. Shalmaneser rebuked this rebellion by at once besieging Samaria, and in the terrors of war king Hoshea paid an awful tribute.

### THE ROAD TO RUIN.

**Point of Contact.** As a nation we are not in danger of such gross idolatry as that which ruined ancient Israel. Their rude stone and wooden gods; their Baalim and Asherim and groves and high places; their calf worship and sun and star worship; their bloody altars and their sacrifices of beasts and boys and girls have passed away forever. But we have idols of pleasure and of gold and of the market-place that are equally dangerous. Among us also there are drunkards, and we have an altar of lust on which thousands are sacrificed, and to the god of gold we pay heavy tribute through our trusts and monopolies. Our future is a question of Christ and Christliness against such altars and such gods.

**"Thorns and Thistles on Their Altars."** "Samaria is cut off with her king as foam upon the water." This is the cry of Hosea as he foretells the destruction of the city which was the capital of the kingdom of Israel. It is a figure both sad and beautiful. In his tenth chapter the prophet goes further and rebukes the idolatry of the people, saying, "The high places also of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed; the thorn and thistle shall come up on their altars." It would be hard to think of anything more desolate than thistles growing on and around the altars where thousands had been coming to sacrifice their rams and lambs and oxen to their gods. It is a picture that describes the utter destruction of the nation.

In the early part of his reign king Hoshea had become subject to Shalmaneser the king

of Assyria, and paid him tribute year by year. As long as he was loyal all went well. But Hoshea was a weak king and in an evil moment yielded to the fanatical Egyptian party and cut off his yearly tribute or tax to Shalmaneser and made an alliance with So the king of Egypt. Perhaps Shalmaneser was wanting a pretext for war, and if so he could have had nothing better than such a rebellion on the part of Hosea. He promptly besieged the city of Samaria and continued the siege through three terrible years, and at last destroyed it, and carried its people away into slavery, and thus with the high hand of a merciless despot collected his tribute.

**Plowing Wickedness, Reaping Iniquity.** A problem confronted the writer of our lesson. Jehovah was a God above all gods, and yet His chosen people had been destroyed. Could He not have saved them? Why had He cast them off? Why had He sent that dreadful enemy against them?

In verses seven to twenty-seven He gives His answer. It is found in one word; it was their sin. And their sin consisted in hard-necked, unreasoning idolatry. That was their root sin. On the hilltops and under the green trees all over the land they had placed their idols and built their altars, and they were worshiping just as the heathen worshipped. They sang heathen songs and danced heathen dances around their smoking altars. Much of this worship was shameful and cruel. They even threw their boys and girls into the fires of Moloch, for human sacrifice

was a part of Moloch worship. These were the things that "provoked God to anger." He had spoken to them by all His prophets, but they had not heard Him. At last in His anger He had removed them out of His sight. This is how, according to the fine figure of Hosea, they had "plowed wickedness;" in their utter destruction at the hands of Shalmaneser they were "reaping iniquity."

**Associated Sins.** Sins are like grapes; they grow in clusters. In Israel idolatry was the stem sin, and it had many other sins clinging to it. One of the worst of these is pointed out by Isaiah in his 28th chapter, in the cry, "Woe to the crown of pride of the drunkards of Ephraim." They had a rich land with "fat valleys," and hillsides covered with vineyards; and from their grapes they made wine, and became drunkards. They had been living lives of careless luxury, and gluttony, and drunkenness for a long time. A half century before Isaiah, Amos had rebuked them for "lolling on couches, eating the fat of the flocks, singing idle songs, and drinking wine out of bowls." The prophets knew that such ways of living could not last. Isaiah warned them that their "glorious beauty" would be like a "fading flower," and that the nation itself would be ere long like the first ripe fig on a tree—quickly eaten.

**The Links of History Run Far Back.** Meditating still on the problem of Israel's rejection by Jehovah the writer of our lesson vv. 19 to 23, recalls the sin of Jeroboam two hundred and fifty years before. It was this "son of Nebat" who had made Israel to "sin a great sin." It was he who had turned them away from following Jehovah, and all through those long years the people had been walking in the sins of that royal sinner. "They departed not from them." And so King Sargon wrote on the tablets of Khorsabad, "I besieged and took and occupied the city of Samaria, and carried into captivity twenty-seven thousand two hundred and eighty of its inhabitants. I changed the former government of this country, and placed over it lieutenants of my own. And Sebeh (So), sultan of Egypt, came against me to Raphia to fight against me. They met me and I routed them—Sebeh fled."

**Rebellion and Ruin.** When we remember the history of Israel as a nation and reflect on its awful destruction it does not seem too much to couple these two words together, namely rebellion and ruin. The national rebellion was rebellion against God. He was the real ruler of that people. He had watched over them with kingly care even while they were slaves in Egypt; He had brought them out miraculously, opening a path for them through the Red Sea, overthrowing their enemies—"the horse and his rider"—amidst the waves where they had walked safely; He had provided for them water from the rock, and manna from Heaven, and quails from the wilderness; He had given them amidst the grandeurs of Mount Sinai laws, and rulers, and an altar, and a worship sim-

ple and glorious, and suitable to Himself; He had planted them as a choice vine in the promised land; He, in the days of their feebleness, had watched over them and guarded and defended them; He had brought them through the dangerous days of the Judges into the glorious ones of David and Solomon, of which the queen of Sheba said, "the half has not been told;" and now, two centuries and a half from those glorious days comes the inglorious end! Willfully, carelessly, with open eyes in the face of what God had done for them, and in the face of His prophets, they had sinned. In their idolatry they had rebelled against God. And from the rebellion ruin came like venom from a serpent's tooth. Homes abandoned, vineyards torn, wheat-fields wasted, city walls broken down, and smoking, blackened piles of stones and ashes where once were markets, palaces and altars. Such is the end of wrong doing whether on the part of a nation or a man. "The wages of sin is death."

**And the Greatest Sin?** In a sense all sins are great and terrible. But in a sense also some are greater than others. We are told that Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, drove Israel from serving Jehovah and caused them "to sin a great sin." The people of Israel knew better than to worship dumb and hideous and shameful idols, and therefore it was for them a greater sin than for the idolaters themselves. They had been chosen by God, and by Him they had been blessed and guided in a thousand ways. In view of all His goodness to them, to turn from Him was to sin a great sin. It was like the wicked cry, "not Christ but Barabbas." There is no greater sin than to miss the mark of life. John Ruskin says: "I do not wonder at what men suffer; but I wonder at what they miss."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Does the worship of God tend to strict and sober living? 2. What was the relation between Israel's idolatry and drunkenness? 3. Is our own nation suffering from vices which began centuries ago? 4. Are we indulging vices which may ruin us in years to come?

**Challenge Text:** "Come, let us return unto the —; for He hath torn and He will — us; He hath — and He will — us up."—Hosea 6: (?).

**Practical Thoughts:** There is frequent reference in the books of Kings to Jeroboam, "who made Israel to sin." The example set by men in high position is too easily followed by men lower down.

Hoshea was a better king than those who preceded him. Yet he suffered more than they. He was bound up in their history. Just so in everyday life the innocent suffer with and for the guilty. We are like stitches in a stocking; when one is broken the rest ravel. A noble man will be careful lest he cause others to suffer.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



## SENNACHERIB'S INVASION

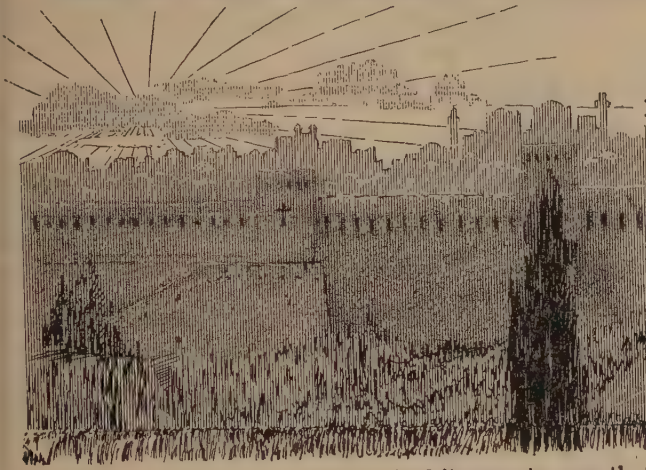
Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria. He shall not come into this city, nor



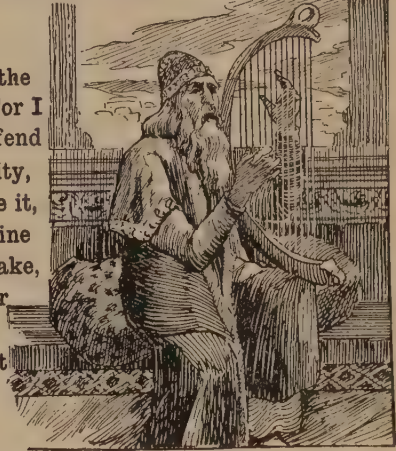
there,  
nor  
come  
before  
it with  
shield,  
nor  
cast



against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this



saith the  
Lord. For I  
will defend  
this city,  
to save it,  
for mine  
own sake,  
and for  
my  
servant



sake. And it came to pass that night, that the



of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand:

and  
when



they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all

corpses.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II KINGS 19:20-37.

**Prayer:** Almighty God and our Father, though our foes be mighty, and though they loast great things, and though the way seems shut before us, yet help us to know that Thine arm is strong and that Thy ways are wonderful. As in a single night Thou didst turn back the proud enemy of Thy ancient people, so Thou canst bring to us glad mornings. In Jesus Thou hast taught us to call Thee Father, and in His name we pray for childlike trust. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"The Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold;  
His cohorts all gleaming in purple and gold;  
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the  
sea,  
When the blue waves roll nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when summer is  
green,  
That host with their banners at sunset were seen;  
Like the leaves of the forest when summer hath  
blown,  
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown."  
—Byron.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 701 B. C., according to the Assyrian chronology. **Place,** Jerusalem. **Persons,** Hezekiah king of Judea, Isaiah the prophet, Sennacherib king of Assyria, the people of Jerusalem, and the army of the Assyrians.

**Scripture Setting:** Parallel accounts, 2 Chron. 32. Isa. 36 and 37. Psalm 46 may be read as an ode to victory.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Verses 20 to 28 are

a taunt song in answer to the Assyrian braggart, Rabshakeh, whom Sennacherib had sent to demand the surrender of Jerusalem. The other verses present the answer to the prayer of Hezekiah, and the sequel to the history of Sennacherib. On the whole we have the spectacle of one godly man, the prophet Isaiah, hoping against all human hope, defying those who mocked his people and his God, and saving his city. "Wisdom is better than weapons of war."

### HOW ONE MAN SAVED A CITY.

**Rabshakeh at the Walls of Jerusalem.** Sennacherib was one of the proudest of ancient kings. He tells on his monuments how other kings came and brought him rich presents and kissed his feet. When Hezekiah had reigned fourteen years this boastful monarch attempted to conquer the whole country as far west as Egypt. Judea lay directly in his way and he swept down over it, taking city after city. While he was besieging Lachish he sent to Hezekiah demanding a tribute of him. Hezekiah sent him at least a million of dollars, as we should say, and in order to get it he had to take away the gold and silver vessels of the temple and even the gold plates from the temple doors and posts.

This did not satisfy the proud and terrible king. Some time after he sent his captain, Rabshakeh, with an army to demand the surrender of the city. Rabshakeh was a braggart like his master. He strutted down to the city and there, instead of a courteous conference with Hezekiah's officers, he roared out his mockeries in the ears of all the people. Forty-six cities his master had taken. This, the capital, he would take with a single speech. He cried aloud to the people, mocking their king and their God, and promising them ease and luxury in his own country if they would surrender. "Make peace with me," he said, "and then eat ye every man of his own vine and every man of his own fig tree, and drink ye every one of the water of his cistern till I come and take you away to a land like your own, a

land of corn and grapes, a land of bread-corn and orchards."

**One Nest Not Robbed.** When the Assyrian kings conquered a city and looted it they spoke of it as lightly as robbing a bird's nest. Here is an inscription on one of their monuments: "As one that gathereth eggs I have gathered all the earth; there was none that moved the wing or that opened the mouth or chirped." But there was one reason why this easy, bird's-nest sort of conquest should not succeed in Jerusalem. There was a man in Jerusalem greater than either of the kings in the conflict, and as brave as any soldier and loyal to God, and a lover of God's city and people. On this man king Hezekiah leaned and found support. To him the people turned and were guided. From him came defiance of Sennacherib and his army, and the prediction of their destruction. That one high-souled man was more to Jerusalem than trumpets and shields and spears and banners and an army and the king himself. It was Isaiah who gave Hezekiah faith to pray, and it was he who held out and saved the city when others would have given up.

**An Ugly Letter Answered by Prayer.** When Rabshakeh returned to Sennacherib he found him besieging another city of the old Philistine region, namely, Libnah. Then he heard that an Egyptian army was coming from the south, and he hastily sent a letter to Hezekiah demanding his surrender. Hezekiah took the letter into the temple and "spread it before the Lord," and prayed.



He prayed that the city might be saved and that the whole world might know that the Lord and He only was God.

Isaiah sent to the king the Lord's answer to his prayer, and a part of it is as though he were talking into the very face of Sennacherib. "The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn. The virgin daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? And against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? Even against the Holy One of Israel. Because of thy raging against Me, and for that thine arrogancy is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way that thou camest."

**"My Hook in Thy Nose."** This striking figure is drawn from the cruel practices of the Assyrians, who were accustomed to lead their captives away like beasts, with hooks in their noses. The "hook" in this case was a deadly visitation. In one night "The angel of the Lord went forth and smote the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand. And when they arose in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies."

When this happened the Assyrian army was on its way to Egypt and was turned back suddenly. There is an Egyptian account confirming the biblical one, of which Dr. George Adam Smith says: "The parallel with the Bible narrative is close. In both accounts it is a prayer of the king that prevails. In both the Deity sends His agent—in the grotesque Egyptian an army of mice; in the sublime Jewish, His angel. In both the effects are sudden, happening in a night."

The loss of so many soldiers in a single night was fearful. Besides what might happen in another day and night Sennacherib could not guess. He left the country as quickly as he could and on his proud monuments he simply says that he returned suddenly. He had nothing to boast of. "So Sennacherib departed and went and returned and dwelt at Nineveh" is the terse biblical conclusion. In this way the Lord answered Hezekiah's prayer and fulfilled Isaiah's prediction.

History cannot be explained altogether by "the heaviest battalions." Napoleon lost Waterloo "by the nod of a peasant's head." God was not on the side of the battalions there, nor at Moscow. Cromwell prayed and conquered. George Washington prayed and Yorktown surrendered. There were those who mocked Lincoln, calling him a boor and a railsplitter; but Lincoln went forward in prayer till he wrote the Emancipation Proclamation.

**Better than Walls and Towers and Cat-**

**apults.** "I will defend this city," saith the Lord. When the Lord defends His people He does not need the help of stone mason and the engineer and the soldier. Prayer is better than walls and forts and battlements. To please God is safer for us than an army with banners. Hezekiah prayed; Isaiah prophesied; and not an arrow from the bow of Sennacherib reached the walls of Jerusalem. "Not by an army nor by power; but by My Spirit," saith the Lord. It is right that makes might, and the Lord is right. When they flattered President Lincoln by telling him the Lord was on his side, he said, "I am not so much concerned to have the Lord on my side as I am to be on His side." Ah, that is what we should all seek; and when we are there we shall not need to carry guns and fight duels. In the stillness of the night the angel of the Lord will fight our battles, and we shall rest and be at peace.

**The End of a Proud and Cruel King.** Sennacherib called himself "The great king, the powerful king, the king of the Assyrians, of the nations of the four regions, the favorite of the great gods, the noble hero, the builder of monuments, the strong warrior," etc., etc. On his monuments he was painted as seated on a throne, in royal robes, with tiara and bracelets, receiving the spoils and captives of the city of Lachish and giving orders for the slaughter of the people. In the name of the Lord Isaiah stood up alone and defied him; the Lord smote his army; and in Nineveh, in the temple of his idol Nisroch, his own sons slew him while he worshiped. This was the end of the mighty monarch who fought against God and mocked the people of God.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Did Rabshakeh think of Jehovah as different from other gods, or as one of them? 2. Had the gods of the Assyrians any moral character? 3. What was the secret of Isaiah's boldness? 4. How did he know that Jerusalem would not be besieged, and that something would happen to the Assyrian army? 5. What may be the worth of one brave and righteous man to a city or nation? 6. Which is more effective, a king on his throne, or a king on his knees? 7. Of all the great men in Jerusalem who was the greatest?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God really cares for His people, and when they obey Him, and pray to Him, He can and does answer them. 2. He has ways that we could never dream of. Perhaps even Isaiah had no idea as to how God would answer his prophecy when he said of Sennacherib, "He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there." He will find the way for us if we only trust Him. 3. Isaiah's faith was the kind that can remove mountains, and Sennacherib's pride was the kind that goes before a fall.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.

# HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER

In those days was Hezekiah



unto death.  
And the prophet  
Isaiah the son of Amoz



and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned



and prayed unto the Lord, saying, I beseech thee.

O Lord,

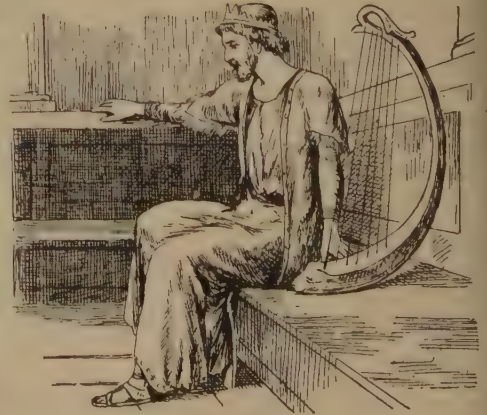


remember now how I have walked before thee in

and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle



that the word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the Lord, the God of



thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the Lord.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II KINGS 20:1-17.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, Thou art compassionate always. May we trust Thee whether in health or sickness, and to Thy will make us resigned. In Christ Thou hast revealed Thy tenderest care for us, and in Him Thou hast given us our highest hope. In the light of His revelation sickness becomes benediction and death translation. Yet we, too, like Thy servant of old, ask for added years that we may glorify Thee with lengthened labor. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"There is a power which man can wield  
When mortal aid is vain,  
God's eye, and arm, and love to reach,  
His listening ear to gain.

That power is prayer, which soars on high,  
Through Jesus to the throne;  
And moves the hand which moves the world,  
To bring salvation down."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 712-3 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Hezekiah king of Judah, Isaiah the prophet, Berodach-baladan the son of Baladan, king of Babylon.

**Scripture Setting:** Parallel account, Isaiah 38 and 39. A royal prayer, Psa. 61. A prayer of distress, Psa. 143. Prayer of a stricken conscience, Psa. 51. Christ's intercessory prayer, John 17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Hezekiah's prayer is a model of brevity. There are only thirty words. It is the prayer of a model life. "I have walked

before Thee in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight."

It is a prayer in which the petition is unspoken, but the life and the weeping express it. It is much to be able to present to God a perfect heart and a life of well-doing. God knew and answered the longing of the king still to live, and still to do good. As the king prayed he "wept sore." Prayer is not eloquence but earnestness. It is not "much speaking" but deep feeling. God hears and answers our tears.

### A PRAYER THAT DROVE AWAY DEATH.

**Point of Contact.** Just as in sickness and sorrow and death we are all one, so we are all one in the resort to prayer when driven to our last stand. When there is no human help we turn our face to the wall and lift our heart to God. Victor Hugo's abandoned criminals in a sinking boat all pray, and the last we see is a hand with index finger pointing upward through the waves. Prayer is a note of the race. It is a necessity. It is communion with God as Friend and Father. There is nothing deeper in life than religion and there is nothing deeper in religion than prayer. It is the root and from it there is the promise of all the fruit of religion.

When you were in darkness you asked for light; when you were in trouble you asked for guidance; when you had a great inspiration to do good you asked for help; when you were under temptation you cried for deliverance; when you were in the deep waters you sought "the everlasting arms."

**The Word of Doom and the King's Last Hope.** In the fourteenth year of his reign Hezekiah became very sick. The Assyrians were threatening the city and the people were in great trouble. The prophet Isaiah, who was both minister and physician to the king, came to him and said, "Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." It is very hard to go to a man who is sick and tell him that he cannot get well, and when Isaiah did this he performed his saddest duty to his royal patient. We can see him turning at once with bowed head to go away.

The king turned his face to the wall, for it was a time to shut out the world. No one but God saw his tears while he prayed, saying, "I beseech Thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart and have done that which is good in Thy sight." Thus in the face of doom the king had hope in God through prayer.

**The Answered Prayer.** Isaiah had not crossed the court of the palace when he was inspired to turn and go back and bring the king a glad answer to his prayer. And this was the answer: Fifteen years of lengthened life! The deliverance of the city from Assyria! And the Lord's defense of the city after it was delivered! We are not told that the king had prayed for so much, but it often happens that the Lord's answers are fuller than our petitions. Melancthon, who was a friend of Luther, said: "Trouble and perplexity drive me to prayer, and prayer drives away trouble and perplexity." So Hezekiah had been driven to prayer, and prayer had driven away not only death, but also the troubles of his throne.

**Tears Also Answered.** "I have heard thy prayer; I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee. On the third day thou shalt go up into the house of the Lord." Nothing touches a mother's heart like a child's tear. And God is a Father as tender as any mother. He, too, sees our tears. When the heart is broken tears are but another form of prayer. They plead for us as the cry of the little child Moses plead for the sympathy of the Egyptian princess. When Pharaoh's

daughter opened the ark of rushes, "behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him." The tears of that baby boy changed the world's history by melting the heart of a queenly woman, and gaining for the child a royal home. And like that baby boy, some of us have tears when we have no words. But to God our tears and heart-breaks are precious. He does not forget them. He answers them.

Tears are not only sad but noble also when their cause is great. Hezekiah wanted to live that "peace and truth might be in his days." A really noble man does not so much fear death as he longs to do good. When William Pitt the younger was dying, he sighed, saying, "My country! How I leave my country!"

**The Returning Shadow and Healing Poul-tice.** It was said above that Isaiah was both physician and teacher to the king. And now that he has brought the best of cheer to his pupil's mind he prescribes a medicine for his patient's body. The Divine providence and the household remedy were made to work together. Though we had miracles, we should still need doctors and medicines and wise and kindly nurses. Isaiah said, "Take a lump of figs. And they took and laid it on the boil and he recovered."

The sign granted to Hezekiah, for he seemed to think the news too good to be easily received, was that the shadow should go back ten degrees on the dial of Ahaz. God could work this miracle simply by curving the rays of light just as a man can throw a baseball in curves. If we put a straight stick in the water it seems broken at the surface of the water; but it is the rays of light that are broken, and not the stick. We cannot say that one miracle is greater than another, but it is right for us to understand them all as far as we can and to know that God may do great things in simple ways. This miracle inspired the prophet and helped the king to believe and soon he was well. His prayer was answered and the people rejoiced.

**The King's Imprudence.** The story of Hezekiah's sickness and his recovery reached as far as Babylon, and to congratulate him the king of Babylon, Berodach-baladan, sent him a letter and a present. On the surface this was a beautiful thing to do, but the messengers were spies and Hezekiah was "taken in" by them. He was so flattered

that he showed them "all the house of his precious things, the silver and the gold, and the spices, and the precious ointment, and all the house of his armor and all that was found in his treasures." He kept back nothing. This was especially imprudent in those days when temple robbing was a business on the part of kings. And the vulgar display! How many kings of capital and favorites of fortune and newly rich people are given to that! The good king, through his vanity, was a blunderer in diplomacy and the rebuke of the far-sighted prophet was quick and keen.

"Whence came these men?" said the prophet. "From a far country, even from Babylon," said the king.

"What have they seen in thy house?"

"There is nothing in my treasures that I have not showed them."

Then the prophet sternly foretold the destruction of the city by the Babylonians, the plundering of its treasures, and even the captivity of the king's sons. And all was fulfilled in a little more than a hundred years.

**Not Embittered but Made Better.** The sickness, the answered prayer, the prophet's rebuke, made Hezekiah a better man. Some are embittered by sickness and misfortune. But Hezekiah became humble, and said that it was good that peace and truth should be in his days. And out of his gratitude to God he sang a hymn which Isaiah has treasured for us, in which he says,

"Behold, it was for my peace that I had great bitterness;  
But Thou hast loved my soul from the pit of nothingness;  
For Thou hast cast all my sins behind my back."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What effect had faith and prayer in working the king's cure? 2. Is it wise to discard doctors and medicines? 3. Why was Isaiah so sure that the king would die and then presently so sure that he would live? 4. Did the king just simply want to live a few years longer or had he the nobler thought of the good of his kingdom? 5. Would it be pleasant to live with a date fixed for one's death?

**Challenge Text.** "I will take the cup of —, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my — unto the Lord, now in the presence of all the people."—Psalm 116. (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** The prayer Hezekiah offered in his sickness was not his only prayer. He prayed when Sennacherib threatened the city and nation. He was a man of prayer, and as we look back on his history the greatest thing we can see in him, and the best thing we can say of him is just this, that prayer was the undercurrent of his life; it made him good, and helped him to become better.

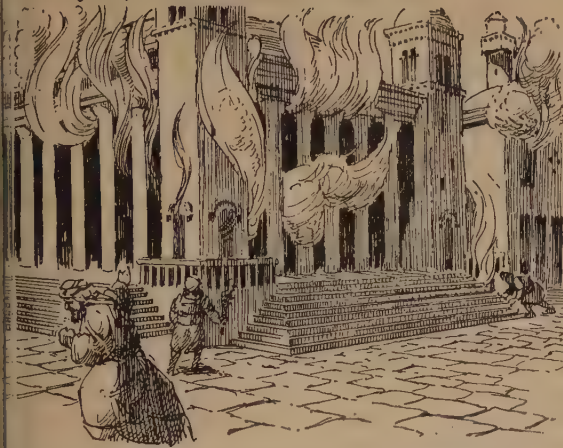
Also his habit of prayer ranks him with great men. President Lincoln said, "I have been driven many times to my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom, and that of all about me, seemed insufficient for the day."

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



# THE CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

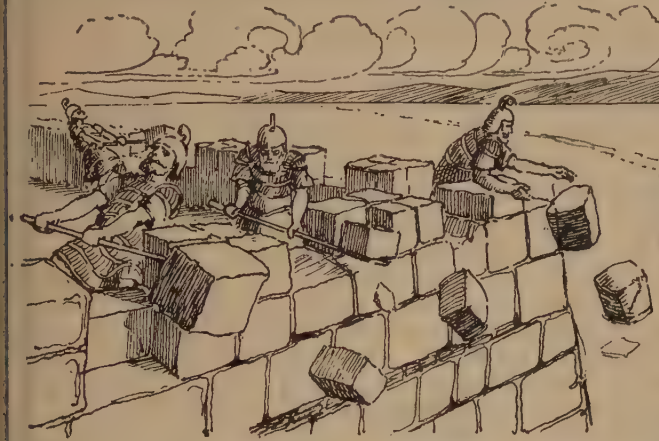
And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzaraden, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: And he



the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire. And all the



of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard,

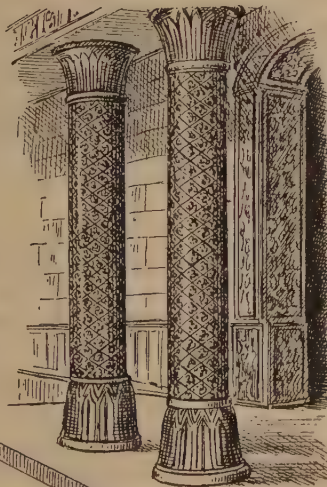


of Jerusalem round about. Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude,

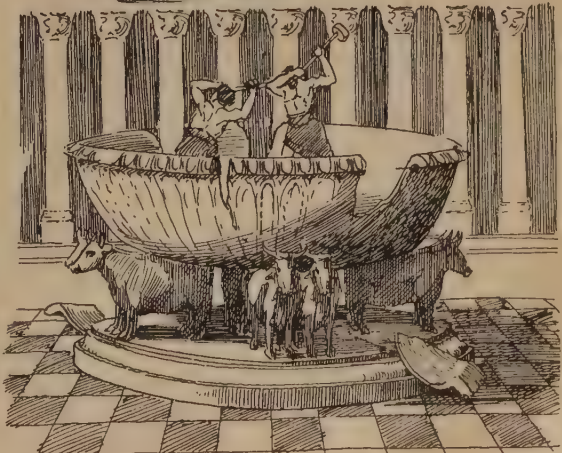


did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard

But the captain of the guard left of the poor of the land to be vine-dressers and husbandmen. And the



of brass that were in the house of the Lord, and the bases, and the brasen sea that was in the house of the Lord, did the Chaldees



and carried the brass of them to Babylon.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II KINGS 25:1-12.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, Help us so to live as a nation that there may come upon us no great calamity. May we have the godliness that leads to brotherliness, and the gentleness that ripens into greatness. In the law of love may we find discipleship toward Thy Son Jesus, and may we through centuries enjoy the salvation that springs from service. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

O God, the heathen are come up into Thine inheritance;  
Thy holy temple they have defiled;  
They have laid Jerusalem in heaps;  
The dead bodies of Thy servants they have given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven,  
The flesh of Thy saints unto the beasts of the earth.  
Their blood they have shed like water round about Jerusalem;  
And there was none to bury them.  
—Psalm 79.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 586 B. C. Places, Jerusalem, the plains of Jericho, and Babylon. **Persons,** Zedekiah the king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan captain of the guard of Nebuchadnezzar, a "remnant" enslaved, and "the poor of the land."

**Scripture Setting:** "Woe to the bloody city," Ezekiel 24. Destruction of Jerusalem foretold, Jeremiah 24. Parallel accounts of the destruction, 2 Chronicles 36:14-21, and Jeremiah 39. Lamentation over the city in ruins. Lam. 2:1-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** All the prophets trace the destruction of Judah to the sins of Judah. Car-

lyle found the same lesson in the French Revolution and its terrors. He says, "Through all time, if we read aright, sin was, and is, and will be the parent of misery."

God's justice must have its way when His mercy is mocked. The people would not hear their prophets calling them to repentance and to God. They stumbled willfully, blindly on, till they fell over the precipice.

The worship of God is a fountain of life. But the people of Judah preferred idolatry. "They hewed themselves out cisterns, broken cisterns, that could hold no water."

### BROKEN COVENANTS.

**Point of Contact.** The national sins of the kingdom of Judah were followed by a great and terrible calamity, the utter destruction of the kingdom and its central city. As long as we have aged men among us who wear the grand army button we are not out from under the shadows of our own civil war. We nursed in our bosom a great evil, the sin of slavery, a crime against humanity. We paid the penalty in five awful years, the loss of half a million of brave men north and south, the expenditure of thousands of millions of dollars and a martyred president.

**The Broken Covenants Were Three.** 1. There was above all others the perpetual covenant between Jehovah and His people that they should worship and serve Him and that they should not turn aside to idols. Again and again the kings and people had reaffirmed this covenant and again and again they had violated it. They had turned their back on the altars of their fathers and in their gross idolatry had said "to a stock, Thou art my father, and to a stone, Thou hast brought me forth."

2. There was the covenant with the king of Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar had made Zedekiah king and Zedekiah had taken an oath of loyalty to the Babylonian monarch. Within eight years of this oath he sought an alliance with Pharaoh-Hophra, king of Egypt, and refused to pay tribute to Babylon. He "rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar by sending ambassadors into Egypt that they might give him horses and much people."

3. There was the covenant of liberty to their own enslaved brothers. During the dark days of the siege of Jerusalem the king, Zedekiah, under the influence of Jeremiah, proclaimed the freedom of all Hebrew slaves. The "princes" agreed and their man-servants and maid-servants were allowed to go free, according to the ancient law that none "should serve himself of a Jew, his brother." But presently Pharaoh-Hophra's advance drew away the besieging army. Thinking they were now safe, the fickle people at once violated this covenant also, and reclaimed their slaves. The rebuke of Jeremiah was fearful. In bitter sarcasm he cried, "Ye have not hearkened unto me in proclaiming liberty every one to his brother and every man to his neighbor. Behold, I proclaim a liberty to you, saith the Lord, a liberty to the sword, to the pestilence and to the famine. And I will make you to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth."

**The Boiling Pot.** While Jeremiah was prophesying in Jerusalem, Ezekiel was living and prophesying among the captives already in Babylon, whither he had been carried in 597 B. C. Under the emblem of a rusted, seething pot of meat and bones he described the woes of the besieged and falling city. The figure is terrible, but not more so than the siege. "No horror was spared. The sepulchres were rifled for treasures; maidens and old men were slain. Princes were hanged up by the hand, and the faces of elders were dishonored; priest and prophet were slain in the sanctuary of the Lord till blood flowed like red wine over the desecrated floor." Palaces and temples were plundered and burned. Human flesh and offal served for food



during the siege, and the emaciated survivors were led away into slavery.

**"At The Head of Two Ways."** In fulfillment of this prophecy Nebuchadnezzar is pictured by Ezekiel (21:21) as already on his way westward. He stands casting lots where the roads fork, one leading to Rabbah, the other to Jerusalem. Is it chance that decides which way he shall take? "He shakes the arrows; he consults the teraphim; he looks in the liver." By such hap-hazard will he decide one of the great events of history? We toss coppers over trifles. But this was more than a trifle. It was the Lord's will that Jerusalem should be rebuked. The Lord directed what Nebuchadnezzar dreamed was chance. Three arrows are shaken hard in a quiver. He draws out one and holds it high in his right hand. It is "the divination for Jerusalem," and the die is cast. We imagine the great king crying, "Forward—march!" and the caravan route to Jerusalem holds a terrible, conquering army.

**Digging Out Through a Wall.** By another emblem Ezekiel foretold the disgraceful flight of king Zedekiah. In the twelfth chapter of his prophecy he records this command from the Lord to himself: "Dig thou through the wall in their sight and carry out thereby." So the prophet packed his stuff as "stuff for captivity" and in the evening he digged through the wall with his hand and came out bearing his stuff on his shoulder. His face was covered so that he could not see the ground, signifying disguise, blindness and stumbling. No emblem could better show the shame and sorrow and blundering of king Zedekiah. Had he yielded he might have been saved, for so was the message of Jeremiah to him. But he hesitated and the awful siege went on. At last when they "made a breach in the wall" he sought to escape "by the gate betwixt the two walls; and he went out by the way of the plain." Disgraced, disguised and a fugitive, he was overtaken by the Babylonian soldiers and brought to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah. There they slew his sons before him and then put his eyes out, and led him captive to Babylon. In his sad experience two prophecies, seemingly contradictory, were fulfilled. Jeremiah had said, "Thou shalt see the eyes of the king of Babylon." Ezekiel had said, "I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there." Ne-

buchadnezzar led away captive the fairest of the people, leaving the poorer and less capable to care for the land under officials appointed by himself.

**The Burning of the House of the Lord.** This was the climax of destruction. The siege ended in conflagration. The glorious temple that Solomon had built, the king's palaces and every great man's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem "burnt he with fire." The altar and the hearthstones of the people, their city walls and their market places, and even their streets—all were gone. They beat their breasts as they looked on their blackened homes and they turned away with torn hair and garments from smoking ruins as the Babylonian soldiers herded them together for the long march into a strange land. And the temple even! Hundreds of thousands of Jews had gazed with patriotic pride on that majestic building, with its lavish decorations of marble and gold, its sacred courts, its holy place and its holy of holies; there they had presented their sacrifices and had taught their children to pray, and there they had learned to trust Jehovah's power and protection. As they gazed back from distant hills on their weary march they saw nothing of all that recent glory but broken walls and crumbling marbles and smoking timbers. A wail went up from the hearts of the despairing people.

"They have laid Jerusalem in heaps;  
The dead bodies of Thy servants they have given  
To be meat to the fowls of heaven."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Would loyalty to his oath on the part of king Zedekiah have averted this warfare and bloodshed and devastation? 2. When and how often had Nebuchadnezzar previously come against Jerusalem? 2 Kings, 23:36-24:1. Also 24:8-16. 3. Of what other awful siege in the history of Jerusalem does this one remind us?

**Challenge Text:** "The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to — upon them that — Him, and His righteousness unto children's —; to such as keep His —, and to those that remember His — to do them." Psalm 103. (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Righteousness is a nation's best protection and sin is its greatest danger. 2. There is such a thing as honor under the hardest conditions. Zedekiah should have been true to his oath to Nebuchadnezzar till some better way could have been found than a secret alliance with Egypt. 3. God's teachers and prophets should be heard and heeded. Zedekiah recklessly disregarded the warnings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

"God sends His teachers with every age,  
To every clime and every race of men,  
With revelations fitted to their growth  
And shape of mind."—Lowell.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



And



said to



My son, as for me, it was in my mind to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God: But the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly and hast made great

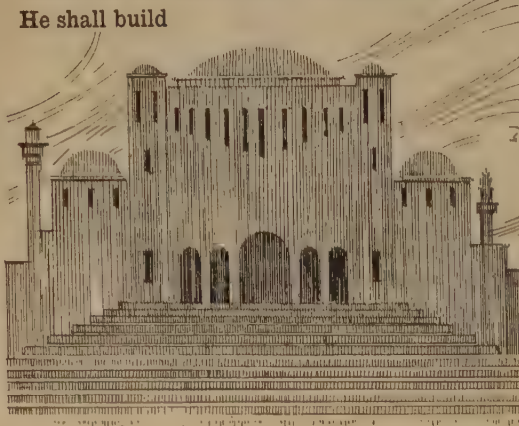


s: thou shalt not build an house unto my name,

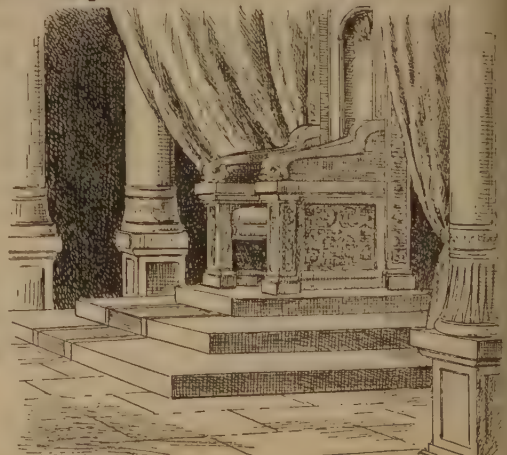


because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight. Behold, a

shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about: for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days. He shall build



for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the



of his kingdom over Israel for ever.



# DAVID'S CHARGE TO SOLOMON.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I CHRON. 28:1-10, 20, 21.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the rightful Ruler of our lives. By creation and again by redemption Thou dost doubly own us.

We hail Thy power, as we have been won by Thy grace. Do with us, and by us, as it may seem best to Thee. May all our plans and ambitions be ever subordinate to Thy wise rule and will. Work in and by us to advance Thy kingdom and glorify Thyself. For Christ's sake. Amen.

An easy thing, O Power Divine,  
To thank Thee for these gifts of Thine!  
For summer's sunshine, winter's snow,  
For hearts that kindle, thoughts that glow;  
But when shall I attain to this—  
To thank Thee for the things I miss?

—Thomas W. Higginson.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1015. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, David and Solomon.

**Scripture Setting:** Conditions of Best Service. Basis of service, Deut. 6:4-9. Fruitful service, Psalms. 1. Strong service, Isa. 40:22-31. Diligent service, 2 Pet. 3:9-14. Happy service, Isa. 26:3-12. Full service, Rom. 12. Adaptive service, 1 Cor. 9:19-27. Secret of service, John 15:4-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this great disappointment of David, we are taught some important principles in Christian work. 1. The principle of

co-operation. Note the nine influential classes he interests in the work, verse 1. 2. Mutual and frank counsel regarding the work, verse 2. 3. Submission to the will of God, even when he was prevented from his chosen work, verse 3. 4. Gratitude for past mercies, and public acknowledgment of them, verse 4. 5. Seeing God's hand in all things, verses 5-7. 6. A full and hearty obedience, and influencing all the people to the same, verse 8. 7. A worthy character and life, by which God is declared to others, verses 9, 10.

## A GOOD FATHER'S ADVICE TO HIS SON.

**The Best Work.** Not everything that is right is best. David had been a man of war, and this was right, for God had ordered it. Even David himself would not claim that war and conquest were the best things. But David had it in his heart now to do one of these best things, namely, to build a house for God, where He might be worshiped and where He could specially reveal Himself to the people. We can scarcely think of any nobler task than that, for it means the distributing of many blessings to the world. The house of God stands for the book of God, and the day of God, and the Spirit of God, and the people of God. These five things or forces are the means by which God builds up His kingdom in the world; and if the house of God is lacking all the others would be prevented from doing their best work. David felt this, so he was anxious to build a fitting temple for the God of Heaven. He is called the "man after God's own heart," and it must be that he was sincere in this desire. He began to gather material for a magnificent temple. He even selected the place for it and engaged skilled workmen and had the promise of cedar and other wood from Hiram king of Tyre.

**Aim for the Best.** Some men are afraid of being too religious. What we need today is men who believe down deep in their souls what they profess. The world is tired and sick of sham. Let your whole heart be given up to God's service. Aim high.

God wants us all to be His ambassadors. It is a position higher than that of any monarch on earth to be a herald of the cross; but you must be filled with the Holy Spirit. A great many people are afraid to be filled with the Spirit of God

—afraid of being called fanatics. You are not good for anything until the world considers you a fanatic. Fox said that every Quaker ought to shake the country ten miles around—D. L. Moody.

**The Best Spirit.** David had not gone far until God sent His prophet Nathan to talk with him about this house he wished to build. Did God tell David how to build the temple, as he had told Moses how to build the tabernacle? No, it was something very different, and it was a very great disappointment to David. God told him that he should not go ahead to build the temple, for he had been a man of war and it was not fitting that such a man should build a house that would stand for peace and prayer. God also told him that his son should build it. Now what does David do? Does he make other plans to use all these spoils of war and the other materials? No; he submits to God's will in the matter and we are not told that he was displeased in any way. That kind of a disappointment is a great test of character and David shows the very best spirit by his submission. He is the "man after God's own heart" and also after God's own will. Another way in which David showed a good spirit was by turning all over to Solomon and even gathering more material for him. This was the very best of advice, for it set an example of the best spirit.

**How to Win When You Lose.** "Do you remember the time I lost the race I'd been so sure of?" said Dick to Bob.

"I felt just as you do—disgusted—ready to throw the whole thing over. It was Professor Dana who saved me. He came up and shook hands and congratulated me. I can remember his words now. 'Field,' he said, 'you put up a good race,

and next time you'll win; but you've won a bigger victory today, in proving yourself a good loser. I'm proud of you.' I wasn't, you know; I was black as night inside, but that made me think. Sometimes I've thought I didn't get anything in college so valuable as that sentence. It fits in everywhere."

This time Bob nodded and smiled approval.—Forward.

**The Best Worker.** That picture of war tells us something of David's life, and we would hardly think that he was the best person to build a temple of worship. But one of David's sons shall do this work, for the kingdom shall have a time of peace and quietness. His very name, Solomon, means "peaceful," and by nature he will be fitted for the great undertaking. David told Solomon all that he had planned and done, and urged him to go forward in the work. He also asked all the people to aid him by gifts, which they did. Solomon enters heartily into the plans of his father David. Together they work in fullest sympathy. Really it is almost as much David's temple as Solomon's, for he had done so much in advance. God purposed that Solomon should personally superintend the work, but he also gave David the credit for the thought of his heart and for all the preparatory work for it.

God believes in the motto, "To everyone his work," and by His providence He seeks to show each one what he should do and what he could do best. Everyone is best fitted for some certain work and he should not be satisfied until he finds what the work is and also the best way to do it. Here are some good rules for making the best worker.

"If I Were a Boy Again." In some of the papers of the late Dr. Harper, of the University of Chicago, was found a memorandum which read like this: "If I were a boy again, I would read every book that I could reach. I would strive to find out from good books how good men lived. If I were a boy again, I would cultivate new patience with the faults of others, and study my own with greater care. I would strive for humility. If I were a boy again, I would more and more cultivate the company of those older, whose graces of person and mind would help me on in my own work. I would always seek good company. If I were a boy again, I would study the Bible even more than I did. I would make it a mental companion. The Bible is a necessity for every boy. If I were a boy again, I would study the life and character of our Saviour persistently, that I might become more and more like unto Him."

**The Best Helper.** This seems to be a story of best things—the best work, the best spirit, the best worker, and now the best

Helper. Are you thinking that that means David in Solomon's case? We have seen that David was a splendid helper to Solomon, both in the matter of advice and in the real contributions to the building Solomon was to erect. But Solomon's best Helper was not David, but rather David's God. Hear what God promised to and for Solomon: "I will give him rest from all his enemies." "I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days"; "he shall build an house for my name"; "he shall be my son and I will be his Father"; "I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." Here are five great promises which cover every part of his life and reign and made by One who is able to fulfill them. The two last pictures show how God began fulfilling the promises. No one ever had a better start in life or a brighter outlook. There is one promise of Christ's which is worth more than all those five great promises; and it is made not merely to kings, but to all who are willing to receive it and believe it. It refers not only to this life and work here, but points to the future and assures the constant presence and aid of Jesus Christ, the great Helper. It is this: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

**Still Better to Follow Christ.** There is a story told of a man who was once walking through a dangerous swamp in the night time and was startled to find that his little boy had followed him. Turning about, he said, "My son, don't you know that a misstep anywhere here might cost you your life?" To which the little fellow replied, "Father, I am stepping right in your foot-prints, then I know I will be all right."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What bad son did David have, and what did he do? 2. What good son, and what did he do? 3. What are the five greatest Bible characters up to David's time? 4. Name some of the ten classes David influenced to build the temple. 5. What great desire of Moses was not granted, and why?

**Challenge Text.** "Whatsoever thy \_\_\_\_\_ findeth to do, do it with thy \_\_\_\_\_." Eccl. 9: (1)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christian work requires above all else a right heart and spirit. 2. Nature, disposition, circumstances, surroundings, gifts, all help to determine our life work. 3. In greatest disappointments we may yet find greatest appointments. 4. The fullest co-operation necessitates much personal concession, and even sacrifice. 5. All believers are as a temple builded together in Christ, and for His glory. 6. For God's house, and for every other work, the best we have should be fully given. 7. Duty of fathers to counsel their children, and the duty of children to obey. 8. Everyone should find his place and his work in temple-building for God.

DR. J. M. COON.



And Asa did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord his God: For he took away



of the  
strange  
gods,  
and the  
high  
places and



and

the groves: And commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers, and to do the law and



the commandment.

Also he took away out of all the cities of Judah



and the kingdom was quiet before him. And he built fenced



in  
Judah.  
for the  
land had  
rest, and  
he had  
no



in those years; because the Lord had given him rest.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 14:1-15.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for Thy ancient law and its penalties, for Thy love and its inspirations. Thy chastisements have been the chastisements of a Father's hand, and Thy severity is but the shadow cast by Thy kindness. Help us through the lessons of history, and more than all through the teachings of Jesus, to know Thee, whom to know is life eternal. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"Buried was the bloody hatchet;  
Buried was the dreadful war-club;  
Buried were all warlike weapons,  
And the war-cry was forgotten.  
Then was peace among the nations."  
—Longfellow.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 955 to 914 B. C. According to some late authorities, 917 to 878 B. C. Places, Jerusalem and Mareshah. Persons, Asa king of Judah, Zerah the Ethiopian, an army of three hundred thousand out of Judah and two hundred and eighty thousand out of Benjamin.

**Scripture Setting:** Concluding record, 2 Chron. 15 and 16. Parallel record, 1 Kings 15:9-24. Poetic statements of the Hebrew faith in God's blessings on the righteous and His chastisements on the wicked, Psa. 1 and 34.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Prosperity in peace and success in war were the rewards of king Asa

while he lived in faith toward God.

The prophet Azariah (15:2-7) seized the moment of the king's victory to enforce upon him the conditions of continued prosperity. "The Lord is with you while you be with Him."

Both king and prophet saw clearly that loyalty to Jehovah meant war on idolatry, and quite heroically they overthrew the idols, and engaged in a great national season of sacrifice to God.

Good as he was king Asa lacked consistency in faith, and hence in conduct. He thought it safer to hire Benhadad against Baasha than to trust God. Thus blundering religiously he blundered politically.

### GODLINESS AND GROWTH.

**Ten Years of Peace.** In those days of all but ceaseless warfare a respite of ten years was deemed worthy of note by the Hebrew historian. Ancient history is for the most part a record of battles and bloodshed and devastation. Wars were the rule; peace was the exception. Now peace is the rule and war is the exception. One of the most beneficent effects of Christianity is that it has militated against militarism. It has made wars fewer and their effects less terrible. Wars of extermination have entirely passed away among all civilized peoples and wars of conquest are out of keeping with the comity of nations. We have traveled a long way from the days when a short period of peace was a surprise. Under the reign of the Prince of Peace we are hastening to the time when "wars shall be no more." In our own land there has been but one war in a hundred and thirty years, and on the soil of England there has not been a battle for more than two hundred years.

**Good Use of the Period of Peace.** The vigorous and prudent king made use of these years in reforming the state religion and in preparing for war. The idol worship of Asa's people had become hereditary, for it began in the reign of Solomon. They were worshipping the gods that their fathers worshiped and that made it harder for the king to reform their religion. Besides, people do not readily give up their gods and sacrifices and priests and altars. Worship is too nearly related to life to be easily changed, and that is the reason that so many reformers are disliked and even persecuted. Asa's

reformation must have been very unpopular with many of his people. But the good king began in a most heroic way. His own mother, the "queen-mother," was an idolater and had set up one of her gods in a grove. It was an Ashera and was something like a great post or trunk of a tree. Asa cut it down and stamped on it and took it down to the brook Kidron and burnt it to ashes and then "removed her from being queen." This was a brave way to rebuke the false religion of all the people. He proceeded to take away the images of the false gods and cut down their groves and destroy their altars. But he never fully succeeded, for it is said in chapter 15, verse 17, "the high places were not taken away out of Israel."

In addition to his religious reformation Asa used the period of peace in preparing for war. His people were warlike tribesmen, and if the religious movement made him unpopular this one would make him popular, and it was well for him that he carried the two side by side. The northern kingdom under Baasha was a continual menace, and Asa fortified the border cities. The numbers he enlisted in his army surprise us; they show the military enthusiasm of the people. There were 300,000 out of Judah and 280,000 out of Benjamin! That was great indeed for a land so small.

**A Great Victory.** Zerah the Ethiopian—perhaps Osorkon I, the second king of the twenty-second Egyptian dynasty—victorious in the Nile valley, began to overrun the region at the foot of the Judaean highlands. He had an army of "a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots." The presence of such an army so near to his capital



was a challenge that Asa could not ignore. Though the enemy were two to one, yet there was faith in Jehovah, and there was hope of victory. Not always is the battle to the strong or the race to the swift. At Agincourt sixty thousand French were defeated by twenty thousand Englishmen. At Marathon the Persians brought ten to one against the Greeks. Asa cried unto the Lord and said, "Lord, it is nothing with Thee to help whether with many or with them that have no power. Help us, O Lord, for we rest on Thee, and in Thy name we go against this multitude." The victory was decisive. It strengthened the good king mightily with his people, and under the instruction of the prophet Azariah he continued his war on the high places and the abominable idols.

**"To Him That Hath Shall Be Given."**

Success succeeds and prosperity prospers. The kingdom grew. When they saw that the Lord his God was with Asa they came to him out of Benjamin and Ephraim and Manasseh, and even strangers came. His policies in peace, his victories in war and his confidence in God made his land a home for refugees. They flocked "like doves to his windows." His policy of godliness made the growth and prosperity of his kingdom such that the people celebrated his fifteenth year by a great season of worship in which they sacrificed 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep. "And they made a covenant to seek the Lord God of their fathers with all their heart and with all their soul."

**A Faith that Failed.** We wonder that one who had been so helped of God could ever turn to lean on his own poor plans. Late in his life, in the thirty-sixth year of his reign, when Baasha, the king of Israel, came against him, Asa made an alliance with Benhadad, the king of Syria. He even robbed the house of God of its treasures of silver and gold, and gave them to the Syrian king for a bribe. He little thought, and little cared about the future of such a policy. Foreign help became at last the ruin of Judah. But Asa, like many another sinner, sold the future safety of his kingdom for a present mess of pottage. Benhadad came, and by attacking certain cities of Israel drew Baasha away from Judah.

The die was cast. The state was saved for a time, but a bait had been thrown to the foreign king, and God had been dishonored. The prophet Hanani came with a rebuke that was quick and sharp. "Thou hast done foolishly. From henceforth thou shalt have wars." Too much power and too many good things had made the king stubborn as well as foolish. He fell into a rage and put the prophet into prison.

And what an opportunity was lost by the fickle king! Would not God have delivered

Baasha and Benhadad also into his hand if he had been faithful? Ah, that lesson is hard to learn: the lesson of trust so finely spoken by the prophet; "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through the whole earth to show Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him."

**"Spices and Sweet Odors."** During the last two years of his reign Asa was a sufferer. He had a disease in his feet and it was "exceeding great." We do not know what the nature of this disease was, but more interesting than that is the historian's censure. "He sought not unto the Lord but unto the physicians." We should not smile at the naive expression. We should remember that the physicians of that day were, aside from the Jewish prophets themselves, priestly magicians of idolatrous altars, similar to the medicine men among Indian and African tribes today. Their magic failed to cure the king, but it angered the prophets of his own people. It brought a shadow over his last days. In his death, however, the people remembered his goodness and forgot his weakness, and they buried him in state "in a new sepulcher in the city of David," amidst spices and sweet odors and "a very great burning."

**Quiz and Study.** What is meant by "fenced cities," and what great change is indicated by the fact that we have no such cities? 2. How is building a sign of prosperity, and how does prosperity conduce to building, and what is the relation of peace to both? 3. Today we have peace commissions, and arbitration tribunals, and international law. But what could Asa do when a great army came?

**Challenge Text.** "The angel of the Lord — round about them that — Him, and delivereth them. O taste, and see that the Lord is —. Blessed is the man that — in Him." Psalm 34: (9)

**Practical Thoughts.** Practical atheism is to trust something, or some one else, more than God. This is what Asa did when he turned to Benhadad for help against Baasha, and gave him silver and gold out of the treasures of the Lord's house.

Practical faith is to trust God and go forward even when the way is fenced up by mountains of difficulty. Face to face with an army greater than his own Asa prayed, and won the victory.

God's relation to us is like that of a friend. He can be friendly only while we are friendly. "If ye seek Him, He will be found of you; if ye forsake Him, He will forsake you."

King Asa's early years were his best, and his last years his worst. That is the saddest thing about him. Our lives should grow better with age, our faith stronger, our conduct more consistent, our friendships truer, and our prayers more earnest. The Apostle Paul said at last, "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith." Christ on the cross cried out grandly, "It is finished." That was His note of a victorious life.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



## JEHOSHAPHAT'S GOOD REIGN

And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; \* \* \* And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no



against  
Jehoshaphat.  
Also some  
of the  
Philistines  
brought  
Jehoshaphat  
presents,  
and tribute  
silver;  
and the



brought him

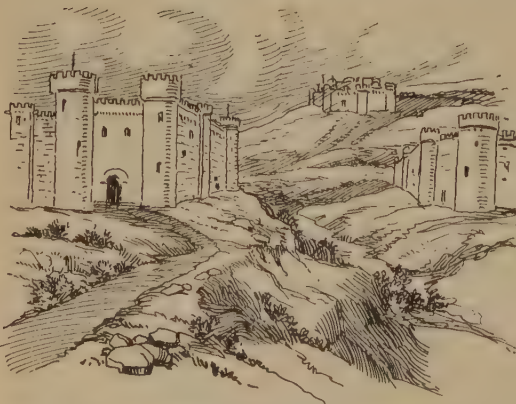
seven thousand and seven hundred rams,



and seven thousand and seven hundred he



And Jehoshaphat waxed great exceedingly; and he built in Judah



and  
cities  
of store.  
And  
he did  
much



in the cities of Judah: and the men of war, mighty men of valour, were in Jerusalem.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 17:1-13.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for those who have battled against idolatry and immorality and cruelty, and who have gained the world's greatest victories on its spiritual battlefields. We praise Thee for the teachers of men who lean more on truth and persuasion and love than on the shield and spear and sword. For the ancient synagogue and academy we praise Thee with fullness of heart, and yet more abundantly for our Christian churches and schools. Help us to teach much, and to fear not at all, and hasten the day when swords shall be beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. In Christ's name and Spirit, Amen.

"Lord, Thy word abideth,  
And our footsteps guideth;  
Who its truth believeth  
Light and joy receiveth.  
O that we discerning  
Its most holy learning,  
Lord, may love and fear Thee,  
Evermore be near Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Jehoshaphat's reign, 914 to 889 B. C. The teaching mission, about 912 B. C. (Some recent authorities give a much later date for the reign of Jehoshaphat, namely 876 to 851 B. C.) Places, Land of Judah and cities of Ephraim. Persons, Jehoshaphat and his teaching princes and Levites, vv 7 and 8.

**Scripture Setting:** Leading thought, the teaching of "the book of the law," and its power to remake a nation. Brief parallel account, 1 Kings 22:41-50. Ancient command to teach the law of the Lord, Deut. 6:1-12. Praise of the precepts of the Lord, Psalm 119:1-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jehoshaphat pursued the double policy of protection and education. He fortified the border cities and placed soldiers in them. He discovered that it was not enough to destroy idols, he must destroy superstition and the love of idols in the hearts of the people. So he sent out teachers of "the book of the law" through all the cities of Judah. He became a great and honored king, and his own people, and even the Philistines and the Arabians brought him presents. In later years his alliance with Ahab brought him under the censure of Hanani the prophet.

### JUDAH'S KING AS PRECEPTOR.

**The Real Reformer the Teacher.** When Jehoshaphat came to the throne he found two conditions that needed his care. The border cities on the north that his father Asa had taken were weak and defenseless. He fortified them and put soldiers in them, thus protecting his kingdom.

Religiously there was a more serious condition. He saw that although the idols had been destroyed again and again, they were still there. He perceived that it was one thing to destroy an idol and quite another to change the heart of the man who worshiped it. As long as the people loved the idols and were ignorant of the law of the Lord, they would build again the old "high places" and bring back the images.

To us the king's greatness appears more in his effort to educate the people and so lift them above their gross idolatries, than in his enlistment of an army, the fortification of his cities and the collection of tribute from his own and weaker peoples. The historian presents this effort to enlighten the people of Judah as an incident. We hail it as the beginning of an age-long, beneficent policy. To educate is to remake. It is to remake the man himself in mind and heart and will and the only possible permanent reformation is in such remaking of men, one by one, till the whole state is remade. There is a Greek myth which tells how Sisyphus in Hades was condemned as a punishment

to roll a huge stone to the top of a hill. It immediately rolled down and he had to roll it up again, and so keep on forever. This was the way with idolatry as long as the people did not know better. So king Jehoshaphat very early in his reign sent out his princes with priests and Levites "to teach in the cities of Judah."

**The Power of the Word of God.** "And they had the book of the law of the Lord with them." That is what they taught. It is a beautiful thing to see those princes and priests going about from city to city having in their hands rolls of the law of the Lord and gathering the people together and unrolling their "books of the law" and reading and explaining them. It was the beginning of synagogues and schools and our missionaries do very much the same way in India and China and Africa today.

And wherever the Bible is taught it makes people different. They think differently and love higher things and seek to do as God wills.

Prof. Green in his history of Puritan England tells us what a wonderful influence the Bible had when it was first translated and put in the churches. He says, "The Bible was as yet the one book which was familiar to every Englishman; and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened to their force and beauty, kindled a startling enthusiasm. Its effect, however dispassionately we may examine it, was simply amazing. The whole nation became a church."

It was in this way that the good king became

a preceptor to his people. He felt what our national forefathers felt when they said, "We must educate or we must perish."

**Education and Regeneration.** Looked at closely the king was seeking more than the education, he was seeking the regeneration of his people. He wanted them not only to be better, but to be renewed in their relation to God. A striking parallel is found in the plans of our Saviour. After His resurrection, in His great commission, He said to His disciples, "Go teach all nations."

In Exeter Hall, London, an engine driver was called out before a crowded house of the Christian Railway Men's Association. He had not prepared a speech, but this is what he said: "Mr. Chairman, there are some people who say, legislate, legislate, legislate. So say we workingmen. Parliament can do a great deal for us, and the sooner it does it the better. There are others who say, educate, educate, educate. So say we workingmen, and we are thankful for what has been done of late for the working classes. But while we are ready to say legislate, legislate, legislate, and educate, educate, educate, we say above everything else, regenerate, regenerate, regenerate. Bring into the working class the might of the Spirit of God."

**Policy of Conservation.** The barest mention was made above to the fact that Jehoshaphat fortified the cities that his father had taken. He came to a kingdom made great and secure by the statesmanship of another. His wisdom is shown in that he conserved what came to his hand, and furthered the policy that had been successful. Those "fenced cities," that his father had thrown like a wall with towers along the borderland of the northern kingdom were a source of security and pride to him, and he honored his father by re-enforcing them and setting garrisons in them. He is a spendthrift who squanders his heritage, and he is unfaithful to his trust who fails to reap where his fathers have sown. He only honors the past who gathers out of it a better future.

**A Mistake that Marred a Life.** A single drop of certain dyes will stain a whole bucket of clear water. So there are lives marred by one mistake. In his later years Jehoshaphat visited the idolatrous king Ahab of the northern kingdom, and was feasted by him. "Ahab killed sheep and oxen for him in abundance, and for the people that were with him." That was the wily king's way of drawing Jehoshaphat into his quarrel against Ramoth-gilead. Jehoshaphat, like many another well treated foolish fellow, fell into the trap, and in spite of the warnings of the prophet Micaiah he went into the battle with Ahab. A ridiculous picture is

drawn of his conduct in the battle. He had an army, according to the previous chapter, of more than a million men, and he went into the battle in his royal robes, while Ahab shrewdly went in dressed as a private soldier. The Syrians directed their attack against the first man they could find that looked like a king, and that man was Jehoshaphat, and he, the commander of a million men, cried out, shouting to the Syrian charioteers that he was not the king of Israel. Begging thus he got out with his life, and "returned to his house in peace to Jerusalem."

So there on the one hand is his great and loyal and wise life, and there beside it, marring it, is the fact that he went like a "silly bird" into Ahab's trap, and on the battle field he cringed and cried instead of fighting. At a later time he made a similar mistake in a commercial alliance with Ahaziah the king of Israel. But for the most part the people remembered his piety and loyalty to God, his teaching of the law, and the prosperity of his reign.

**Loyalty and Prosperity.** The books of Chronicles are written from the viewpoint of a definite theological conviction. The writer believed that Jehovah invariably blessed those who feared and served Him, and that He as invariably punished those who turned from Him to serve idols. Loyalty to God was therefore a synonym for patriotism, and its reward was national glory and gain.

In the long run this holds both of men and nations. It is only in the running of a short race that the wicked even seem to win. Somehow, somewhere, the way of the transgressor is hard; and somehow, ultimately the way of the just is as a shining light. The fruits of righteous sowing shall somewhere be garnered, and they that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind. "The world was certainly not framed for the lasting convenience of hypocrites, libertines and oppressors." "Patience may be disappointed of her hope and Wisdom of her aim, but I have never yet seen folly fruitless of mischief, nor vice conclude but in calamity."

Walking in the commandments of the Lord king Jehoshaphat found the kingdom "established in his hand;" and presents pouring into his lap, "riches and honor in abundance;" and he enjoyed peace, for "the fear of the Lord fell on the nations round about him;" and "his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What was Jehoshaphat's first wise act on coming to the throne? 2. He had a great army, but what was a far better security to him? 3. What was his attitude toward idolatry? 4. What new and beneficent movement did he set on foot among the people looking to their permanent help?

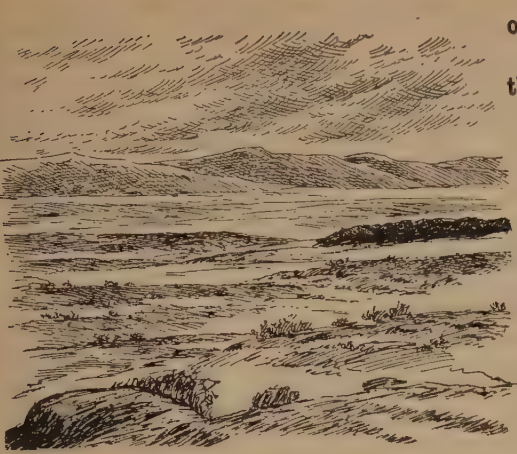
**Practical Thoughts.** We cannot live as we should without our teachers and preachers of the Word of God. Alexander said, "I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well." True religion inspires education. It was Jehoshaphat's love of God that prompted him to send out teachers to the people, and it is the Spirit of Christ that has built up our own great schools and colleges and universities. The church of God is the mother of education.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



And they rose early in the morning, and went forth into the

of Tekoa:  
and as  
they went  
forth,  
Jehoshaphat  
stood  
and said,  
Hear me,  
O Judah,  
and ye  
inhabi-  
tants of



Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his



so shall ye  
prosper. And  
when he had  
consulted with  
the people, he  
appointed sing-  
ers unto the  
Lord, and that  
should praise  
the beauty of  
holiness, as  
they went out  
before the



and to say, Praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever. And when they began to

and to praise, the Lord set ambushments

against  
the  
child-  
ren, of  
Ammon,  
Moab,  
and  
mount  
Seir,  
which  
were



come against Judah; and they were





THE SCRIPTURE LESSON **II CHRONICLES 20:1-30.**

**Prayer:** Our Father in Heaven, May the nations learn in times of danger to trust Thee, and cease to lean upon the sword. Thy prophet spake, and the king's army was unused because not needed. In Christ we learn that Thou art the Father of all peoples, and that Thou art pleased when Thy children dwell together in peace.

May our rulers heed the prophets who today are pleading for peace, and planning for a sisterhood of nations answering to our Christ-given ideal of the brotherhood of man. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"Out of my distress I called upon the Lord;  
The Lord answered me and set me in a large place.

The Lord is on my side; I will not fear;

What can man do unto me?

The Lord is on my side among them that help me;  
Therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me.

It is better to trust the Lord

Than to put confidence in man.

It is better to trust the Lord

Than to put confidence in princes."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 900 B. C. Places, The house of the Lord in Jerusalem, cliff of Ziz, and wilderness of Tekoa ten or eleven miles southeast of Jerusalem. **Persons,** Jehoshaphat the king, Jahaziel the prophet, musicians from among the Levites, the people of Jerusalem, and the army of the allies, namely Moabites, Ammonites, and Meunim.

**Scripture Setting:** The text presents one of God's mighty deliverances. Compare, deliverance from Egypt, Ex. 14:1-31. Destruction of Sennacherib's army, 2 Kings 19:20-37. Song of deliver-

ance, Ex. 15:1-18. Hymn of the promised land, Psa. 105.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is shown the power of national prayer, for Jehoshaphat and his people cast themselves on God. 1. The king set the example of prayer, standing before the people, and praying with them and for them. 2. He honors the great men of the past by appealing to God as the "God of our fathers." 3. Experience helps prayer. The king remembers God's providences and deliverances in the past, and appeals for present help to the same mighty Deliverer.

## A GREAT VICTORY WITHOUT A BATTLE.

**Point of Contact.** The prophet bade Jehoshaphat have faith in God. That was worth more than a great army. We as modern nations may have that and more that Jehoshaphat could not have. In those tribal times he could not have faith in neighboring peoples for they were treacherous and warlike. But in these Christian times the nations have faith one in another. They are bound together by trade and travel and international law and courts of arbitration, and the acknowledged kingship of Christ. We need more both of faith in God and in one another, and less in standing armies and battle ships.

As most difficulties between men can be settled by faith and friendliness and prayer, so it is with nations. God will hear when His people, and their rulers, come to Him in real need and in real faith.

**A Standing Army Unused.** Jehoshaphat's army is listed at 1,160,000, the largest attributed to any king of the southern kingdom. Some of these may have been lost in the unfortunate campaign with Ahab, but his fighting force must still have been a commanding one. Not a shield was lifted, not a bow was bent, not a spear hurled. The time had come to re-enforce among the people of Judah a forgotten lesson of their fathers. Moses at the Red Sea had commanded the terrified people to "stand still and see the salvation of God." But the people were prone to put their trust "in chariots and in

horses," and to forget the name of their God. The very greatness of Jehoshaphat's army made it a menace to faith in God, and the prophet sets it all aside; he does not reserve a Gideon's band from it. There are weapons of destruction best used when unused, and it was so with Judah's army.

"If drunk with sight of power we loose  
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—  
Such boasting as the Gentiles use  
And lesser breeds without the law—  
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,  
Lest we forget—lest we forget."

**The Policy of the Prophets.** Faith, not force, was the policy of the prophets. Isaiah rebuked the people of his day for "refusing the waters of Shiloh that go softly," and seeking the help of Syria. Jeremiah cried out against their "gadding about to go down into Egypt." A simple life of peace and trust and independence was the prophetic ideal. And Jehovah, the Ancient of Days, was to be their "Shield and Defender." In the moment of crisis, when the army of the allies was at En-gedi, Jehoshaphat proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah, and when they had come together to seek the Lord, a strange prophet appeared, bringing a revival of the old political policy of faith in Jehovah. Jahaziel appealed to the king and his people in language that should have been familiar to them; "Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's." Then



he bade them go down the next day not to fight but to gather the spoils of war from the fields of a self-destroyed enemy. And they went down not with soldiers but with singers, children of the Kohathites and of the Korahites, making the way glorious with psalms, and chanting beforehand their paeans of victory and their processional odes.

**The Nation Prays.** A new court had been built to enlarge and beautify the temple areas, and thither the king called the nation to prayer. There he stood with them in a vast multitude, and there he prayed with them and for them. It was a great open-air meeting in the presence of God. And the king was never more kingly than when he bowed down thus in his royal robes, and acknowledged the higher Kingship of Jehovah, and his own feebleness without Him. The master of a million of men cried out to God, saying, "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do; but our eyes are upon Thee." Ah, then! They had learned the greatest lesson of life; they were looking to God. And now in few words, simple and sweet, the writer paints a most touching and beautiful picture; he says, "All Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children." Every "little one" was an added prayer. Every loved one that we present to God is a thousand-fold plea to Him. Surely God would take note of those helpless wives and babes and little boys and girls.

A great statesman, whom every reader would know if I should name him, said, "I have not taken a drink of liquor for years. I have a reason. I have a boy."

**The Prayer was Answered.** While the hill-sides were ringing with the temple songs of Judah the valley of En-gedi was strewn with the slain. Like beasts in a cage the fierce tribes of Moab and Ammon and of Mount Seir had turned on one another; first Moab and Ammon against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and then Moabites against Ammonites and Ammonites against Moabites, until "they were dead bodies, fallen to the earth." The people of Judah had gone out with praises; they returned laden with the spoils of a war fought by other hands than theirs. Such deliverance would remind them of the Exodus, when their fathers looked back and saw the bodies of the Egyptians washed ashore on the sands of the Red Sea. In the eyes of neighboring peoples the effect was greatly to enhance

the prestige and security of the kingdom of Jehoshaphat.

The destruction of the Spanish Armada is in some ways a modern parallel. "It was in noble tone that England owed her debt to the storm that drove the Armada to its doom. On the medal that commemorated her triumph were graven the words, 'The Lord sent His wind and scattered them.' The pride of the conquerors was hushed before the sense of their mighty deliverance. It was not till England saw the broken host 'fly with a southerly wind to the north,' that she knew what a weight of fear she had borne for thirty years."

**The Power of Faith.** The writer of the Chronicles teaches, by this incident, such faith in God as leads to the non-resistance of man. Jehovah did not need the smiting of a man's puny hand to help Him. He could dispense with soldiers and swords, and all the poor accoutrements of war. The whole story is a protest against the support by the little state of Judah of the crushing weight of a great standing army. "It was shown conclusively that Judah could safely be contented not merely with an army smaller than those of its neighbors, but that she would be equally safe with no army at all."

But the world was not ready for this high teaching. Like other prophets Jahaziel outran the centuries. His lesson, however, is not lost. It rests in the heart of humanity wherever humanity seeks to be brotherly. Christ has re-enforced it with His doctrine of "the other cheek," and of the "putting up of the sword," and by His prayer on the cross.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How did the people show their faith in the early morning after the king's prayer? v. 20. 2. What great promise did the king make to the people if they should believe in God and in His prophets? v. 20. 3. Instead of appointing captains of war whom did the king appoint, and what for? v. 21. 4. To whom did the people attribute the victory at last? v. 27. 5. In what public place did they gather to express their joy? v. 28. 6. What name do we give to such occasions?

**Practical Thoughts.** The story has good cheer for us as we bear our protest against political and social evils. "If we had to defend everything and fight everything in our own strength, the case would be perfectly different; but God says to us, 'Ye have this treasure in earthen vessels; the excellency of the power is of God and not of man.'" When Frederick Douglass expressed a doubt as to the issues of the struggle in the early sixties, Sojourner Truth impatiently cried out, "Frederick, Frederick, is God dead?"

National faith in God is worth more than an army. Without faith France had her revolution and her reign of terror. With faith little Switzerland has been a happy republic for many centuries.

Each one of us has his battle to fight. It is the battle of life. If we win we must pray. "He makes best time who marches on his knees."

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.

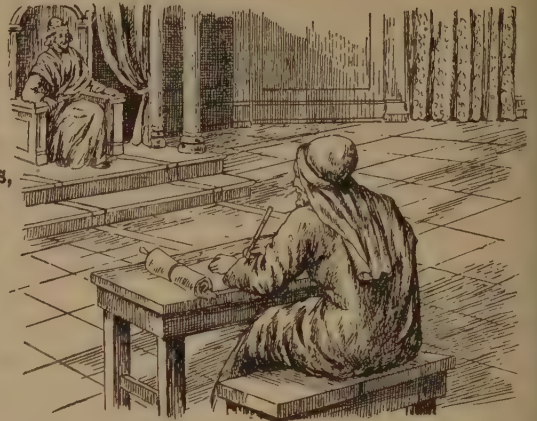


Now it came to pass, that at what time the



was brought unto the king's office by the

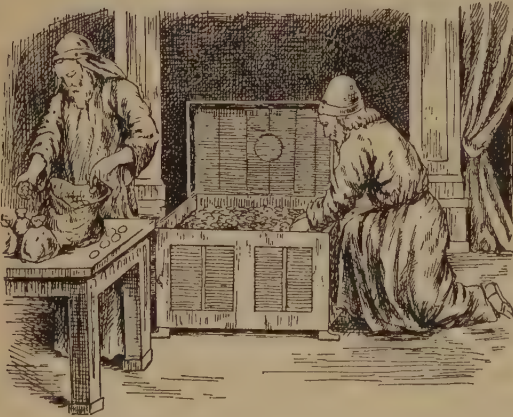
hand  
of the  
Levites,  
and  
when  
they



saw that there was much money, the king's

and the high priest's officer came and

and took it, and carried it to his place again.



Thus  
they  
did  
day,  
by  
day

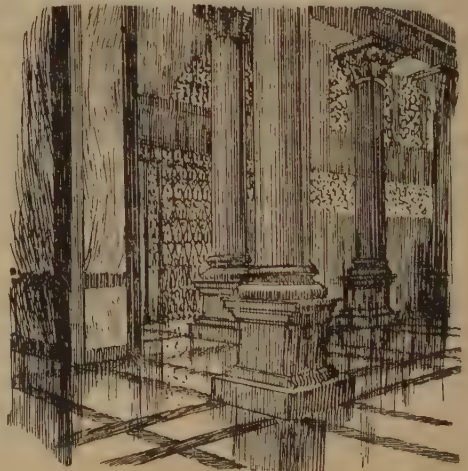


and gathered money in abundance. And the

and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the Lord, and hired



to repair  
the house  
of the  
Lord,  
and also  
such as  
wrought  
iron and  
brass to  
mend the



of the Lord.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 24:4-14.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Help us to have reverence for the outward appointments of Thy service, for the house that is named for Thee, and for the gifts of Thy faithful ones whereby they build and repair. But grant above all that Thy name may be hallowed in our hearts; that we ourselves may be temples of Thy Holy Spirit; and that we may ever worship Thee in spirit and in truth,

remembering that Thou dost seek such service. In the name and Spirit of Thy Son Jesus, Amen.

"There ought to be such an atmosphere in every Christian church, that a man going and sitting there should take the contagion of Heaven, and carry home a fire to kindle the altar whence he came."

—H. W. Beecher.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 856 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Joash or Jehoash the king, Jehoiada the high priest, the king's scribe, the high priest's officer, priests, Levites and workmen.

**Scripture Setting:** The lesson presents one step in a great movement, namely, the long struggle against idolatry and in favor of the pure worship of God. Parallel account, 2 Kings, 12:1-16. Later history of Joash, 2 Chron. 24:15-27. Usurpation of Athaliah, the mother of Joash, 2 Chron. 22:10-12. Revolution headed by Jehoiada, and crowning of Joash, 2 Chron. 23. Salutation to Jerusalem and the temple, a pilgrim song, Psalms. 122.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** In the following lesson Joash is represented as "the temple child" because he had been hidden in the temple and brought up in it.

Early associations have lasting influence. As a child he learned to love the temple, and later in life devoted himself to its restoration. The king's example was contagious. The people caught up his love for the temple, and gave joyfully and plentifully in answer to his calls. At last the king and people rejoiced in the beauty and perfection of their place of worship.

### A REVIVAL AND A REFORMATION.

**The Temple Child and his Love of the Temple.** Joash was a "temple child." His grandmother, Athaliah, was the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, and she inherited the ambition, the ferocity and the idolatry of her mother. Upon the death of her son, king Ahaziah, she seized the throne, and to make it secure in her hands she attempted to murder all "the seed royal." There was a little grandson of whom she seems to have known nothing. The good priest Jehoiada and his wife secreted this child in the vast courts and numerous chambers of the temple, which were seldom seen by the idolatrous queen, till he was seven years old. The secret of the existence of this child Joash, and of his temple training, was kept perfectly from the idolatrous queen, so that at his coronation the revolution on the one hand and her surprise on the other were complete. Hearing the sound of the silver trumpets that proclaimed his coronation she rushed into the temple courts, there to see her little grandson standing in royal robes, and to read in the faces of the priests and people her own doom. Just outside the temple precincts she fell by the sword, and in her death there passed from Hebrew history the dark race of Jezebel.

It was fitting that the temple child who had become the king of Judah should show his love to the temple by planning its renewal. Much grows old and worn in a century and a quarter. Besides there had been troublous times, and much idolatry and many faint hearts during those years. Je-

hoiada had taught the young king to love Jehovah, and from the larger love of the Lord sprang the lesser love of the Lord's house.

**Perfunctory Priests.** In his plans the king turned to the priests and Levites. He had a right to expect enthusiastic leadership from these ministers in holy things. But according to the account in the twelfth chapter of II Kings twenty-three years passed and nothing was done. The command had been, "see that ye hasten the matter." The chronicler significantly adds, "Howbeit the Levites hastened not." They had become mere functionaries. They waited at the altar for what there was in it, and were lazily willing to let well enough alone. It is among the sad features of religious history that in the hands of its ministers worship tends to become formal and stereotyped,

"Teily regular, splendidly null;  
Dead perfection—no more."

In Hebrew history at least we must look to the prophets rather than to the priests for vitality and spirituality and progress. So indifferent and inactive were the priests that the king took the matter out of their hands. "The priests consented to receive no more money from the people, neither to repair the breaches of the house."

**An Appeal to the People.** The king's new plan created confidence and aroused latent enthusiasm. He had a chest made and placed at the gate of the temple. And he made a proclamation "through Judah and Jerusa-

lem, to bring in to the Lord the collection that Moses the servant of the Lord laid upon Israel in the wilderness." Very likely the people distrusted the priests, and so had been withholding their gifts. When they saw a direct way to the work they rejoiced, and "brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end." This laymen's movement resulted in a glad abundance. The money was counted in the king's office by the king's scribe and the high priest's servant, and again and again the chest was replaced and refilled till the amount was sufficient for the work.

**"The House of God in his State."** It is with a note of pride that the writer says, "And they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it."

There is no better index of a town or city or nation than its churches. In southern Missouri there is a town called Liberal. Unbelievers tried to build it without churches, or Bibles, or preachers, or Sunday-schools. It got so bad that the railroad company threatened never to stop a train there. Decent people moved out. At last to save the town they had to build churches and invite preachers and open Sunday-schools.

An Illinois town of less than four thousand population has within recent years spent \$55,000 on two new churches; \$40,000 on a Young Men's Christian association building; and is now building another church at a cost of \$50,000. The people pride themselves in this, and point to their churches as a sign of their prosperity. So the Hebrew pilgrims sang as they went up to Jerusalem to worship,

"I was glad when they said unto me,  
Let us go into the house of the Lord.  
Our feet are standing within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

**One Step in a Great Movement.** The repairing of the temple is but one feature of a national movement of great significance. Baalism and kindred idolatries had threatened the very life of Judah and the worship of Jehovah. Under the statesmanlike administration of Jehoiada and the work of the prophets not named in the lesson the people were aroused and enlisted. There came a revival of the true and pure worship of Jehovah, and a reformation ensued. It was a religious and political necessity to dethrone Athaliah; to enthronate a son of David; to centralize the worship; to throw down the high places; to strengthen the order of the Levites; and to enrich and protect the ritual of the worship of God. It was a long process, and other centuries were required for its completion. But at last it gave the people a saving toughness, and united them in a grand state church, the earthen vessel of a treasure too precious to be lost, the treasure of ethical monotheism. From the days of Elijah to

the days of Jehoiada unclean Baalism threatened the clean worship of Jehovah, and the world's best hope hung in the balance while the war waged. This lesson is one of the battlefields in that long warfare.

**Greater than the King.** It is not always the man in the limelight who does the work. There was a man who had saved the life of Joash, and protected him, and educated him, and crowned him, and inspired and directed him. As long as this man lived Joash did what was right, and he and his kingdom were prospered and blessed. No sooner had he passed away than the fickle king went wrong. He listened to the counsel of idolatrous princes, and forsook the glorious temple that he had so proudly repaired.

This good man was the priest Jehoiada, who died at a hundred and thirty years of age, and was so honored that they buried him in the city of David among the kings. All his life he was a prince and a power among men. He never wavered. From first to last he was loyal. He was not only priest to the souls of men, but also prime minister of his state and nation. Such men are God's best gifts. Through them He makes progress possible and history glorious. Through them he establishes righteousness, and makes truth as radiant as suns and stars that shine forever.

"Were a star quenched on high,  
For ages would its light,  
Still travelling downward through the sky,  
Shine on our mortal sight.

"So when a great man dies,  
For years beyond our ken,  
The light he leaves behind him lies  
Upon the paths of men."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who was the uncrowned ruler of Judah during the early years of Joash? 2. What is the significance of appealing to the people when the priests failed? 3. Did Joash succeed in ridding the land of the high places and the idols? 2 Kings 12:3. 4. What classes of workmen are named in the lesson? v. 12. 5. What compliment is paid to these workmen? 2 Kings 12:15.

**Practical Thoughts.** When the opportunity was afforded the people gave joyfully. All our worship should come from the heart and should be leavened with gladness. "If ye love me keep my commandments." Out of love we are privileged to sing and praise and pray; we should find pleasure in giving and in forgiving; in building and burden-bearing, in conflict and in victory. The religion of God and of Christ is the soul of optimism. "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice."

A dilapidated church building bespeaks a dilapidated faith. A traveler who has been through India says that Hinduism is dying; its temples are decaying and there is no enthusiasm to repair them. It is the picture of a dead religion that Byron paints in his "Siege of Corinth."

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



And they withstood Uzziah the king, and said unto him, It appertaineth not unto thee, Uzziah, to



unto the Lord, but to the priests the sons of Aaron,



that are consecrated to burn incense: go out of the  
for thou hast trespassed; neither shall it be for thine honour from the Lord God.  
Then Uzziah was wroth, and had

to burn incense; and while he was wroth with the priests,



the leprosy even rose up in his forehead before the  
in the house of the Lord, from beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief  
and all the priests, looked upon him, and, behold, he



was leprous in his forehead, and they thrust him  
from thence; yea, himself hasted also to go out, because the Lord had smitten him.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 26:16-23.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We know that in the days when all is well with us we are most apt to forget Thee. Our hearts are prone to be lifted up by reason of our good health, or our fair looks, or our full store-houses, or our superior learning and culture. Help us therefore to be most on guard when the world seems best to us, and in days of prosperity may we be most thankful to Thee, remembering that Thou art the Giver of all good gifts, and that Thou dost desire Thy bounties to be received as blessings. In the name of Thy Son Jesus, Amen.

"But man, proud man,  
Dressed in a little brief authority,  
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,  
His glassy essence, like an angry ape,  
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven,  
As make the angels weep."

—Shakespeare.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time, somewhere between 765 and 758 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Uzziah the king of Judah, Azariah the priest, eighty priests, and Jotham the king's son.

**Scripture Setting.** Parallel record, very brief, 2 Kings 14:21-22. The pride of Nebuchadnezzar humbled, Daniel 4:1-37. The pride of Belshazzar humbled, Daniel 5:1-31. The pride and the calamity of Sennacherib, 2 Chron. 32:1-23. The Savior's parable of humility, Luke 14:7-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** Uzziah's reign of fifty-two years is the longest with one exception

of any of the kings of Judah. He was successful in war, vv. 6-8. He was devoted to the husbandry of cattle, v. 10. He made Judaea with Jerusalem as its center a great military power and employed "cunning" men to invent new weapons of war, vv. 11-15. Success set its crown on all that he did. Uzziah was a worshiper of Jehovah, and in his earlier years came under the influence of a godly man by the name of Zechariah. It was in his later years that he became haughty and sacrilegious and fell a victim to pride "which eats up itself."

### A ROYAL OUTCAST.

**Point of Contact.** We all know of the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, the seventeenth president of the United States, and the successor of Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Johnson was acquitted by a very close vote on the part of the United States senate. Had he not been acquitted we can imagine him cast aside by his party and his country, and going away to live and die in shame, with the brand of his country on him. We are today glad that it was not so.

There is a sense in which Uzziah's leprosy was an impeachment. The writer of Chronicles presents it as the Lord's impeachment because of his pride and his sin. He went away in shame, and lived in a separate house, and died of a terrible disease. He could no more visit the temple or go abroad among the people. He was a royal outcast.

**A Promising Character.** King Uzziah came to the throne of Judah at an unpromising age. He was only sixteen years old. His father, Amaziah, had foolishly gone out to war with the northern kingdom, and had been defeated, and four hundred cubits of the walls of Jerusalem had been broken down, and the temple had been plundered, and its treasures carried to Samaria. Following this the people conspired against him, and he was slain at Lackish.

However, there was enthusiasm over the royal boy, for it is said, "all the people of Judah took Uzziah and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah."

It is well for a king so young and inex-

perienced to have the guidance of some one older and wiser, just as Joash, who was only seven when he began to reign, found himself under the care of the wise priest Jehoiada. There is just a hint given us that Uzziah had such a counsellor. It is said, "He sought God in the days of Zechariah, who had understanding in the visions of God." This man was one of the great company of the unknown and unheralded moulders of men; quiet teachers and prophets and priests, who do their work behind the scenes, and are real makers of history. It was in his days that Uzziah "sought God," and "did what was right in the sight of the Lord." There is no better promise of a strong and brave life than that a young man should admire the spirit and follow the instructions of such a teacher. It is teachableness that leads to the kingdom of greatness.

**A Successful Reign.** King Uzziah prospered greatly in war and in husbandry. It is much to say that a king is successful both in the arts of war and the arts of peace.

He conquered these old and troublesome enemies of his people, the Philistines, breaking down their city walls, and building other cities as he pleased; he overcame certain Arabians, and the people of Gur-baal, a place now unknown, and carried his victorious arms as far as Egypt. His fame was such that the Ammonites paid tribute to him, thus acknowledging his lordship seemingly without a battle. He had a great army for so small a kingdom. There were three hundred



seven thousand and five hundred men in it, and he encouraged the invention of new arms and new ways of fighting. He built towers on the walls of Jerusalem, and put on them great machines for shooting arrows and hurling stones. The Romans called these rude, primitive machines catapults, and Uzziah is the first king of Judah that adopted them. It helped to make him famous and dreadful. "His name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped till he was strong," says the chronicler.

"He loved husbandry." And we love to hear that said of him, for we live in a land of wonderful fields and vineyards and orchards, and we know how much of wealth and prosperity there is in great crops and great herds of stock. Palestine has very fertile valleys and hills and mountain sides, and the vineyards that Uzziah planted, and the wells that he digged, and the towers of defense that he built must have helped the people mightily, and added greatly to their wealth. It is hard to realize what a full half century of such a reign must have meant to the people and king of Judah. It must have been to them what the reign of Queen Elizabeth was to the people of England in the sixteenth century, and what the reign of Queen Victoria was in the nineteenth.

**Pride, Rage, Ruin.** "But when he was strong his heart was lifted up to his destruction." We have seen trees in full leaf and casting great shadows suddenly broken by a storm, and then we have seen how the worms had eaten into their hearts. Outwardly the king was victorious and rich; inwardly his character was eaten out by pride. Isaiah, who began his prophecies in the last days of Uzziah, describes the people as being drunken and luxurious, and as mocking at righteousness, and as a vineyard bearing wild grapes, and "sinning as it were with a cart rope." In the eyes of such a people king Uzziah, victorious, rich, must have seemed on the upgrade and near the very top of glory, when suddenly there came like a storm the occasion that revealed his inner, downgrade life. He became so haughty and conceited that nothing was sacred to him. He even violated the law of the temple by going in to burn incense, an act of worship that should have been performed only by consecrated priests, "the sons of Aaron."

The Bible presents to us other examples of men who became rich and great and foolish. Solomon's wealth was fabulous. He received in one year eighteen millions of dol-

lars' worth of gold; he built great palaces, and a temple on which he spent money by millions; his merchantmen traversed the seas, and his fame reached to Assyria and Egypt and Ethiopia. But he fell at last into idolatry, ensnared by his foreign wives.

Nebuchadnezzar, victorious, rich, and a mighty builder, walked proudly amidst his palaces and hanging gardens, saying, "Is not this great Babylon that I have built by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" Suddenly, "while the word was in his mouth," the kingdom was taken from him; he became insane, and was driven out to live like a beast in the fields.

"Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." There is the fable of a frog which tried to be as big as an ox, and swelled and swelled himself till he burst and fell "stone dead." Napoleon's ambition got the better of him. Thomas Paine's brilliancy made him an infidel. The rich man's bursting barns robbed him of his soul.

Eighty brave priests with Azariah as their leader stood to rebuke the sacrilegious king and he became enraged. They said to him, "Go out of the sanctuary, for thou hast trespassed." But their rebuke was not needed. While they spoke the whiteness of leprosy rose in his forehead, right where his proud crown had rested, and in his terror he rushed out of the temple, nevermore to be a man among men.

No sadder picture can be drawn than that of the lonely king, in "a several house," slowly dying of a wasting disease; brooding in memory over his better days, and not forgetting that awful hour of temple desecration and of fierce anger at the priests of his God. And to crown his sorrow, he must have known, being a leper, that he could not be buried with his royal fathers, but in a field aside from them. It is more terrible than the rebuke of Nebuchadnezzar's pride, for he was permitted to repent and return to his kingdom. But from king Uzziah's leprosy and loneliness there was no return. The inscription that Dante places on the gate of hell is this:

"All hope abandon, ye who enter here."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Were the conditions favorable to a successful reign when Uzziah came to the throne? 2. How large an influence may we attribute to the young king's counsellor, Zechariah? 3. From the viewpoint of his long and outwardly prosperous reign should we count Uzziah as among the greatest kings of Judah? 4. What in general is the picture that Isaiah draws of the kingdom in the last years of Uzziah? Isaiah, 5. 5. Does there always lurk spiritual danger in material prosperity?

**Practical Thought.** In what is known as the pearl of parables the prodigal son is represented as going away from his father in pride and returning in prayer. "Father, I have sinned against Heaven and in thy sight. Make me as one of thy hired servants."

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



# HEZEKIAH THE GOOD KING

He in the first year of his reign, in the first month,



of the  
house  
of the  
Lord,  
and  
repair-  
ed  
them.  
And he  
brought  
in the



and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east



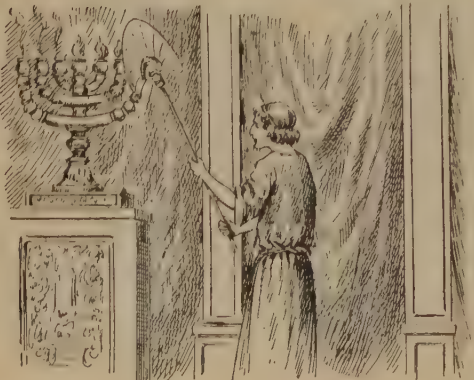
And said  
unto them,  
Hear me, ye  
Levites,  
sanctify  
now your-  
selves, and  
sanctify the  
house of the  
Lord God  
of your  
fathers, and



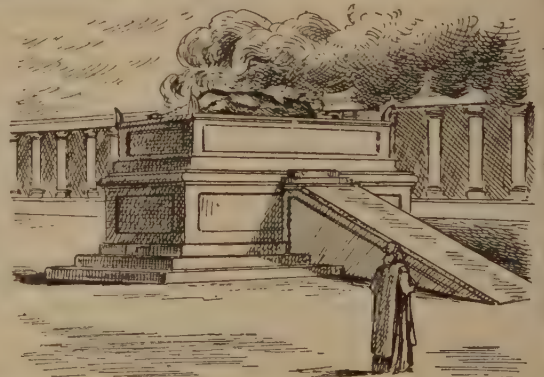
the filthiness  
out of the  
holy place. For  
our fathers have  
trespassed,  
and done that  
which was



in the eyes of the Lord  
our God, and have  
forsaken him, and have  
turned away their faces  
from the habitation of  
the Lord, and turned  
their backs. Also they  
have shut up the  
doors of the porch, and



and  
have  
not  
burned  
incense  
nor  
offered



in the holy place unto the God of Israel.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 29:1-19.

**Prayer:** Our Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for the kings and prophets who have been great enough to know Thy will and to do it; who have turned away from uncleanness, and brought order out of disorder, light out of darkness, and hope out of despair. We ask Thee for singleness of heart

that we too may worship Thee in temples made clean by the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, even in our own bodies and lives, cleansed from sin and made fit dwelling places for the Holy Spirit. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 726 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Hezekiah the king of Judah, priests, Levites, and rulers of the city.

**Scripture Setting:** Brief parallel account, 2 Kings 18:1-7. For prophetic description of conditions at the time of Hezekiah's accession, Isaiah 5. Evil and idolatrous reign of Ahaz, 2 Chron. 28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Conditions had become dreadful when Hezekiah came to the throne, and he immediately sought a remedy. He began at the center of the religious, and therefore also of the political, life of the nation, namely the temple and the temple worship. His speech to the negligent priests and Levites, vv. 5-11, is in true prophetic and kingly style, showing a wise analysis of the national trouble and its remedy. The heart-

iness with which the priests and Levites entered on the work, the filthiness of the temple and its cleansing, and the restoration of the sacred vessels, are vividly described in the remainder of the lesson.

"Wash you; make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well. Seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson; they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword. For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." Isaiah 1;16-20.

### THE KING OF THE OPEN TEMPLE.

**Point of Contact.** We are so blessed in this land of religious liberty and Christian graces that comparison with such new life and joy as must have come to the hearts of many a saintly Jew when Hezekiah reopened the temple are hard to find. But in the great island of Madagascar there was a recent incident that may help us. For many years the native Christians have been persecuted, first by their own cruel rulers, and later by French officials. Recently a new governor general was appointed by France, and when a petty official forbade the native Christians to rebuild a ruined church, this new and more generous ruler promptly issued an order that the people must not be interfered with in their work of church erection. Now therefore, those good people have the joy and enthusiasm that come of building and rebuilding their houses of holy worship.

**Open Doors Once More.** It is a sad picture we have here of the temple closed and deserted. That temple was the religious and political center of the nation, and to close it was a blow at once to both the church and state. But Ahaz had become so mad with idolatry that he cut to pieces the vessels of the temple, closed its doors, and built altars "in every corner of Jerusalem, and in every several city of Judah." He surfeited in idolatry.

And now it is delightful to see king Hezekiah, in the first year of his reign, in the ardor and glory of his young manhood, throwing open those doors, as though he

were drawing near to the God of his fathers, and inviting Jehovah to return and dwell again among the people. "Sixteen years of licensed idolatry must have fostered all that was vile in the country, and have put wicked men in authority, and created numerous vested interests connected by close ties with idolatry, notably the priests of all the altars and high places." Meanwhile the priests of God and the Levites had been driven away from the polluted temple and scattered. The opening of the temple doors was the sign of a great change, a reversal of the national policy, a reformation, a war on idolatry and its evils, and a new attitude toward God. It was a brave, strong, manly deed on the part of the king. It was better than the winning of a battle. It was a victory, and the beginning of a godly and victorious reign.

**A Sermon from the Throne.** In one speech Hezekiah made of his throne a pulpit and of his pulpit a throne. It is both an edict and a sermon that we have in verses five to eleven of the lesson. The king was the preacher. The place was the open space east of the temple. The audience was made up of the priests and Levites, scattered and discouraged by Ahaz, and now recalled. The theme concerned matters of state, of the church, of the good of the people, and the pleasure of God.

The royal preacher speaks in commanding, kingly style. He says, "Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy

place." This was the beginning, following which he reminds them of the evils and idolatries that cursed the land, the wrath of the Lord, the "hissings" of other nations, and the ravages of war. He brings his oration to its conclusion with a declaration and an exhortation. He declares that it is in his heart to make a covenant with God, and he exhorts his audience not to be negligent in their duties. Virtually he said to them, "Do it now."

**A House Made Fit for a Heavenly Guest.** There were months of preparation in England for the coronation of King George the Fifth. No pains were spared to make his palaces and courts and cathedrals beautiful and attractive. The nation was thrilled by the coming of the king to his throne and his crown. It is a very true and noble sentiment that prepares thus for a royal guest. How much more should His own house be prepared for the return and the residence of Jehovah! Hezekiah felt that he could not pray the Lord to return to His people till he had cleansed the place of His abode.

Sixteen years of neglect in a place where there had been so many sacrifices of oxen and rams and lambs must have left the great house in a frightful condition. The words "uncleanness," and even "filthiness," are used in describing it. They began in the "inner part of the house," and they were eight days in reaching the "porch." Companies of Levites carried the refuse far down to the brook Kidron, and it was sixteen days before "they made an end." Then they came to the king and told how they had cleansed the temple and the altar and the table of shewbread and the vessels. How different that great building must have seemed after those sixteen days! Now it was a thing of beauty with its shining walls and white marble floors, its burnished altars and tables, its golden and silver vessels washed and glowing, and its marble porches dazzling white once more. That cleansed temple is an emblem of the "clean hands and pure hearts" all should have who invite God to dwell with them.

**A Royal Rededication.** The king again appeared before the open doors, and within the courts that were cleansed, this time accompanied by the rulers of the city, and the priests and Levites. And they offered for a sin offering four times seven beasts, sprinkling the blood on the altar. The large brotherly heart of the king is shown

in that he commanded this sacrifice as an atonement, not for Judah only, but for "all Israel."

And the whole congregation worshipped, bowing low, and they had a great orchestra and chorus, "and the trumpeters sounded and the singers sang." "They sang praises with gladness, and they bowed their heads and worshipped." To crown the day of this rededication they brought with a free heart thank offerings and peace offerings to the number of six hundred oxen and three thousand sheep!

**An Index of the King's Life.** This initial act is an index of Hezekiah's life and reign. Through all his days the temple doors stood open inviting the people to worship, and speaking of the presence of Jehovah. And we know that in one dreadful hour the good king himself passed through those open doors to lay a threatening letter before the Lord and pray for the salvation of his people, and that the Lord heard his prayer and answered it marvellously. He threw open not only the doors of the temple but also the doors of his heart to Jehovah, the God of his fathers. When in the days of David they dedicated Jerusalem, they stood before her walls and sang:

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates,  
Even lift them ye everlasting doors,  
And the King of glory shall come in."

Ah! Such a beautiful "open-door policy." We all love the king of Judah who stands thus inviting the King of glory.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. When and by whom was the temple built? 2 Chron. 3, 4, 5. 2. What had been the action of Ahaz in regard to the temple? 3. What does the closing of the temple indicate as to the religious condition of the people at large? 4. How many kinds of offerings are named in the lesson? 5. What is the Jewish, and what the Christian meaning of sacrifice? 6. What great prophet helped Hezekiah, and guided and inspired him? 7. Can you think of a better indication of character than one's attitude toward the church?

**Practical Thoughts.** In the New Testament we ourselves are called "temples of God," and our bodies "temples of the Holy Spirit." Some of us have lived closed lives to God, and our hearts need cleansing that the Holy Spirit may dwell in them. He who loves sin and keeps it in his heart, and does unholy things, is like the closed and filthy temple. He must repent, and be forgiven, and cleansed by Christ, before he can "glorify God."

A clean life is more beautiful even than a clean temple.

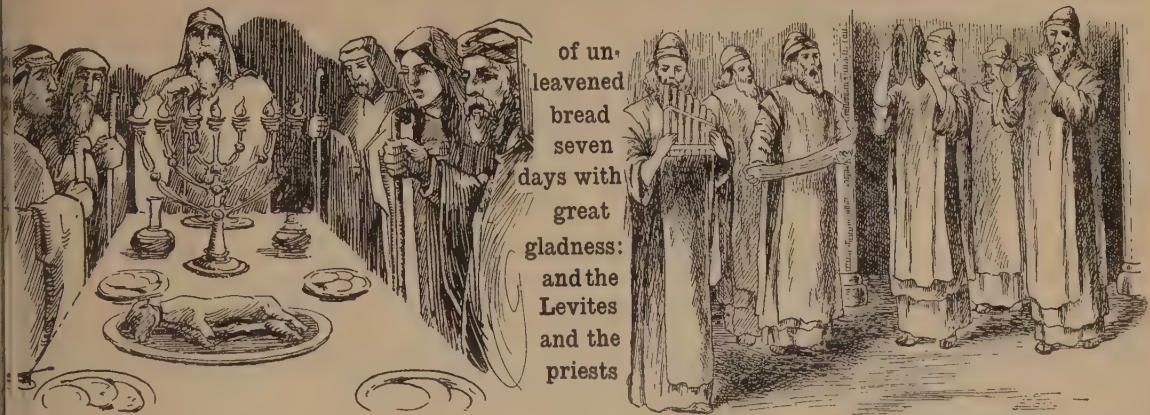
Hezekiah and his people came to the clean temple with sacrifices and music and joy. True religion brings true joy. Jesus says, "My yoke is easy and my burden is light."

As Hezekiah was "the king of the open doors," so we should be people of open, royal hearts for Christ and His church.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem, kept the



of unleavened bread seven days with great gladness: and the Levites and the priests

the Lord day by day, singing with loud instruments unto the Lord.

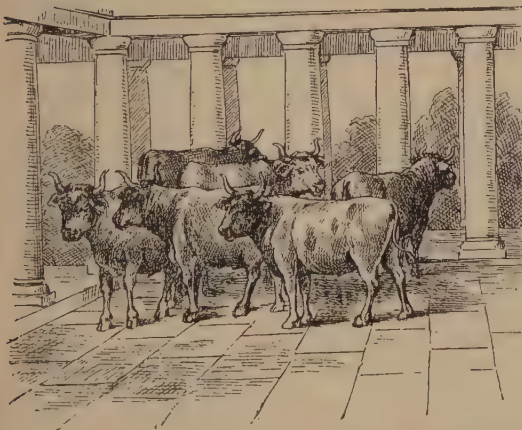
And Hezekiah spake comfortably unto all the Levites that taught the good knowledge of the Lord: and they did eat throughout the feast seven days, offering peace



and making confession to the Lord God of their fathers.

And the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days: and they kept other seven days with gladness.

For Hezekiah king of Judah did give to the congregation a thousand



and seven thousand



and the princes gave to the congregation a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of priests sanctified themselves.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 30:1-27.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, Wilt Thou help us to remember that Christ, our passover, is sacrificed for us, and wilt Thou help us to keep the feast with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. May we know that the spirit of our worship is first, and that the forms of it are secondary. Though all other rules should perish, may we never fail in the law of love; and living, and laboring, and worshipping according to that law, may we be forever acceptable to Thee. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?  
And who shall stand in His holy place?  
He that hath clean hands and a pure heart;  
Who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity,  
Nor sworn deceitfully.  
He shall receive the blessing from the Lord,  
And righteousness from the God of his salvation"

—Psalm 24.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 726 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Hezekiah the king of Judah, priests, Levites, and a great throng of worshippers from the kingdoms both of Israel and Judah.

**Scripture Setting:** This feast follows immediately upon the cleansing of the neglected temple, Chap. 29. Original command to keep the passover, Ex. 13:1-16, Deut. 16:1-8. Song of pilgrims going up to Jerusalem, Psalm 125.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** During the first month of the initial year of his reign Hezekiah cleansed the temple and reopened it. According to the law the feast should have been kept in that month. But as this was impossible and as the king and people, now newly awakened religiously, did not

feel that they could omit this great memorial feast entirely, they decided to keep it in the second month.

In breadth of brotherliness they sought to make it a feast for Israel as well as Judah, that is, for all the Hebrew race.

In their enthusiasm they doubled the days of the feast, making it fourteen instead of seven, another irregularity sanctioned of God because of the spirit in which it was done. These two great deeds, the cleansing of the temple and the keeping of the feast in the very beginning of his reign, were strokes both of piety and statesmanship on the part of the young king.

### A KING OF BREADTH AND BROTHERLINESS.

**Point of Contact.** In our great missionary conventions we frequently decorate our halls with the flags of many nations. Side by side may be seen our own "Old Glory," as we fondly call her, and Great Britain's Union Jack, and China's Yellow Dragon, and the sunrise symbol of Japan, and the Persian Lion, and the Turkish Crescent, and many another from many an island, state and continent. It is a beautiful expression of breadth and brotherliness, and of that deeper spirit of loyalty to the one God and Father of all, "Who is over all, and through all, and in all," which must at last unite the nations. It is something of this spirit that Hezekiah has when he invites the people of the northern kingdom to unite with his own people in the passover feast. It is a new note of brotherliness after many generations of ill will.

**A Royal Invitation.** "Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh, that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem to keep the passover unto the Lord God of Israel." It is well to note this whole text for it is so full of breadth and brotherliness and devotion. He is a magnanimous man who can forget old feuds, and long cherished prejudices, and bitter quarrels, in an effort just simply to worship God. This was a royal invitation because it came from the king, but better still because it is so wholehearted, and unselfish, and inclusive. It is

like the bands of the blue and the gray on opposite sides of the river, for a while taunting each other with "Dixie" and "The Star Spangled Banner," but at last uniting their music, and making the night memorable, with the melody of "Home, Sweet Home."

**King and Congregation Pleased.** The law was that the passover should be kept in the first month. But that was impossible. The priests were not sanctified and their purification would require seven days. The people were not assembled and could not be in so short a time. In addition to all else, to hold a passover in the neglected and filthy temple was not to be thought of. They resorted to what we should call case law, and found in the book of Numbers, the ninth chapter, an instance of certain men who could not keep the feast in the first month, and were allowed by Moses to keep it the second month. Acting on this the king and people decided that irregularity in worship was better than no worship at all, and were pleased to be able to keep the feast in the second month. There is a rigid and deadly way of keeping religious laws and forms and ceremonies, and there is a life-giving way of modifying them. It is the spirit that gives life; the mere letter kills. The Savior himself, instead of sacrificing a ram or a lamb in the temple, took a scourge of cords and drove out the flocks of sacrificial beasts, and rebuked the extortionate tradesmen, and overthrew their money tables, and declared



that they had made the place "a den of thieves." Today we can see that the Savior's lash for thieves was more religious than the sacrifice of a bullock would have been. And Hezekiah was broad enough to see that the soul of religion lies deeper than the mere laws and forms that gather around it. He was pleased to be irregular for the greater good.

**Not as the Fathers.** Ordinarily we are told to follow the examples of our fathers. But Hezekiah asks the people of Israel and Judah not to be like their fathers. Sometimes the examples of the fathers are the best ones not to follow. If the fathers are proud and stubborn and idolatrous; if they are drunken and profane and dissipated; if they close their eyes to truth, and set themselves against progress; if they make a mockery of virtue, and laugh at sincerity, and sneer at piety and prayer; if they belittle Christ and His church, and the Bible and God, it is well not to follow their example. When the fathers fall into the ditch they are a warning to us rather than an example.

If Paul had been like his fathers he could not have been an Apostle, for they were Pharisees. If Luther had been like his fathers he could not have been a reformer. If George Washington had been like his fathers in Great Britain he never could have been the father of our country. Progress means that we shall save what is good in our fathers, imitate their virtues, avoid their mistakes, and go forward where they leave off. It is all right for the boy in kilts to believe just like his father does, if his father is at all sane and good. But when he is a man he should have a faith of his own, and be able to give a reason for it.

## **Crude Mockery of a Kingly Welcome.**

King Hezekiah sent his letters of invitation by special carriers through the country and cities of the northern kingdom, bidding them to turn again to the Lord, and to their brethren and children; reminding them that God was waiting for them in grace and mercy, and that He would not turn from them if they would return to Him. But for the most part they were so crude and sunken in idolatry that they laughed at the message and mocked the messengers.

But there were noble and devout people among those tribes, who humbled themselves and accepted the kingly welcome to Jerusalem, and there God gave them one heart to worship with their brethren from whom they had been long separated. Maybe it was at this time that the 133rd Psalm was written, beginning,

Behold how good and pleasant it is  
For brethren to dwell together in unity.

**Truth Fighting Falsehood.** To love the good is to hate the evil. The more one devotes himself to truth the more he opposes falsehood. When the people grew enthusiastic in this great passover worship they began to make war on the idols that were yet in Jerusalem, and they took them and their altars, and cast them contemptuously into the brook Kidron. As the priests and Levites had cleansed the temple so now the people cleansed the city.

**A Wonderful Way of Giving.** There is another indication of king Hezekiah's breadth and brotherliness. He had a wonderful way of giving to support the temple service. He set an example for all his people. He gave a thousand bullocks and seven thousand sheep. The princes, inspired by his example, gave a thousand bullocks and ten thousand sheep. Such was the generosity and enthusiasm that they were enabled to continue the feast another seven days with prolonged gladness. Perhaps the guests that the king had invited from the far northern tribes were unable to bring their sacrifices with them. In that case Hezekiah and his people entertained them royally by their princely giving.

**Answered Prayers of a Right-hearted Ruler.** There were many of the invited guests who had not prepared themselves for the feast according to the Mosaic law for cleansing. "They did eat the passover otherwise than as it was written." For these guests the generous king prayed this short, beautiful, heart-felt prayer: "The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seek God, the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary." The Lord answered this prayer and received the worship of those who, having the heart preparation, yet lacked the legal preparation for the worship.

Nothing in all his reign speaks so much for the king's great and true heart as the incidents of this passover. We love him when we see him so brotherly toward all, so generous in his giving, so fervent in his prayers, so like a child in simplicity, and so like a hero in his reformation of religion. "When the heart goes before, like a lamp, and illumines the pathway, many things are made clear that else lie hidden in darkness."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Of what great event was the passover a memorial? 2. In what month was it observed according to the law? 3. Was Hezekiah justified in holding it a month later, and if so why? 4. What was the effect of the invitation to the people of the northern kingdom? 5. Is religion primarily a matter of laws and forms or of the heart and life?

**Practical Thought.** As long as there was one idol left in Jerusalem the city was not cleansed from idolatry. When Madagascar became Christian the Hovas took down their idols and burned them. But the queen tried to play a double role. She kept a little black idol about three inches long, and wore it as an amulet about her neck. It was her darling idol—her pet sin. At last she came to the missionaries and gave it up, for she found that she could not be a Christian as long as she cherished that little black image. It is so with our sins. If we would be right with God we must not keep a single one of them.

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



# MANASSEH'S SIN AND REPENTANCE

Now after this he



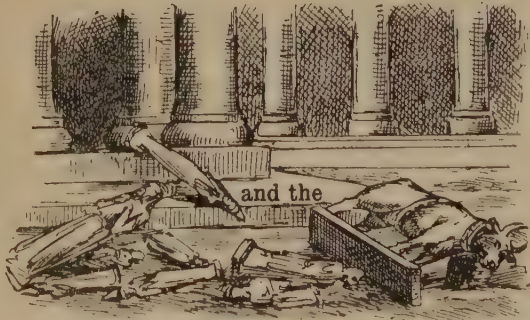
without  
the city of  
David, on  
the west  
side of  
Gihon, in  
the valley,  
even to the  
entering in  
at the fish



and compassed  
about Ophel, and  
raised it up  
a very great  
height, and put  
captains of



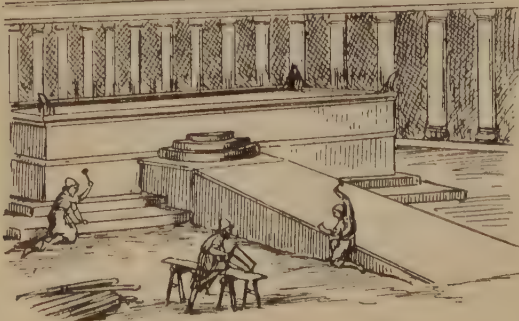
in all the fenced  
cities of Judah  
And he took  
away the strange



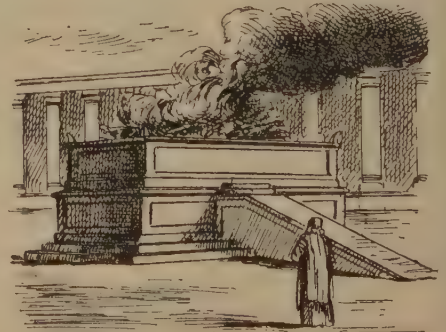
out of the  
house of  
the Lord,  
and all the



that he had built in the mount of the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. And he



of the  
Lord, and  
sacrificed  
thereon  
peace  
offerings  
and thank



and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 33:1-16.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, We praise Thee for this, that when men have gone astray they may return to Thee. We thank Thee that in every age there has come the call to repentance, and there has been granted the promise of forgiveness, and therefore of reconciliation and restoration. Thou art a Father, and Thou dost look for Thy returning children, and run to meet them, and Thou dost kiss them, and present them anew with Thy robe and ring, and Thou dost make feasts for

them, and bring them forever into the old home. And we thank Thee for Christ, who together with Thy prophets, has revealed this to us. In His name. Amen.

"True repentance consists in the heart being broken for sin, and broken from sin. Some often repent, yet never reform. They resemble a man travelling in a dangerous path, who frequently starts and stops, yet never turns back."—Thorn-top.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, his captivity, 680 to 678 B. C. Places, Jerusalem and Babylon. **Persons,** Manasseh the king of Judah, the king of Assyria and his army, and the people of Judah.

**Scripture Setting:** Parallel account, 2 Kings 21: 1-16. The chastening of the Lord, Psa. 94:12, Heb. 12:5-11. God's pardon, Micah 7:18-20. Parable of the prodigal son, Luke 15:11-24.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** It is sad to think of so bad a son as Manasseh to so good a father as Hezekiah. Probably his evil and idolatrous asso-

ciations explain it. He undid what his father had done. He made the whole land sinful and idolatrous. His evil example was easily followed, just because he was the king. He was no half-and-half character, however; he went the full length of his sinful course. He put an idol in the very temple, and burnt his own children in sacrifice to his hideous gods. His repentance under punishment is the best we know about him, and God's mercy in forgiving such a sinner is wonderful.

### WICKEDNESS WIDE OPEN.

**Point of Contact.** Sometimes in our towns and cities mayors and councilmen are elected on what is known as "the wide open policy." Then the saloon keepers and gamblers and grafters, and the keepers of vile resorts rejoice, for they know that they will not be molested. Having the authorities on their side they sin openly, boldly, and brazenly. It is wonderful how terribly wicked such a place may become in a short time.

In Judah the idolaters rejoiced when the king came over to their side, and helped them. They threw Jerusalem open to the worst forms of idol worship, and the cruelties and superstitions and vileness that accompany such worship. The city and nation were wide open to wickedness.

**Manasseh the Idolater.** It is hard to realize that the son of Hezekiah could have been so abandoned to idolatry as Manasseh was. The explanation may be that he was a mere child, and that he came under the influence of idolatrous teachers, and of a party of idolaters that had lingered all through the reign of his father. It was the company he kept that led to his undoing.

His evil, it is said, was "like unto the abominations of the heathen." That is the severest thing the writer of Chronicles could say. He knew nothing worse than the things the heathen did, just as missionaries today tell us that there can be nothing worse than the things that are done in the name of religion by the worshippers of idols in such lands as Africa and India and China. Things which in our land are done secretly and in shame, and against which we make severe

laws, idolaters do openly, and without shame, and as a part of their worship. So the holy heart of the Hebrew writer, revolting against it all, used the strong word "abominations."

Manasseh rebuilt the images and altars of Baal and Ashtoreth that his father had destroyed, and the groves and the high places were reopened to the vile songs and dances of the idolaters. Still worse, he brought in new forms of idolatry. He set the example to his people of the worship of Moloch, the ancient Canaanite god, a human figure with a bull's head and horns, and outstretched arms, into which children were placed that they might roll down into the red-hot furnace over which the idol stood. He introduced also Sabaism or star worship. He worshiped all the host of heaven. Within the temple courts he built altars to the stars of the Zodiac, and images of horses and chariots dedicated to the sun. In the seventh chapter of Jeremiah we have a description of sun and star worship in the cities of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. "The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings to other gods, that they may provoke me to anger."

With star worship there were connected all the superstitions of astrology. They imagined that the sun and moon and stars controlled the earth and the destinies of men. The planets especially, by their rising and setting, and their peculiar colors, revealed the fate of people and nations. They wore trinkets called amulets, in which they

thought the power of some special star was centered, and they imagined that it would protect them from harm, and make them fortunate. They borrowed this species of idolatry from Assyria, and there was no end to its superstitions. They built altars to the host of heaven, and offered sacrifices, and saluted the sun by kissing their hands to him. In short, Manasseh and his people hesitated at nothing in the way of idolatry. They worshipped every god that fancy suggested or superstition dictated, and they filled the land with vileness till "the whole head was sick, and the whole heart was faint."

**Manasseh a Prisoner.** Could such conditions go on forever? Would the holy God of Israel permit them to continue? Must there not come a day of reckoning to such a king and people? There is a maxim which says, "it is a long lane which has no turn." Though the reign of Manasseh was the longest of any of the kings of Judah it was not all smooth and straight. There was a sad and shameful turn in it. He gave no heed to the warnings of the prophets, and there is an indication in the book of II Kings, Ch. 21, that he mercilessly killed the Jehovah worshippers who opposed him, for it is said, "Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to the other."

At last the punishment came. We do not know the exact date, but we are told that, "Jehovah brought upon them the hosts of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh in chains, and 'drove rings through his lips,' and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon." Thus the Lord called a halt to the mad king.

And there in chains and loneliness, like the prodigal son among the swine, he came to himself. He thought, and repented, and prayed to God. "He humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers." Thus the sadness and shame of the chains and prison walls were turned into spiritual benediction and reformation and hope.

It is interesting to note that recent excavations in Gezer, an ancient city in the western part of Palestine, has brought to light two deeds to land made in the time of Manasseh. The conveyance was made by a notary with an Assyrian name, thus

indicating the power and influence of the Assyrians at that time.

**Manasseh the Penitent.** Manasseh remained "a penitent and a patriot." He sought to correct the evil that he had done. Bravely he took away the strange gods, and cast their images out of the temple and city, and restored the altar of Jehovah, and commanded the people to worship God.

It is sad to know that there were some things that the penitent king could not undo. He could not remove the stain of idolatry. He could not bring back the children he had burnt on the altars of Moloch. He could not forget entirely his terrible days.

The historian tells us that God heard the prayers of the penitent king, and was entreated of him, and "brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom." It is wonderful that God would forgive one so abandoned to idolatry and all its shameful deeds, and who had done so much to degrade the people. But the Heavenly Father's mercy is great toward all who turn to him in sorrow and reformation. Jesus teaches us that in His prayer on the cross, when He cried out, asking the Father to forgive those who were mocking and crucifying Him.

Whittier puts it beautifully when he says of Christ,

"Through all depths of sin and loss  
Drops the plummet of Thy 'cross;  
Never yet abyss was found  
Deeper than that cross could sound."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Would it have been possible for the young king to have so completely committed the nation to idolatry if there had not been a strong party in favor of it? 2. What were some of the moral objections to the worship of idols? 3. Name the leading idols of the Manasseh cult. 4. What is the effect on a nation of a pure and noble religion? Of an impure and idolatrous one? 5. Is it better not to "sow wild oats," or to sow them and repent when the reaping time comes?

**Practical Thoughts.** Deep wounds heal with a scar. Shameful sins may be repented of, but they leave ugly marks in the life and memory. It was brave, and even heroic, in Manasseh to turn squarely around; to break with his old party and companions; to seek new associates; and in every way live a new life. In comparison with a life of mistakes and corrections, how admirable was the life of that noble prince, Gustavus Adolphus, whose youthful prayer was, "God grant me so to live that I may ever live with Christ, and on earth may never blush for my own deeds."

DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



And Hilkiah answered and said to Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah



to  
Shaphan.  
And  
Shaphan



and brought the king word back again, saying, All that was committed to thy

they do it. And they have gathered together the money that was found in the house of the



Lord, and have delivered it into the hands of the overseers, and to the hand of the



Then Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiah the priest hath given me a book. And Shaphan



And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the law, that





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II CHRONICLES 34:14-28.

**Prayer:** Our Heavenly Father, Wilt Thou help us to thank Thee heartily for the struggles of the past by which truth has been brought to us. May we treasure in memory as Thy book does in history the names of prophets and priests and kings who fought for Thy holy name, and for Thy pure worship, and who gained victories over unholy idols and unclean altars. We thank Thee for the great teachers who prepared the way for greater

ones, and most of all for Christ, the Prophet, Priest and King above all others. In His name. Amen.

"Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!  
Star of eternity! The only star  
By which the bark of man could navigate  
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss  
Securely."  
—Pollok.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Reign of Josiah, 639 to 608 B. C. Finding of the book of the law, about 621 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Josiah the king, Hilkiah the priest, Shaphan the scribe, Ahikam, Abdon, Asaiah, Huldah the prophetess, and the elders and people of Judah and Jerusalem.

**Scripture Setting:** Idolatrous conditions in Judah at the accession of Josiah, 2 Chron. 33. Prophetic description, Jer. 2. Punishment threatened, Zeph. 1. Blessings and curses of the law, Deut. 28:1-19. Psalm celebrating the blessings of the law of the Lord, 119.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The finding of this "book of the law of the Lord" was providential.

It was just what the king and the nation needed, and the Lord answered their need.

The real goodness of the king's heart is shown in his reverence for this book, and in the sorrow and reformation it caused him. Hardened hearts do not heed the word of God so readily.

Many scholars think the book found was the book we know as Deuteronomy. This is one of the most spiritual books in the Old Testament, and one of the most eloquent. Our Saviour often quoted from it.

A life or a nation guided by the teaching of such a book cannot go wrong.

### A BRAVE KING AND A GOOD BOOK.

**Point of Contact.** An African prince, who was sent from an Ethiopian court on an embassy with costly presents to Queen Victoria, requested that her majesty would tell him the secret of England's greatness and glory. The queen handed him a beautifully bound copy of the Bible and said, "Tell your king that this is the secret of England's greatness." Just so it was Luther's Bible that made Germany great, and America's Bible that has made America great, and the Bible of the Hebrews that made them the greatest people in moral and spiritual ways of the ancient world.

"I have found the book of the law of the Lord." These simple words contain a startling announcement. Hilkiah the priest and Shaphan the scribe were engaged, under the command of Josiah, in repairing the temple. Hezekiah had cleansed the temple but it had not been repaired since the days of Joash, fully two centuries and a quarter before. It must have appeared weather-beaten and broken, and Josiah in his zeal for the worship of Jehovah had determined to repair it.

One good thing often leads to another. During the dark and dreadful times of the idolatrous kings the law of the Lord had been forgotten, and the temple worship corrupted. It may be that Manasseh had destroyed all the copies of the law that he could find, for even the priests and prophets were without Bibles, as we should say. It was while making the repairs that Hilkiah found the "book of the law of the Lord given by Moses."

Scholars think that this was the book we know as Deuteronomy, though the roll that Hilkiah found may have included other parts of the Old Testament. "No work of literature that has ever appeared has produced a greater sensation than this. It was read before the king, and he rent his clothes as he listened; a thrill of horror went through the nation at the denunciations of idolatry coming to light right in the midst of their idolatry."

**A Scene in the Palace.** The king sits on his throne, and the scribe Shaphan stands before him and unrolls the parchment leaves of a book dusty and yellow from long neglect. Ah! There it was indeed! the book that his aged men had told him of, but that he had not expected ever to see. He touches it with reverence, and curiously scans its ancient pages. Then he listens while the scribe reads, and if we can see in imagination what the king must have seen we shall not be surprised that he was mightily moved, and that he arose and rent his robes. There is in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth chapters of Deuteronomy the story of a recital of blessings and curses that is beautiful and terrible. Six tribes stood on mount Gerizim to pronounce blessings on the people if they would keep the law of the Lord; and just across the valley on mount Ebal stood the other six tribes to pronounce curses on the people if they would not keep the law. And there they stood, a great chorus of thousands upon thousands of voices pronouncing blessings,



and other thousands responding with curses. It was in this way that the majesty of the honored law was set forth, and the terrors of the violated law. And the king felt it as a king should who really loved his people.

In addition to all this king Josiah could recall some dreadful history that helped to make those curses more threatening to him. Just about a hundred years before his time Samaria had been destroyed by the Assyrians, and the people carried away into slavery. And in the days of his great-grandfather, Hezekiah, had not Sennacherib taken many cities of Judah, and had he not threatened Jerusalem? And his grandfather, Manasseh, had he not been a captive in Babylon? The king knew that the sins of his nation and the curses of the law were not to be taken lightly.

### The Written Word and the Spoken Word.

King Josiah, thoroughly aroused by the reading of the law, sent at once to inquire of the nearest prophet what to do. This prophet was a woman named Huldah, who lived in the second quarter of the city.

Her answer to the king's messengers was a burning denunciation of idolatry, and prediction that the curses of the law should be fulfilled on the city and the people. For the sinful nation there was no hope. But to the king himself she sent a message of comfort because his heart was tender, and he had mourned for the sins of the people. She promised him that he should not see the evil that was to come on the nation, that he should die in peace and be buried with his fathers.

**The King's Best Gift to His People.** King Josiah did the best thing for his people when he brought the book of the law to them. At his command they gathered together, elders, priests, Levites, and all the people in the courts of the temple, and he "read all the words of the book of the covenant to them." That was a great gathering, and the beginning of a better time for the nation. The king led the people, "great and small," in a promise to God that they would keep His law, and as long as he lived they did not depart from it. To Josiah and his people that new-found law was state constitution and prayer-book, all in one. It was better for them than wealth or victory. For all future time this book held the respect and love of the Hebrew people, and helped to make them great and honored. Pious Israelites quoted chapters from it in their daily devotions, and our Lord was familiar with it.

It requires something more than olive orchards and vineyards and fields of wheat and flocks and herds and gold and silver to make a great nation. There must be moral and spiritual strength, and the Bible is the best book in the world to build

such strength. "Our country," said Walt Whitman, "is made up of prairies and muscle and Rocky Mountains." But the poet Sidney Lanier replied in a burst of fine indignation, "Mr. Whitman, you cannot make a republic of prairies and muscle and Rocky Mountains. Republics are made of spirit." The Bible is the book that ministers to spirit, and therefore it makes great nations.

### The King's wise Policy for his People.

King Josiah made a covenant before the Lord to keep his commandments with all his heart. In doing this he turned back not to the example of his fathers who had sinned, but to the older example of those great Hebrews who were faithful, such as Moses and Joshua and David and the good king Asa. The fact of a covenant with God is one of the greatest features of the history of that wonderful people. No other nation had any such thought about their gods, or any such relation with them.

To keep the agreement with God was wise because it was right, and when Josiah "caused the people to stand to it" he entered on a policy better by far than an alliance with Egypt or Babylon or any idol-worshipping nation. An alliance with the Lord was religiously right, but it was also politically safe. Oliver Cromwell felt that he also had a covenant with God. He was a man of prayer, and his soldiers were known as "the praying Ironsides," and they were as mighty in battle as they were earnest in prayer.

"I raised such men," said Cromwell, "as had the fear of God before them, and had some conscience of what they did; and from that day forward I must say to you they were never beaten." \* \* \* The issue of the whole war lay in that word. It lay with 'such men as had some conscience in what they did.'"

**Quiz and Study.** What great king was the pattern of goodness according to the writer of Chronicles? 2. Is it easy for a king to reform the religion of his people, or does it require long and earnest and brave effort? 3. Which was the more precious, the book or the money that Hilkiah found in the treasury? 4. Can there be a great and happy nation without true teachers and true teaching? 5. What is the greatest and best book in the world, and who are its teachers?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The people of Judah would have been better off if they had not lost their Bible. Too many of us practically lose our Bibles by allowing them to become dust-covered; or we bury them under a pile of magazines and newspapers; or in the rush of business and professional life we forget them entirely. We need to keep our Bibles wide open, close to the very throne of our lives.

2. Like the open-hearted king of Judah, we should let the Bible right into our souls. A man who was reading the New Testament said to his wife, "Wife, if this book is true, I am a sinner." Later he said, "Wife, if this book is true I am lost." Reading still further he at last said, "Wife, if this book is true I may be saved."

3. The king had the book before his people. We may pray for and give to the missionaries and the great Bible societies as they seek to give this book to India and China and Japan and Africa and the world.

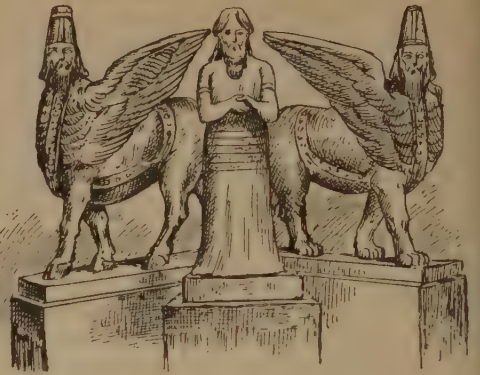
DEAN W. J. LHAMON.



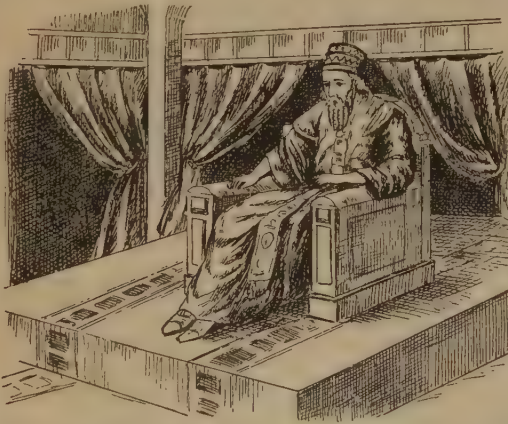
Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the



of the  
Lord, which  
Nebuchad-  
nezzar  
had brought  
forth out of  
Jerusalem,  
and had put  
them in the  
house of his



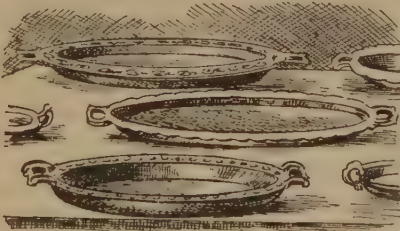
Even those did Cyrus



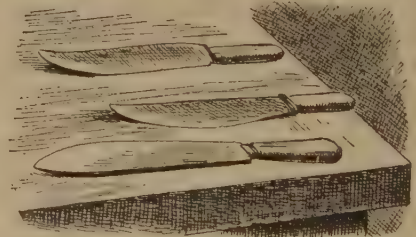
of  
Persia  
bring  
forth  
by the  
hand of  
Mithre-  
dath the



and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. And this is the number of them: thirty



of gold, a  
thousand  
chargers of  
silver, nine  
and twenty



Thirty



of gold,  
silver basons  
of a second  
sort four  
hundred  
and ten,  
and other



a thousand. All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EZRA 1:7-11.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we, as we study this part of Thy Word, appreciate deeply Thy great goodness in opening the way by which we may escape from the captivity of sin. May we look unto Thee as

our Deliverer. May none of us remain in captivity, but may we go forth in faith to return to our own country, to our home in our Father's house. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 536. Places, Babylon and Jerusalem. **Persons,** Cyrus, the chief fathers of Judah and Benjamin, Sheshbazzar prince of Judah, and Mithredath the treasurer of Cyrus.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Captivity. A useful captive, 2 Kings 5:2. Righteousness among captives, Dan. 2:25. Good news to captives, Jer. 29:20. Lamentations in captivity, Psa. 137. Prayer of captives, Psa. 126:1-4. Servants of sin, John 8:35. Ransomed of the Lord, Isa. 35:10;

51:11. Captives of Christ, 2 Cor. 10:5. God and captives, Deut. 30:3; Psa. 14:7; 53:6; 85:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The position of the Jews in Babylon had been due to disobedience and sin. 1. The Lord accepted their repentance and offered them a new opportunity as a people. 2. The love of their country had been kept alive, and thus there remained a strong motive for their return. 3. Sin swept away their nationality, but had not destroyed the possibility of God's restoring it.

### GOING BACK TO THE OLD HOME.

It was a joyous time for a people who had been long in captivity to another nation. Through how many days and weeks, months and years they had yearned for the beloved home-country. They had hung their harps on the willows and wept by the waters of Babylon because of enforced absence from their native land. Now God had compassion on them and the way was being opened for their return. How they smiled and laughed and wept for joy. It was too good to be true, but it was true. And men, women and children of the Jews rejoiced and talked and planned and thrilled with delightful expectation.

**A Wonderful History.** Their fathers had for ages rejoiced in the possession of the land given them of God. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had lived in it before the years of bondage in Egypt. Then had come the wonderful departure of the host of freed slaves, their journey through the Red Sea and the wilderness. What a mighty conquest was that when Israel, under the Divine leadership, had gone up against the hosts of the native heathen of Palestine. How wonderfully they had been enabled to wrest from them "the land flowing with milk and honey." Having overcome the Hivites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the beautiful, rich land became theirs.

What a glorious history had been theirs for many ages! There had risen their mighty prophets, their great kings. There they had prospered and grown great among the nations. There they had built cities and planted vineyards and cultivated orchards and fields. Their cattle and their sheep had covered the plains and the hills. Their chil-

dren had flourished in that happy land. David had risen and had subdued all enemies. Solomon had come in his glory and had built the Temple and adorned the city of Jerusalem. His fame had been known everywhere. Their prophets had spoken in the name of God and those splendid men had taught the people the Divine truth. It had been a glorious history. No men and women ever loved a country more deeply, more passionately than they had loved their own land.

**Glory Changed to Shame.** But a dread foreign foe had come, with vast armies, with irresistible weapons of war. The plains of Palestine had swarmed with the hosts of the Chaldeans. The battering rams of Nebuchadnezzar had pounded at the walls of Jerusalem. Their capital city had been taken. Their soldiers had been defeated. The fierce warriors of Babylon had driven the Jews, men, women and children, like sheep before them, away and away, over many miles, across rivers and plains, to be captives in the huge city of Babylon, a city whose very name had grown to be terrible in the ears of all other nations.

There in Babylon they were made to serve their masters. They had a certain amount of liberty; they were not prisoners in dungeons; they were not bound in iron. Some of them even succeeded in business and became rich in that land. They lived in a very great city and in a very fertile and rich country. But it was not their country. The Babylonians were not their people. The Jews were aliens among foreigners. They were looked upon and treated as inferiors, even when they were not actual slaves.

What a contrast to the ancient glory of

Jerusalem. Now its walls were in ruins. The temple was desolate. The fields were uncultivated. So the Jews were sad. When the native Babylonians bade them sing their old songs of Zion and play upon their harps, they hung the musical instruments on the sad willows and wept, saying, "How can we sing the songs of Zion in a strange land." So they wept for their home. Each generation of children that grew up during that long captivity heard of all that had occurred. They were told of the ancient glory of their own people. They heard how their fathers had been carried away from a beautiful, rich country of their own. They were not permitted to forget, for all hoped that some day there would be a return.

**New Masters.** Now after Nebuchadnezzar died, others succeeded him. Then another nation came into power. Media and Persia started upon their conquests. Babylon was taken by Darius the Mede, and after a while Cyrus, the king of the Persians, extended his power almost everywhere. Then there was shown to this mighty monarch, Cyrus, a prophecy of the Jews which foretold that Cyrus would be the deliverer of the Jews and would send them back safely to their own country. Cyrus was deeply impressed by this mention of his own name in a writing of one of the prophets of the Lord. He declared he would carry out that design; give the Jews the privilege of going back to their own country and help them to accomplish that end.

Cyrus issued a royal decree to that effect. He declared that the Lord had given him all the kingdoms of the earth and had appointed him to build God an house at Jerusalem. He called upon any of the Jews who wished to do so to go up to Jerusalem and declared that God would be with such. He commanded that those who would not go should help those who returned, with silver and gold, with goods and beasts, as freewill offerings for the house of God, to be rebuilt at Jerusalem.

**Good News.** Gladly at that glorious announcement did many of the Jews make ready for departure. The chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites rose up for this journey. All those around them gave of their wealth willingly. Cyrus also commanded that the precious and holy vessels that had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar from the temple, and which had been placed in the heathen temples in Babylon, should now be brought forth and given to the Jews to take

back, to fit up the new temple when it should be erected. The treasurer of king Cyrus, named Mithredath, brought all these forth, about five thousand four hundred vessels of gold and silver, and gave them to Sheshbazzar, who was a prince of Judah.

So under the protection of the decree of Cyrus, with many gifts in their hands and with the vessels of the Lord's house restored to them, a host of the Jews set forth. There were more than forty-two thousands of the Jews, besides more than seven thousand servants and maids, and two hundred singing men and women. They had many horses and mules and camels and asses. They set off on that happy, longed-for journey of return to that beloved country from which their fathers had been carried many years before.

Doubtless there were many hardships on the way. It was a long journey; they had to endure many discomforts, but they were so overjoyed by the fact that they were actually on the road to their own country, they did not mind them. On and on they went, day after day, mile after mile. At last they drew near to the borders of that country which had been that of their race. With what eager eyes they caught their first glimpses of it. What joy welled up in their hearts at the prospect. Soon their feet touched their own soil. They were back again, returned from the dreadful captivity. They were a free people once more, in possession of their own land.

Have you ever owned homing pigeons? If so, or if you have watched the flights of such as have belonged to others, you know that when a pigeon of this species is carried far away and is then released he rises rapidly high in the air, circles around for a while, and then speeds straight toward his native cote. So should we turn from the captivity of sin and flee to our Heavenly Father for peace and liberty.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Sin, like Babylon, is a state of captivity. It is worse, indeed, than any bodily slavery. 2. God's gracious, loving purpose is to deliver those who are in bondage to evil. 3. Christ brings to us the only real freedom. All else is bondage. The Christian is the only truly free person. 4. As Cyrus permitted the Jews to go back and take possession once more of their own country, so God welcomes us from our sins into His favor and love. 5. The history tells us that some of the Jews did not return to Palestine, but continued in Babylon permanently. They were in love with it and were satisfied. It is pathetic to think of such men, from whose hearts the love of country had died out. But even that is a small thing beside the sinner who refuses to go back to his Father's House. 6. It is a very important truth that the Jews were made better by their captivity. They had been influenced by the idolatrous nations before they were carried away. The prophets had warned constantly against these demoralizing tendencies. But after their long experiences in a heathen land, and the bitterness they had passed through, there is evidence that the Jews never again departed from the worship of God. Much of the dross had been burned out of them in the furnace of captivity.



And when the builders



of the temple of the Lord, they set the priests in their apparel with



and the Levites the sons of Asaph with



to praise the Lord, after the ordinance of David king of Israel. And they



together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people

with a great shout, when they praised the Lord,



because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. But many of the



priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were

that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EZRA 3:8 TO 4:3.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that it is given to us also to have our share in the rebuilding of Thy kingdom wherever it has suffered from the power of evil. Help us to give ourselves with great joy and earnestness to this holy work. When we have come to the close of our earthly lives, may we have, by Thy grace, accomplished something toward this glorious end. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"Nor heeds the sceptic's puny hands,  
While near the school the church-spire stands;  
Nor fears the blinded bigot's rule  
While near the church-spire stands the school."  
—Whittier.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 536 to 516. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jeshua, Zerubbabel, priests, Levites, Jewish people, Cyrus, Tatnai the governor, the Cutheans, Darius the son of Hystaspes.

**Scripture Setting:** Temple Worship. Toward the temple, Psa. 5:7. Enquiring in temple, Psa. 27:4. Thoughts in the temple, Psa. 48:9. Defiling of, Psa. 79:1. Voice of God in, Isa. 66:6. Temple without God, Hosea, 8:14. The Lord present in, Hab. 2:20. Jesus in the temple, Matt. 21:12-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The remarkable aspects of this rebuilding of the temple are that a

foreign king, Cyrus, took a deep interest in it; the restoration of the sacred vessels that had been plundered from the former temple, the long journey of the returning Jews largely for the purpose of rebuilding the sacred edifice, and the removal of great and numerous difficulties that were in the way. 1. The help of God to this end was evident throughout. 2. The people, under Divine guidance, wrought willingly and persistently. 3. The foes of the movement were defeated in their plottings. 4. The whole history shows how believers are aided in their work.

## BUILDING THE SECOND TEMPLE.

The idea of building and rebuilding is most attractive. It applies to character and life, to society and institutions as well as to material edifices. The young person has his life and character to build. He is to take part also in the laying of foundations and the rearing of walls in the institutions around him. Not only that, but he is to have a share in the rebuilding of whatever good or useful organizations have decayed or have been impaired from any cause. It is a rare opportunity and should awaken enthusiasm in every youthful heart.

**The First Temple.** Now we are to consider the rebuilding of the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. That temple had been one of the most glorious structures ever erected on the earth. It had long been planned and prepared for. While David was king he had collected gold and silver, iron and wood for this purpose. When Solomon came to the throne the actual work was begun and carried forward. Experts had been secured from neighboring kingdoms, the best architects, the most skilful workers in metals, wood and stone. At last the splendid temple stood completed on Mount Zion. It was dedicated with elaborate ceremonies in the presence of vast multitudes. For many years it was the center of worship for the children of Israel. Then came foreign invaders, who captured the city and destroyed the temple.

**Hindrances.** There are always foes, material or spiritual, ready at hand to overthrow the best that good men can establish. Even the temple of Jehovah was not secure from these. Neither is anything else. Good character, noble reputation, useful influence,

the best institutions, all have foes. We must ever be on our guard to defend the good against the evil.

At last, the longings of Israel for the restoration of the temple are to have the beginnings of their fulfillment. Like other good works, however, this is to have its hindrances and delays. Nothing goes forward in this world without encountering difficulties. We must expect the difficulties and be ready to meet them, and persevere in spite of them. Cyrus had been deeply impressed by the prophecy which foretold that he should send back the Israelites to their own land and that he should build a house to the true God. Many of the Jews had gone back. He had restored to them the holy vessels of the temple which had been taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and called upon the people to supply them with gold and silver.

There was a king who was very ambitious that his son should become a leader of men, and in order to impress upon him the possibilities that were in him, he used frequently to stand by him and lay his hands on the youth's head and say with deep feeling, "You can. You can. You can." This experience so influenced the young man to effort that he led an energetic life and made a profound impression upon his age. What every young person needs is to be impressed with this thought, "I can do something for God. I can help in the rebuilding of His kingdom. I can. I can."

So, in the seventh month, the people of Israel gathered in Jerusalem. The city presented a great contrast to what it had once been. Now the walls were cast down, and the temple was a pile of rubbish. But the people were thankful for their return, for permission from Cyrus to restore what had



been thrown down, and thankful for means by which to do this work. So, in spite of all, it was a joyous occasion.

**Worship First.** Everything has to have a beginning; usually a small one. A great deal was to be done and it would take a long time, but the people were ready to begin in an humble way. Though it would be years before the temple could be finished, they could speedily have an altar. The altar, under the Jewish dispensation, was really the center of their worship. It was the place where the sacrifices were made, and the offerings of animals to be slain stood for the giving by the people of themselves to God. Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel and his brethren builded the altar. Among the rubbish they found parts of the ancient altar. With reverent hands they cleared a space, and set up the parts as nearly as possible like what they had been before. Again a sacrifice was laid thereon and again the smoke ascended. The people reverently entered into the spirit of the hour, pledging themselves as a spiritual offering unto God.

This being the time of the Feast of Tabernacles and a great multitude present, they celebrated that event. It was a memorial of the days when their ancestors dwelt in tents. They were accustomed to erect booths made from branches of trees and to live in these during the feast days. Thus they commemorated one of their great annual feasts, and with the daily offerings laid on the altar they began to restore their ancient customs. At once also masons and carpenters were employed and arrangements were made with men of Tyre and Zidon to bring cedar trees from Lebanon for the work when it should begin.

Once two men were passing along a street of a large city when they came to a spot where a huge but old building was being torn down. The air was filled with dust; the sound of falling stones and timbers rose above the noise of traffic. The one man said, "How distressing it is to see so much waste. Think of the labor that went into the first erection of all that. Now it is but rubbish." "You are wrong," said the other. "It is glorious. You should think of what is to take its place. Nothing is grander than the rebuilding of something better, larger, finer, more useful." This is true. A large part of our work in life is this very rebuilding; putting up what has been taken down.

**Beginning to Build.** It was not until the second month of the second year that the foundations of the temple were ready. Then the leaders and the priests gathered, with the people. The great stones were in place. So much had been accomplished. Now the

priests, in their robes and with trumpets in their hands, and the procession of the Levites and singers with their cymbals broke forth in praise to God. They sang by courses in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, "because He is good, for His mercy endureth forever toward Israel." All the people shouted. Among those present were some aged men who remembered the first temple, and now they were stirred to tears of mingled sadness and joy.

**Delayed.** It seemed that all would be well and that the great work would advance steadily. But enemies interfered. It appears that long before this an Assyrian king named Shalmanezzer had conquered Samaria, and after a custom of those days had transplanted many people from Persia and Media as colonists, and these were known as the Cutheans. These and other neighboring people did not wish the Jews to come back to their own land nor to rebuild their cities. So they bribed certain of the officers of Cyrus to delay the work. Cyrus himself was busy with his wars and knew nothing of all this. Year after year the Jews were interfered with and made little progress. The Cutheans sent letters to several kings, who succeeded each other, accusing the Jews of being a rebellious people, and so the work was hindered. Artaxerxes, having received such a letter, sent in haste to Jerusalem and compelled the cessation of the work of building. When the next Darius, who was the son of Hystaspes, came to the throne, Zerubbabel and Jeshua ventured to begin again. The Assyrian governor to the west of the Euphrates heard of this, and bade them give their authority for what they were doing. Yet they persevered. Then the governor sent a letter to Darius stating that the Jews had answered him that they had authority from Cyrus to rebuild their temple and city. Darius upon this had search made among the records of his kingdom and found the decree of Cyrus. He then issued his own decree, granting permission to the Jews to go forward with their work.

**Completed.** Great was the joy in all hearts when at last this news came to them. The governor sent word speedily that Darius was favorable to their enterprise and that no man dared interfere more with them. Now they set to work in earnest and went on without interruption, until the walls had risen and the structure was crowned with its roof and all its appropriate fittings.

**Practical Truths.** 1. A religious enterprise, conducted in the right spirit, may be assured of God's supervision, leadership and help. 2. Out of the most distressing conditions, it is always possible to reestablish what is good. 3. Seasons of spiritual indifference are always followed, in due time, by revived interest and progress. 4. Every one of us, in our degree and place, can have part in rebuilding the broken places. 5. The demands on our time for work for God are as great and pressing as when the Jews rebuilt their temple. To the superficial observer, all may seem to be moving onward satisfactorily. But there is much to be done, and every worker is needed. Let us do our part. 6. "The family altar should be set up first in every family and the service of worship should be regular day by day." 7. "Worship is more important than the house in which it is offered."

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# DEDICATING THE TEMPLE

And the children of Israel, the priests, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the



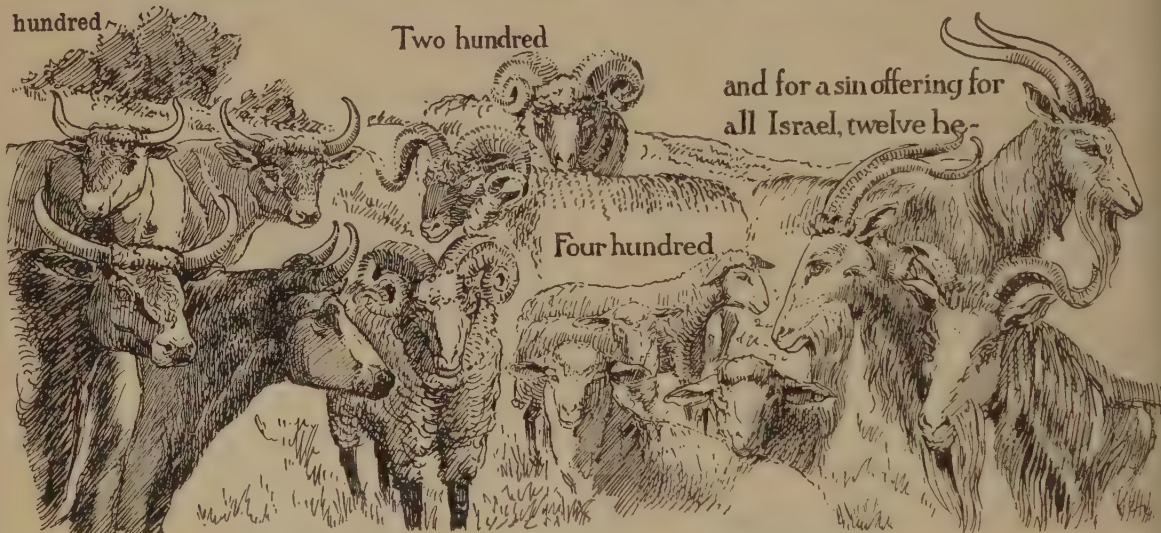
kept the dedication of this house of God with joy, And offered at the dedication of this house of God an

hundred

Two hundred

and for a sin offering for all Israel, twelve he-

Four hundred



according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And they set the



in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the

service of God, which is at Jerusalem; as it is written in the book



of Moses. And the children of the captivity kept the

upon the fourteenth day of the first month.



# DEDICATING THE TEMPLE.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EZRA 6:16-22.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we be interested always in Thy work, and give Thee our hearts while we worship in the temples dedicated to Thy holy name. Teach us reverence for Thy house, and may Thy house ever be to us a place in which we draw nearer to Thee. In Christ's name. Amen.

I love Thy church, O God:  
Her walls before Thee stand,  
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,  
And graven on Thy hand.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 516. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, priests, Levites and people.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Spiritual Bearings of the Temple. Witness against sin from the temple, Micah 1:2. Temples without God, Hosea, 8:14. The lame in, Matt. 21:14. Buying and selling in, Mark 11:15. Pharisee and publican in, Luke 18:10. Gate of, Acts 3:10. Swearing by, Matt. 23:16. God present everywhere, Acts 7:48. Man a temple, 1 Cor. 6:19. Spiritual temple, Ephes. 2:21. A pillar in, Rev. 3:12. No temple in Heaven, Rev. 21:22. God and Christ the Temple, Rev. 21:22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This dedication of

the temple was characterized by the joy and enthusiasm of the leaders and of the people, by a feast of rejoicing, by the reestablishment of their religious ceremonies, by the consecration of priests and people anew to God, by the welcome given to such as had fallen into heathen ways, but repented and returned. 1. The temple became dearer to them than before. 2. It became the realized center of national and spiritual life. 3. The welcome to such as had fallen into sin became from that time onward a more marked feature of Jewish religious life. 4. So restored blessings may become dearer to us, after our experience of their loss.

## A NEW CHURCH HOME SET APART TO GOD.

It is a beautiful act to dedicate, to set apart for God, or for any holy or good uses, a person, a building, or a portion of time. It has served many a noble purpose in the world so to do. All of us who do what we should do, dedicate ourselves to God. We can say, "This body shall be used only for good; this mind shall be consecrated to good; my time and talents and opportunities shall all be used for the best purposes."

**Set Apart.** Certain buildings are set apart for educational ends, some for art, some for business, some for homes, and then they are supposed to be used only for such ends. Sometimes elaborate ceremonies are employed in connection with the completion of art buildings, or great public structures. But especially are the churches set apart with religious ceremonies for the worship of God. And in this custom we follow the precedent of the ancient Jews who, with all the impressiveness of their ceremonies, proclaimed that the temple was given to God. The word itself is from a Latin one which means "to give." The dedication of the temple was the giving of it to God, for His worship.

The ceremonies with which this was done were used as an expression of the hearts and minds of the givers. In themselves they had no intrinsic worth; ceremonies do not change a material fact, a building, nor the character of a person. But they may be a very beautiful and valuable expression of the feeling of men and women and children. Ceremonies are nothing if used without sincere feeling and thought, but when full of affection and spirit they may be, and often are, of great

beauty and helpfulness. When the temple was thus dedicated it became a holy place to the people who built it for God. While to us an altar with a slain animal upon it, being consumed by fire, would mean little, to the ancient Jews it was a devout and reverent expression of gratitude to the Divine Being.

**A Happy Occasion.** The Feast of Dedication was kept with joy. It was twenty-one years since they began to rebuild the temple. That seemed to them a long time, since they had wrought under such very great difficulties. True, this temple was not so vast and splendid as that of Solomon, but it was the best they could erect since they were a small and still scattered people. It was a center of national and religious life and they were glad. They consecrated it not with a fast but with a feast. There are some sad things in their circumstances, but these they would forget, and they would rejoice in what they had. They would not spend the days comparing this temple with that of Solomon and lamenting over their calamities, but they would praise God for the good they enjoyed.

"On his humble shoemaker's bench, Carey laid the foundation of British Baptist Missions. John Newton found in his congregation an unfriended Scotch boy, whose soul was glowing with love to Christ; he took him to see John Thornton, one of those noble merchants whose wealth, whose piety and whose beneficence increase together. They educated him, and that boy became Claudius Buchanan, whose name India will bless when Clive and Hastings are forgotten. John Bunyan was a gift of poverty to the church. Zwingle came from an Alpine shepherd's cabin; Luther from a miner's cottage; some of the apostles from fishermen's huts." Such are some of the gifts which poverty

has dedicated to the service of Christ and the church.

Their worship was again according to their ancient customs. The regular order of priests was present. The Jews have always kept their genealogies with the greatest care, and they do so today. While they were in captivity in Babylon they preserved as much as possible of an orderly worship and of their national organization. So when they returned to their own land the succession of the priesthood was maintained. The offerings at this dedication were small compared to the days of Solomon, yet they were generous for this people at the time. Seven hundred victims were presented as a burnt offering. Twelve goats were sacrificed as a sin offering "for all Israel," one for each tribe.

With processions of priests, with trumpets and psalms, with prayers and shouts and sacrifices, the new temple was set apart for the worship of Jehovah.

**The Passover Kept.** Then on the fourteenth day of the month, the Passover was kept in celebration of the deliverance from Egypt. For seven days more they continued in their rejoicings, praising God.

By this dedication and by following it with the Passover, Israel again appropriately showed herself as the redeemed and favored people of the Lord. They felt themselves to be in covenant relation with Jehovah. At the same time they were beginning a new and glorious assurance of continuance and progress.

"The word 'temple' has as its root 'tem,' which signifies 'cut.' Templum means a portion 'cut off.' Its religious associations came in this manner: The Roman augurs, when they wished to observe the heavens, went forth with a sacred rod in their hands, and marked out with it a portion of the sky. Whatever passed within that portion was the subject of their augury, and no more. This was the 'templum,' the separated space, cut out of the blue heavens for sacred uses. Thus the word came to be applied to any enclosed spot which might be separated to sacred uses; to sanctuaries and houses of prayer. The fundamental idea is separation, the severing of a portion of the material universe for higher use and honor than the residue." So we can separate a portion of time, or a certain amount of money, or whatever we have of value, to give to God. When we enter God's house, we should realize that it is separated, "cut off" and devoted to spiritual things.

In preparation for this dedication, we are told that the priests and Levites purified themselves as one man, and they were all clean. This refers partly to the ceremonial cleansings, washing with water and the putting on of pure garments. But it also indicates that the men gave themselves anew in consecration of heart and life to God.

There was a noble readiness, a holy zeal on their part. We likewise should follow in their steps in this regard. Helping to build the church, joining in its worship, is not enough, but we should pray that our hearts and lives be cleansed from all iniquity.

An incident is related of a missionary and a proud and powerful Indian chief. The chief was convicted of sin. Trembling under a sense of guilt, he approached the missionary and proffered his belt of wampum, to be freed from his crushing fears. "No," said the missionary, "Christ cannot accept such a sacrifice." The Indian departed, but soon returned, offering his rifle and the skins he had taken in hunting. "No," was the reply, "Christ cannot accept such a sacrifice." Again the Indian went away, but soon returned once more with a troubled conscience and offered his wigwam, wife, child, everything for peace and pardon. "No," was still the reply, "Christ cannot accept such a sacrifice." The chief seemed oppressed with surprise for a moment; then lifting up his tearful eyes to the face of the missionary, he cried out, "Here, Lord, take poor Indian, too."

**The Lost One Welcomed.** Another feature of this celebration was that such others as were willing to unite with them and purify themselves from heathen customs round were welcomed to the dedication and the feast. "And all such as had separated themselves unto them from the filthiness of the heathen of the land came." These were descendants of the Jews and Israelites who had remained in the land when the rest of the nation had been carried into captivity. These had intermarried with the heathen. Now they were welcomed if they would forsake communion with these people and seek communion with the Jewish congregation. It was one of the gracious opportunities of the restored Jews, as it is of every Christian church, to gather unto itself from the sinners around them such as were willing to follow the Lord.

In all this wonderful story of the return of Israel, the rebuilding and dedication of the temple of God, it is plain that God was actively present. He used men and nations for His purposes, but it was His work. Cyrus and the others were but instruments of God in carrying out His plans and purposes.

**Practical Truths.** We should be careful to revere the very edifices erected to God. While they are built of earthly materials, they are made sacred by being set apart to God. 2. The worship of God is the highest use of our best faculties. We should bring to the temple attentive minds, sincere hearts and pure lips. We should strive to find help for our souls in public worship and beware of mere formalism. 3. Remember we are to dedicate not only temples, but ourselves, our talents, our time, all to God. 4. We should form a habit of regular giving to the church and to all the work of God. 5. We all may have a part in hastening the building of the temple of God's kingdom in the earth.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# EZRA'S JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

Then I proclaimed a fast there, at the



of Ahava,  
that we might  
afflict ourselves  
before our God,  
to seek of him  
a right way for  
us, and for our



and for all our substance. For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of



to  
help us  
against  
the  
enemy  
in the  
way:  
because  
we had  
spoken  
unto the



saying, The hand of our  
God is upon all them for  
good that seek him; but,  
his power and his wrath  
is against all them that  
forsake him.\* \* Then we



of Ahava on the twelfth  
day of the first month,  
to go unto Jerusalem.  
and the hand of our God  
was upon us, and he  
delivered us from the  
hand of the enemy,  
and of such as



by  
the  
way  
And  
we



and abode there three days.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EZRA 8:15-32.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we, like Thy servant Ezra, be helpers in Thy work. Help Thou us that we may help others. Make us able to be leaders if this be Thy will in regard to us; if this be not best, make us wise as followers. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"One soul in panoply of Heaven  
Is stronger than their host;  
The cause which God befriends cannot  
Outnumbered be or lost."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 458. Place, Babylon, the lands between the Euphrates and Syria, and Jerusalem. Persons, Ezra, Artaxerxes, priests and followers.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Journeys. The king's decree, Ezra 7:11-26. The journey of the children of Israel, Exodus 13:20. Of Abraham from Ur, Gen. 11:31-12:1-8. Of Jacob and sons into Egypt, Gen. 46:1-34. Of Jesus, John 4:6. Of disciples, Matt. 10. Paul's journey to Damascus, Acts 9:3. Paul's missionary journeys, Acts. Of the master in the parable, Mark 13:34.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This was the expedition of an earnest religious reformer, who desired to turn his people from evil and destructive ways unto righteousness. 1. He had a commission from God to this end. 2. His manner of life and training had prepared him for this work. 3. He had won the esteem and confidence of the king, and so was able to carry on his mission with royal support and influence. 4. We should, in our degree, aim to be reformers of whatever is wrong around us.

### PREPARING FOR A LONG, PERILOUS JOURNEY.

When a leader is needed for the affairs of God's kingdom, God always brings forward the fitting person. There is always demand for laborers in the field of God's work, and He can and will use us if we lend ourselves willingly to His purposes. But in the great crises; in the most trying times, men and women of remarkable gifts are required, and God equips and commissions them for the duty. It appears that many years had passed since the large company of Jews had returned to their country from Babylon and had rebuilt the temple. Meanwhile many others had remained in Assyria; some of these were engaged in prosperous business enterprises and so were anchored in a foreign land. Perhaps some of them felt that by remaining where they were and by increasing wealth they could best help those of their countrymen who went back to the Holy Land. Others were priests and officers of the Jews and were needed by those who remained in Babylon as spiritual advisers and leaders.

**A True Patriot.** Among those still in Babylon was Ezra, whose name means "the helper," and he indeed proved to be a help to his people. He is declared to have been "a ready scribe in the law of Moses," a scribe of the words of the commandments of the Lord and of His statutes to Israel, "a scribe of the law of the God of heaven," a priest. "He was a man of Judah and was descended from Hilkiah the high priest in Josiah's reign. He was qualified for the work which he undertook, since "he had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." He was, in short, a learned and pious priest.

Some years before Lincoln was elected President he declared that it would require a very great man to lead the nation through the crisis which he saw approaching. When he had become President, the man to whom he had made this remark wrote reminding him of it and asking if he thought he was such a great man. He replied, "I am not such a man, but I have faith that God can make me to be such a man." We may not in ourselves be equal to the duties that come to us, but we are not to undertake them in our own strength. With God's help we become better, and indeed greater.

He had learned that the Jews in Palestine had fallen from the good ways in which they had begun, and his motive in making his journey was to bring about a religious reformation. It is wonderful how easily individuals and large bodies of people can slip back and down from right paths. There is a constant struggle between good and evil and society and individuals require always to be on their guard. Moreover, reformers, leaders with earnest convictions and pure lives and influence, are needed to stir the conscience and awaken people to their duty. Ezra felt called of God to set forth to revive religion and righteousness at Jerusalem.

**The King's Favor.** A new king had come to rule in Babylon, by name Artaxerxes Longimanus. We do not know how Ezra had grown in favor with that monarch, whether by some remarkable act, or on account of his learning and character, or on account of special influence with his own people, such as the king approved. We do know, however, that Ezra did stand exceedingly high in the opinion of Artaxerxes, and that the king granted his request to be permitted to return to his country and he issued a special letter to that effect. In it the king said, "I make a decree that all they of



the people of Israel, and of his priests and Levites, in my realm, which are minded of their own free will to go up to Jerusalem, go with thee." Ezra was authorized "to inquire concerning Judah and Jerusalem," to carry the silver and gold which the king was sending as an offering to God, also the free will offerings of the people. The king showed his remarkable faith in Ezra by writing, "And whatsoever more shall be needful for the house of thy God. . . . bestow it out of the king's treasure house." He ordered that all his treasurers westward of the Euphrates should do speedily whatever Ezra required of them "unto a hundred talents of silver, and to a hundred measures of wheat, and to a hundred baths of wine, and to a hundred baths of oil, and salt without prescribing how much." What confidence this heathen king had in his captive servant! The priests, singers and all who were to minister in the house of God were to be free of toil, tribute or custom. Ezra was also commissioned to appoint the judges and magistrates in the regions west of the Euphrates. He was authorized to execute judgment upon any who would not obey the law of God and of the king, even to death, banishment, confiscation of goods or imprisonment.

Napoleon said of the saying, "Man proposes, but God disposes," when it was quoted to him, "I propose and dispose also." But God overruled him and he was sent an exile to St. Helena. Ezra was wiser, and strove to see what the plan of God might be, and followed that. In our efforts to do good we should be wise and seek to learn God's plan and keep close to it.

**Joining the Caravan.** Thus commissioned and equipped Ezra read the king's letter to the Jews in Babylon, retaining the Epistle itself as too necessary to allow others to have. He made copies of the same and sent to all the Jews in that region. His countrymen were much pleased with the king's letter and many of those from outside Babylon came up to that city to join him in his journey. Altogether, there were gathered about Ezra, in the seventh year of the reign of Artaxerxes, seventeen hundred and fifty-four people, including priests, Levites, singers, porters and servants. This does not seem a large number, but we are to remember that it is not as simple a matter as it appears for people to leave their business, the homes they have made and to take wives and children, who may suffer from a long journey, and go to a far-away place even

when their hearts yearn for the home land. Doubtless, multitudes of Jews were much interested in Ezra's expedition, who found it would be too much of a hardship for them to join him.

**The Journey.** The journey itself occupied four months. On the west side of the Euphrates they gathered together, and stayed there three days, to fast and to pray for God's presence and care, for preservation from enemies and accidents. Ezra had been offered an escort of the horsemen of the king, but he told Artaxerxes that God would care for them and so declined the aid of soldiers. He knew well that God's protection was more important than any help men could give. He trusted utterly in the Divine power, and his course was justified.

**The End.** Now on and on, over that wide region between them and their sought-for destination the caravan moves day by day. When they encountered officers and agents of the king the letter Ezra bore, with the seal of Artaxerxes, gave them right of way. God uses the kings of the earth for His purposes, as well as the lowliest instruments. Here was a small company of captive Jews marching, unprotected by soldiery, through a strange country infested with robbers, but God was over them and kept them safe, and even the seal of a heathen king was made to aid them. So after four months of wearisome journey they came in sight of the city that had been the pride and joy of their fathers. How their hearts must have thrilled and the hardships of the journey faded from memory as they looked upon the city of which in captivity they had said, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." But they found many things to make their hearts sad in Zion—neglect and abuses that required time and tears to correct.

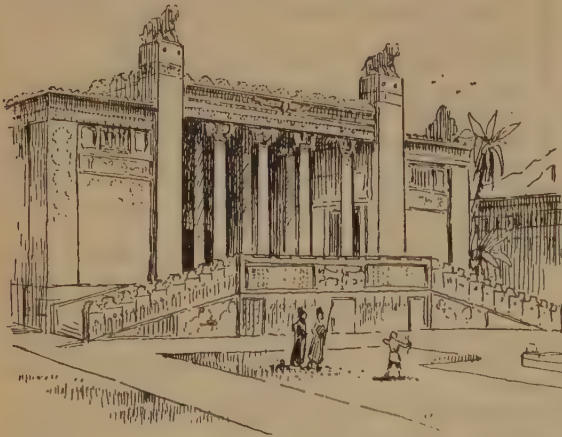
**Practical Truths.** 1. We should set out in faith upon the missions on which God sends us. 2. God can make even alien and hostile powers friendly to us, and cause them to serve good ends. 3. We should meet the critical times in the spirit of prayer. 4. As the Jews longed for Jerusalem, so Christians should desire the Kingdom of God to be established in the whole world. 5. Like Ezra, we are called upon to be loyal to the Word of God, whether in Babylon or in Jerusalem. 6. Ezra's good life had a profound effect upon the heathen king, and so loyalty to convictions and right counts everywhere and with all men. 7. Under the most adverse conditions we may be fitted for the service of God, as Ezra was when in captivity.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## NEHEMIAH'S PRAYER

The words of Nehemiah the son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Chisleu, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the



That  
Hanani,  
one of  
my  
brethren,  
came, he  
and certain



of Judah;  
and I  
asked them  
concerning  
the Jews that  
had escaped,  
which were  
left of the



and concerning  
Jerusalem.  
And they said  
unto me, The  
remnant that  
are left of the  
captivity there  
in the province  
are in great  
affliction and  
reproach:  
the wall of  
Jerusalem  
also is



and the gates thereof are



with fire. And it came to pass, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven,



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS NEHEMIAH 1:1-11.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Teach us to pray in the true faith that Thou dost hear and answer. May we come to Thee with those real needs of our hearts that are truly felt. May we see the answers to our petitions in Thy providential removal of difficulties and the giving of the means whereby the ends may be accomplished. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"And still what miracles of grace are wrought  
In many a lowly chamber with shut door,  
Where God our Father is in secret sought  
And shows Himself in mercy more and more!  
Dim upper rooms with God's own glory shine,  
And souls are lifted to the life Divine."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 445-444. Place, Susa or Shushan ("a lily"), the chief of the three capitals of the Persian empire. **Persons,** Nehemiah and Artaxerxes Longimanus.

**Scripture Setting:** **A Study of Prayer.** Importunate prayer, Isa. 62:6-7. Prayer of waiting, Isa. 26:8. Sincere prayer, Psa. 66:18. Daniel's prayer, Daniel 9. Penitent prayer, Lev. 26:33, 42; Deut. 4:29-31. Prayer and kings, Prov. 21:1. Command to pray, Luke 21:6. Without ceasing, I. Thess. 5:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** If we become suc-

cessful, we should not forget to help the poor among our acquaintances and relatives. We should consider the needs of all good people as if they were our own.

The greatest concern of all Christians should be for the Kingdom of God. Though we may gain high position and prosperity, our chief thought should still be for the glory of God. The coming of that Kingdom is what gives value to life and security to all the institutions in the world. Every good life, devoted to what is right and true, helps to bring in the Kingdom.

## THE KIND OF PRAYER GOD HEARS.

One time prayer had very much to do with the building of the walls of a city. That may sound like a strange statement, but in a true sense the one depended upon the other. Our world is both spiritual and material, just as we have spirits and bodies. What the body does depends upon the spirit, and to a very large extent what happens in our world depends upon the spirit in man. Everything is under the control of God, who is a Spirit. Prayer has to do with the spirit, and prayer is uttered unto the Supreme Spirit. So what Nehemiah desired to do in regard to the walls of Jerusalem was first a wish in his own heart, was then expressed to God, and when he was assured that God would help him he went on to use the means God had given him. Prayer was thus the starting point and the inspiration of it all. We cannot believe too much in prayer. It works wonders and puts us into sympathy with the plans of God.

We are told by science that everything in the world is effected by causes. All is like the links of a chain, each one interlinked with another. It is entirely reasonable to believe that prayer, the devout human desire expressed to God, is itself one of the series of causes, a link in the chain.

**The King's Cup-Bearer.** It was some seventeen or eighteen years before that affairs in Jerusalem had appeared to be in a relatively prosperous condition. Ezra had gone thither and had stirred the people to reforms. But this progress had been interrupted. News of the present sad state of things came to Nehemiah. He was one of the captive Jews who remained far away from the land of his fathers. He was the cup-bearer of the king Artaxerxes at Susa, which was the

principal Persian palace. Ecbatana was the royal summer residence, Babylon the spring, Persepolis the autumn and Susa or Shushan the winter residence. The position of cup-bearer was an important and responsible one. When kings were always in danger of being poisoned they needed near them men devoted to them personally and such as could be absolutely relied upon. The cup-bearer had as part of his business to watch carefully that no poisons were introduced into the king's drink. It speaks well for the character of Nehemiah that the king relied upon him to protect his life. A man in such a position was almost constantly near the person of the king, and if he were of an attractive nature the monarch would naturally treat him with some familiarity and friendship.

**Bad News.** Josephus gives us a more intimate glimpse of the way in which Nehemiah learned of the state of things at Jerusalem than we get elsewhere. He tells that Nehemiah was walking before the palace and heard some strangers that were entering the city, their garments showing that they had come from a long journey, speaking to one another in the Hebrew language. Nehemiah, knowing by their tongue that they were Jews, went to them and asked from whence they came. They told him they came from Judea. He began to inquire in what condition Jerusalem and the people there were. They answered that they were in a bad state, that the neighboring people had thrown down the walls. In the daytime they overran the country and plundered it, and at night they did mischief, sometimes carrying Jews away as captives. They said the roads were full of dead men. These reports caused

Nehemiah to shed tears, and he cried to God to pity his countrymen.

He was so touched by this knowledge of the suffering Jews that he lost his cheerful appearance and often went about weeping. Once, as he was lamenting at the gate of the palace, a servant came to find him, saying the king was about to sit down to supper. He made haste and did not delay even to wash himself, and he went in to minister to the king in his office as cup-bearer. The king after supper was in a more cheerful mood than usual and looked on Nehemiah and asked him why he was sad.

**The King Appealed To.** Nehemiah, seeing that this was an opportunity to influence Artaxerxes in favor of his people, lifted up his heart to God and asked that He might give him persuasive words. He then said, "How can I, O king, appear otherwise than thus, and not be in trouble, while I hear that the walls of Jerusalem, the city where are the sepulchres of my fathers, are thrown down to the ground, and that its gates are consumed by fire? But do thou grant me the favor to go and build its walls."

Artaxerxes was moved by his appeal and promised that he would give him this permission, send him with a letter to his governors and aid him in every way. "Leave off thy sorrow then," said the king, "and be cheerful in the performance of thy office hereafter." Nehemiah thanked God in his heart, and thanked the king for his promise.

A boy heard his father pray that the needs of the poor might be supplied. He thought a while, and then said, "Father, I wish I had all the corn you have." "Why, son, what would you do with it?" "I would answer your prayer," said the boy. God expects us to use the means we have to answer our own prayers, so far as we can. He put it into the heart of Artaxerxes to help Nehemiah, and then Nehemiah was expected to carry on the enterprise.

**An Earnest Prayer.** When Nehemiah had gotten the sad news from the travellers, he began to fast and pray. He prayed "day and night." He was importunate. There was no question but that he wanted what he prayed for more than anything else in the world. This is the only prayer that avails. It is but mockery to go through forms of prayer without any deep desire for what the words express. Prayer must be the earnest expression of needs that are deeply felt.

His prayer was one of profound religious patriotism. It had in it noble unselfishness. He interceded for Israel, the people of God, the people who had suffered much and long and were now scattered, while the few at Jerusalem were enduring all manner of

trials. He confessed before God national and individual sins. He magnified God as both just and merciful. He knew that wrongdoing was the source of these calamities, but he asked for pardon and mercy. He appealed to God as merciful, as willing to pardon the penitent.

He declared the repentance of his people; they had been justly punished, but now they were willing to turn and keep the commandments. He asked God to remember that they were His people, redeemed by His hand. In continuing his prayers day and night he had two thoughts in mind—the greatness of God and the sinfulness of God's chosen people. God was able to help, and the people who had sinned were penitent. Therefore would not God be merciful and restore them to their land? Had not God promised mercy?

**God's Answer.** God answered his prayers. Prayer is always answered in some way and at some time. These devout and continued petitions of Nehemiah found their answer in the effect God's Spirit produced upon the heart of the king. Nehemiah asked for a special thing: mercy and restoration for the Jews. For the restoration, means were necessary. The king could be the instrument of Providence, if he would. His heart was turned in compassion upon Nehemiah and upon the Jews.

Letters were given him by the king, bidding the governors of the provinces he would pass through, convey him in safety. An epistle was given him to the keeper of the king's forest, commanding him to supply timbers for the work. So all was arranged; the way was made smooth; the prayer was granted.

There is a picture in the Kensington Museum, England, of the famous Dr. Samuel Johnson waiting in the anteroom of a lord for audience with the nobleman. But God never keeps us waiting. We can enter His presence with our petitions at any time and in any place.

**Practical Truths.** 1. This history shows how a great movement can originate in one person. 2. The genuine patriot is the religious patriot, one who knows that the true advancement of his country is through obedience to God. 3. Nehemiah undertook and carried on his work in spite of the indifference and apathy of thousands of his countrymen. There were doubtless millions of Jews scattered throughout the realm of Artaxerxes. Only comparatively few returned or took an interest therein. The indifference of those who should be interested is one of the greatest trials of religious workers. But no Christian should be affected by that. He should go on praying and working. 4. Good works usually fall upon the shoulders of a few. We should be content to be of the few. 5. Prayer brings down the blessing and prepares us to receive it.



# REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM

And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in



and the  
other  
half  
of them  
held  
both the



and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded



and  
they  
that



with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his



and  
so  
builded.  
And he  
that  
sounded  
the



was by me.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS NEHEMIAH 4:7-21.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Grant unto us Thy Spirit that we may be made wise and willing in the rebuilding of the walls of Thy kingdom, where they are broken down. Grant us success in our fight against sin and temptation, and in our endeavor to build up strong Christian character. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 445. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Nehemiah, rulers of Judah, Sanballat, Tobiah, etc., and people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Work for God. Evil scorners of, Psa. 123:3-4; Psa. 79:11-12; Prov. 3:34. Building the future kingdom, Dan. 9:25-27. Foes, Psa. 83:3-5. God's protection, Isa. 8:10; Psa. 50:14-15. Courage in, 2 Sam. 10:12. Foes overcome, Job 5:12. The Lord's help, Exod. 14:14, 24-25; Deut. 1:30; 3:21-22; 20:2-4; Josh. 23:10; Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 8:31. Armor of God, Eph. 6:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Some special features of this lesson are—1. Nehemiah made a personal investigation of the situation. As a leader became thoroughly familiar with every detail. 2. "Each

"The world wants men—large-hearted, manly men; Men who shall join its chorus and prolong The psalm of labor and the psalm of love. The age wants heroes—heroes who shall dare To struggle in the solid ranks of truth: To blot the error of oppression out, And lead a universal freedom in."

built over against his own house." He did the thing nearest at hand. God has placed us in families and united us in business and social relations that we might be helpful to one another. 3. Those who lived outside the city helped. It was a national affair. The whole people stood or fell with the capital. Our home, our town, our state, our nation, place obligations on us. 4. They used the material at hand. Into the new they put what they could of the old. 5. The building was done by piece-work. Every man's work affected his credit and his influence. 6. The sword and trowel were both used: one to combat the evil, the other to build up the good. 6. They had opposition. It always comes when the good is proposed. 7. Success came at last, but by hard and persistent work.

### BUILDING A CITY WALL UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

**Old-Time Cities.** It was a fine thing to have part in rebuilding the walls of a city in the old days. Without these it was defenceless. It would seem odd to us nowadays to see a city with huge stone walls all around it and with no way to enter it except through great gates. But before gunpowder came into use and cannon were made all cities were surrounded by vast stone walls. These were sometimes twenty and thirty feet high and from five to ten feet wide. The walls of Babylon were indeed so wide that chariots could pass each other on the top of them.

Jerusalem had been thus protected for ages, but foes had torn down these defences, and during the captivity the site of the city lay open. Most of the houses also had been destroyed. The temple had been rebuilt, but the defences had not been repaired. In our world today the same is true of many things in a moral and spiritual sense. Many good causes lie open to attack from evil sources, and we are called, just as Nehemiah was, to help build the defences.

When Nehemiah made his request of Artaxerxes to go up to the help of his ancestral city, the king, being greatly attached to him, declared he could not let him go permanently, but he would give him leave of absence for as long a period as necessary. Nehemiah promised to return after the work of rebuilding should be accomplished. He was made governor of Jerusalem, and as such was furnished with an escort of cavalry, so that his journey was a safe one.

**Opposition.** Every good cause in the

world finds foes to antagonize it. It was so with Nehemiah's plans from the very beginning. Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite determined to give him trouble. Certain of the native people of Canaan, to whom the land had belonged before the conquest under Joshua, had left descendants, and these had always resented the presence of the Jews in that country. The tribes round about on the borders of Israel had given the Jews trouble all through their history in that land. When Jerusalem fell and the Jews were carried away, these Ammonites and Moabites, and others, had rejoiced, thinking the land would again be theirs. They were angry at every step taken for the return of the Jews. They had interfered with Ezra and had troubled the Jews ever since.

Whenever any evil is disturbed by good people it is certain to do all possible to interfere with the success of the good. If you drive the liquor traffic out of any community you may be sure it will strive to win its way back again by every device.

**Careful Planning.** Nehemiah arrived safely, and went about quietly to see what was needed and to plan the best way of undertaking the work. He did not at first announce for what purpose he came. He went out at night with a few men and surveyed the broken walls. When he had completed his view of the ruins, he called the rulers of the city together and addressed them. He told how the king had been touched by his story of the condition of Jerusalem and had given him authority to repair it. He re-



minded them of the antagonism of the native peoples and foretold that they would need courage in this undertaking. But he urged them to put their trust in God and to work diligently for the defence of the city. They were moved by his words and cried out, "Let us rise and build."

Now the mocking Sanballat and Tobiah and Geshem the Arabian, who were in the city and heard what was said, put the worst construction possible on the plan, and declared that Nehemiah was getting ready to rebel against the government of Artaxerxes. They cried out, "What is this thing ye do? Will ye rebel against the king?" One of the hindrances to all good works is the evil interpretation that sinners put upon what is done. It is always easy to find a bad significance in anything. Evil is ready to start a rumor that selfishness, money, ambition or some like unworthy motive is at the bottom of every movement for public or individual welfare. Evil-minded persons have no conception of the possibility of unselfish devotion to anything. They know their own hearts as evil and they attribute the same to everybody else.

**All Together.** All went to work. In general each man repaired "over against his own house," the part nearest and most convenient for him to reach. The names of certain of those who wrought are given in the Scriptures, and so they immortalized themselves by their useful service. It seemed doubtless a prosaic way to gain a name in the Divine Writings to lay stones in a wall, but that was a patriotic and religious task and it was worthier of record than many of the deeds that have brought men fame. All such as gave themselves to this service could not be mentioned, but their work spoke for them. It is not necessary to win a name; it is only essential that we do our share.

The earnest beginning of this building showed their enemies that the workers meant to diligently go on to the end. This stirred them to greater indignation. Doubtless many of the workers were but poor masons and this exposed the result of their labors to ridicule. Tobiah in mockery said, "Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall." But scorn did not stop the faithful toilers. Enraged by beholding the walls grow day and night, the foes conspired to join together and interfere by force. They made several armed attacks and slew many Jews. They hired certain foreigners to try to assassinate Nehemiah, but this failed. That brave leader

appointed a body guard for his protection and persevered. He thus protected himself not from fear of death, but for the sake of the cause.

**Working and Watching.** He also had his followers arm themselves. Half of the people worked while the other half stood ready with weapons to protect them. Every one carried a weapon while at his toil, a sword girded on, or a weapon in one hand and a tool in the other. A trumpeter stood by the side of Nehemiah, and in case of an attack he sounded his trumpet as an alarm to those who were far off on the other side.

In this world where evil is ever ready to give battle to the good, we must be armed for spiritual contests. We must work while furnished with the whole armor of God.

So for two years and four months these Jews, under their faithful leader, pursued diligently their great undertaking. It was a tremendous task, but at last it was done. Earnest, self-sacrificing men, who had given themselves all those months to the task, now rejoiced to see the splendid result. Jerusalem, the beloved city, was safely enclosed.

Earthly glory passes, but work for God abides forever. When Isaac Newton was asked, late in life, to explain a passage in his work on mathematics, he could only answer, "I knew once that it was true." So the greatest mind fails. It is told that when the Duke of Marlborough was old, a friend, to entertain him, read him the history of his own campaigns. Forgetting his own part in that warfare, he asked from time to time, "Who commanded?" So earthly glory is forgotten even by those on whose heads it rests. But good deeds abide forever.

When Alexander the Great was ill, his trusted physician began to prepare him some medicine to drink. Meanwhile, he received a letter warning him that the physician was about to poison him. While Alexander was reading the epistle the physician came with the potion in his hands. Alexander took the cup in one hand and gave the letter to his friend, while he quickly swallowed the medicine to show his faith in his physician. When God gives us hard things to do or to suffer the world tries to make us doubt him. The wisest course is to drink our cup, and do our work with absolute faith in our Heavenly Father.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Many who lived far from Jerusalem came and took part in the work. Wherever we live, our hearts should be warm with love for Zion. 2. Co-working for defence of religion and country brings hearts together and forms the strongest bond of union. 3. We learn from the history that the nobles of Tekoah took no part, but opposed the work. It is often true that those with money and position are most indifferent to religious efforts. Others must be ready to carry on Christ's work without them. 4. The mechanics worked with the priests. They received and deserved the same honor. 5. Nehemiah was a layman and not a priest. He is therefore a fine example of lay work for God and his example should be an encouragement to others.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And they found written in the law which the Lord had commanded by



that the  
children  
of Israel  
should  
dwell in



in the feast of the seventh month: And that they should publish and



in all their  
cities, and  
in Jerusalem,  
saying, Go  
forth unto the  
mount, and



olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and



and branches  
of thick trees,  
to make  
booths, as it  
is written.  
So the people  
went forth,  
and brought  
them, and  
made  
themselves  
booths,  
every one



of his house, and in their courts, and in the



of the house  
of God, and  
in the street  
of the  
water gate,  
and in the



of the gate of Ephraim.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS NEHEMIAH 8:1-18.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for Thy great, holy law, and we pray that we may ever revere and obey it. Give us wisdom and understanding in Thy truths. Help us to hide it in our hearts that we may not sin against Thee. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Holy Bible, book Divine,  
Precious treasure, thou art mine;  
Mine to tell me whence I came,  
Mine to teach me what I am,  
Mine to chide me when I rove,  
Mine to show a Savior's love.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 444. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Nehemiah, Ezra, priests, Levites and people.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Law. The Law, according to Jewish usage, was the five books of Moses. The Ten Commandments, a condensation of the Law, Exodus 20. Command to obey, 2 Chron. 6:16. Perfect, Psa. 19:7. In the heart, Psa. 37:31. Peace from, Psa. 119:165. Christ fulfills, Matt. 5:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This lesson shows five effects of the careful study of God's Word. 1. Repentance. Always a result of the entrance of God's Word. "Their grief was occasioned by the vision of their own miserable imperfection in con-

trast to the lofty requirements of the law." 2. Joy in the Lord. Joy that sins are forgiven. Joy in fellowship with God. Joy of hope; of possibilities; of Heaven. Joy of victory over sin and evil. The joy of loving and being loved by God. 3. Generous giving to those in need. 4. Consecration to God. A covenant of renewed devotion to the Law and service of God was entered into and signed by the leaders. 5. A higher morality. They renewed the temple service. Kept their feasts, paid tithes, brought in the firstfruits and reformed their worldly manner of keeping the Sabbath.—Peloubet.

### THE ENTRANCE OF THY WORD GIVETH LIGHT.

**Religious Liberty.** Now the Jews assembled for worship. They were within a walled city, with the temple near by. They were thus protected from foes: their liberties and their right to worship were no longer at the mercy of aliens. They rejoiced in this blessed condition. Many people today neglect the church who would consider it from another point of view if the churches were destroyed and they were forbidden by foreigners to worship God. Then if a day would come when the churches were rebuilt and liberty to worship was restored they would flock to the houses of God. Like other blessings, this would brighten when lost. The Jews had been long enough without their temple and without the protection of a walled city to appreciate fully their restored privileges.

We cannot overrate the privilege of religious freedom. One of the greatest incentives of the early pioneers who left the Old World to settle in America was the right to worship God according to their consciences. The prayer meetings used to echo this feeling, for grandfathers had dwelt upon America's freedom in this respect. But now we have gotten so used to freedom and know so little about what it is to be without it that we do not appreciate it. Nevertheless it is a great boon; one to be prized and defended when necessary.

**The Preacher.** The Jews from all the region round about, as well as from within the city, assembled. The learned Ezra, who had led the first reformation some years before and who presumably had gone to Babylon

for some reason, had now returned to Jerusalem. He was the most learned man of his time in the Law of God, and it was he who now made ready to read the Scriptures to the people in public. Before the captivity the people had been regularly instructed in the law, but during that period and during the time of the restoration of the temple and the city walls this had been neglected. Indeed, few copies of it existed and these could not always be at hand. But a new order of things was begun.

Ezra appeared with a full copy of the Scriptures as written up to that time. The people gathered as one man in the street before the water gate. In our day the people are so used to hearing the Scriptures read from the pulpit and to reading them for themselves that oftentimes they give little attention. But to that people then present the Scriptures were practically new. They assembled to hear them with more enthusiasm than they would have gathered for any other purpose. Everywhere the subject of conversation was that they were to hear the reading of the Law of God.

**The Pulpit.** Ezra stood on a pulpit, with six scribes on his right hand and seven on his left. This is the first time a pulpit is mentioned. Its purpose was, of course, to place the reader where he could be seen and heard. We cannot estimate the influence and blessings that have come from the pulpit through all these ages. Instruction in Divine things, changed lives, consolations, inspiration and help in a hundred ways have come to mankind from the pulpit. It was

doubtless the office of the scribes with Ezra, to relieve him by reading portions of the Scriptures from time to time. The people stood in ranks in front of the pulpit. And with them were thirteen other ministers, who also aided in helping the people to understand the Law. Ezra read in Hebrew and the scribes translated to the people, who had grown up in Babylon and spoke a mixed Chaldean dialect, so that the Hebrew had to be interpreted to some extent.

**The Lesson.** So began the reading to these returned Jews, the substance of that which we call the Old Testament. Then they heard unfolded before them the history of their nation, the story that we find in Genesis and Exodus, in Numbers and in the Kings. There they heard the wondrous narrative of all that their nation had accomplished and had suffered. The giving of the Law, the details as to what the Law was, its shaping influence upon their national character, the stories of obedience and of disobedience, were rehearsed. Anywhere and everywhere the Scriptures make an impression by their majesty, dignity and appeal to the heart and soul, but surely the appeal then and there, to that people to whom it was all fresh as if newly written and of whose ancestors the records told, must have been overwhelming.

**The Result.** We are told that all the people wept at what they heard, with regret for past glories and for the sins which had caused their great humiliations. But Nehemiah and Ezra bade them cease their grief and to eat and drink and provide for the needy, as the day was holy to God. Seven days were required for the completion of the reading, and these days were intermixed with hours of feasting and rejoicing. With branches of olive, pine, myrtle and palm they made booths on the roofs and in the courts of their houses, according to the custom at the feast of tabernacles.

After their rejoicings, they turned to humiliation and penitence. A fast of two days was held. The Jews clad themselves in sackcloth, with ashes on their heads. Three hours were given to reading the Law. The morning sacrifice was offered, and some time was spent in silent confession and prayer. After the noon hour, the Levites appeared on the steps of the temple, calling on the people to stand and bless God. A hymn was sung, telling of God's mercies from the days of Abraham. They confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors and acknowledged the justice of God. They made a new covenant with God, which was put in writing,

and before evening this was sealed by princes, priests and Levites, while the people swore to obey the law of God.

If we could suppose the Bible to have been lost for several hundred years and that a copy should now be found, what do you imagine would be the sensation it would make! The first pages of the newspapers would be covered with accounts of the discovery and with extracts from the wonderful Book. Such as now seldom read it would not rest until they had read every word. The frequent neglect comes from lack of real understanding of its importance, interest, beauty and usefulness.

The effect of that public reading of the Law was lasting. The Jews from that time onward never neglected their Law. It is true, alas, that they fell into other sins, but it was not into the sin of forgetting outward reverence for the Book. We may be sure that whenever the Book of God is given to any people it will produce results. The Word cannot return unto Him void.

I knew an elderly man who told me he had never read the Bible through. At my persuasion he began a thorough reading of the Scriptures. After finishing the Book, he declared he had not in all his previous life read anything half so interesting. He had neglected for sixty years or more to read the volume which on his own statement is the most interesting in the world.

Carlyle declared that after people see the sunrise a second time it ceases to be a miracle to them. So readily do the most marvelous creations of God become commonplace to us. It is so in regard to the Scriptures. When Ezra read the Law to the Jews they were overwhelmed with emotion; it was new to that generation. But in our time most people are possessed of a superficial familiarity with much of Scripture by hearing it from the pulpit, and so they cease to marvel at its grandeur and beauty.

No greater moral change ever passed over a nation than passed over England during the years of Queen Elizabeth's reign. England became the people of a Book, and that Book the Bible. Its literary and social effects were great, "but far greater was the effect of the Bible on the character of the people at large." "A new conception of life, a new moral and religious impulse spread through every class."—Green's Short History of the English.

**Practical Truths.** 1. The greatest freedom is in obedience to the highest law, that of God. 2. The memorizing of passages of Scripture is a habit that is most valuable. Such passages continue to be a source of guidance and comfort throughout life. In addition, they become molding influences as to style. Ruskin said he owed much to the portions of Scripture his mother had induced him to commit to memory. 3. Most of all the Book reveals to us Christ, and because it enshrines the record of His life it is supreme. 4. Every nation now existing is great in proportion as the Bible is studied and obeyed.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

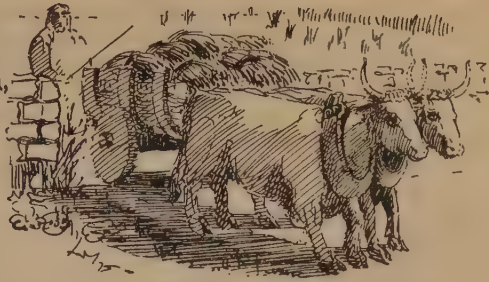


# KEEPING THE SABBATH

In those days saw I in Judah some



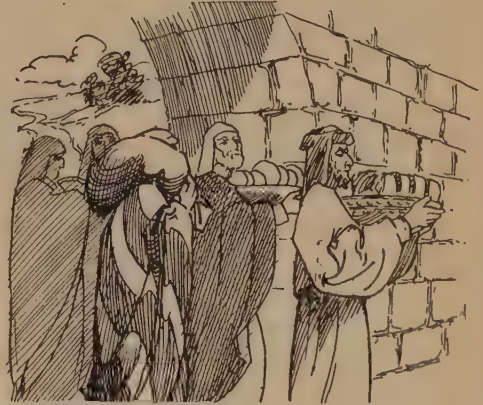
on the  
sabbath,  
and



and



as also wine,  
grapes, and  
figs, and all  
manner of  
burdens,  
which they



on the sabbath day:  
and I testified  
against them in the  
day wherein they



victuals.  
There dwelt men of  
Tyre also therein,  
which brought



and all  
manner  
of



and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS NEHEMIAH 13:15-22.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we reverence Thy holy day and use its rest and worship for the advantage of our souls, the honor of Thy kingdom and the well-being of our fellowmen. We thank Thee for

the good gift of the peaceful Sabbath in the midst of the days of effort and worldly care. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 434. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Nehemiah, priests, Levites and people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of the Sabbath. Command to keep, Exod. 20:8. Origin of, Gen. 2. A gift of God, Exod. 16:29. A rest day, Lev. 16:31. Punishment for breaking, Isa. 58:13. A sign, Ezek. 20:12. Proper use of, Matt. 12:13. Son of Man lord of, Matt. 12:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We see herein how God is concerned for man's spiritual and bodily wel-

fare. His laws are not arbitrarily laid down, but are interrelated with all that pertains to man's best progress and highest condition. 1. The Sabbath is a Divine institution, established by Him who comprehends perfectly our best interests. 2. Response on our part by obedience is a wise recognition of the goodness of God. 3. We should resist the tendencies that blind men to the spiritual values of God's ordinance. 4. We should try to enable our fellow men to comprehend the true import of the Sabbath.

### ONE OF GOD'S GREAT GIFTS TO MAN.

"The Sabbath was made for man," Christ tells us, and God our Creator knows what we need, what is good for body, mind and soul. It is sacred since God set it apart for sacred purposes, sacred because of the needs of man's nature to which it ministers. A day of rest and worship is just as essential as air, sunshine, food and sleep. It is true that man can exist without the Sabbath, but he cannot live his best life and do his best for God and man without it. It is not an arbitrary, superfluous law that creates the Sabbath; it is a kind arrangement of Providence.

**Drifting Away.** The Jews, some years after the restoration of Jerusalem, had drifted into careless ways as to the Sabbath. They had begun well, but had not kept on well in all respects. In their fresh enthusiasm after the reading of the Law, they had joined enthusiastically in all national and religious observances. The dedication of the wall had been a happy event. Ezra and Nehemiah had led two processions, one starting to the right and the other to the left, and with trains of priests, with trumpets and songs of praise, they had marched round the city. They had been willing to carry out the requirement that they be separated from the aliens, the Ammonites and Moabites, with whom some of them had mingled.

**Nehemiah Needed Again.** Then Nehemiah had gone back to Persia, according to his promise to the king Artaxerxes. We do not know how long he remained away, but again he heard of abuses at Jerusalem, and again he asked the king to permit him to visit Jerusalem. The high priest Eliashib had proved to be a weak man, and had allowed Nehemiah's old enemy Tobiah, the Ammonite, to have a chamber in the court of the temple. That place had been set apart for sacred vessels, for offerings, frank-

incense and oil. But Tobiah had appropriated it for his own business. The Levites had not been given support and so had forsaken the temple and had gone to the cities set apart for their class. A grandson of the high priest had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, who had been such a bitter opponent of the Jews. Moreover, the Sabbath was being violated in many respects. So Nehemiah returned.

**A Cleansing of the Temple.** He entered the temple and cast out the furniture of Tobiah from the chamber that Eliashib had given him, and he restored to their places the vessels of God's house. He brought the Levites back again. And he persuaded the people again to bring in the tithes.

Then he set about re-establishing observance of the Sabbath. He had found some treading wine presses on the holy day; some brought their sheaves in from their fields, and laded their asses. Foreigners brought their merchandise, wine, grapes, figs and other goods and crowded the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath. Men of Tyre brought fish and all manner of wares and sold these in the city, just as the pictures show.

**Sabbath Restored.** These violations of the law aroused the indignation of Nehemiah. He called together the rulers of the city and rebuked them for this profanation, reminding them that it was such disobedience that had brought ruin on them before. He ordered the gates to be closed at dusk the evening before and kept closed until the end of the Sabbath. He set his own servants to guard them and enforce the law. The merchants tried to evade this rule by pitching their tents round the wall, but this also was done away with, as he threatened to use force with them.



Queen Victoria was a conscientious observer of the Sabbath and never allowed matters of state to encroach upon that day. She declined to permit the highest noblemen to approach her on such subjects on the day of rest. A well-known merchant said to a clergyman, "Had it not been for the Sabbath and its peace and quiet, my business cares would have made a maniac of me long ago." When this was quoted in a company of merchants, one of them said, "That is the exact case of Mr. Blank. He was one of our greatest importers. He used to say the Sabbath was the day he planned successful voyages; showing that he gave his mind no rest. He has been in the insane hospital for years and will probably die there."

Once more the Sabbath came to be observed as a holy day. Peace and quiet spread over the land during those sacred hours. The abuses had doubtless crept in gradually, as such usually do, but the reformation was sudden and thorough.

**Sabbath and Religion.** We are to remember that the Sabbath is practically essential for all public, organized religion. One of the greatest American statesmen declared that there "can be no morality without religion, and there can be no religion without public worship." Without a day set apart for worship, rest and meditation, morality and religion would decline. Without the quiet and thoughtfulness and prayerfulness of the Sabbath there would be little spiritual growth. If there were no day set apart for sacred things, reverence and all the higher emotions would inevitably decay.

**A Foe.** Two great foes of the Sabbath exist. One of these was found in the days of Nehemiah. The desire to make money at the expense of the day of worship. Perhaps the foreigners, the Tyrian traders, introduced that spirit. They had no Sabbath; they cared nothing for Jewish customs. So they came with their merchandise. They found religious observances relaxed; the people were indulgently careless as to their business. Certain of the Jews tarried in passing, glanced at their goods, stopped, asked prices, bought some trifles. Then more came, and in a few weeks their Sabbath trade was established. Perhaps they started outside the gates, and then presently they were inside. So evils gradually grow.

Certain of the Jews themselves were tempted, by desire to save their crops, gain time, and began to work a little on an occasional Sabbath. Thus the evil spread.

**Money Losses.** In our own day business encroaches on the Sabbath. It is supposed to be necessary to run railway trains, passenger and freight. Certain great mill and

factory owners assert that it is only at much loss they can shut down for one day and then begin again on Monday. Back of it is, of course, the desire for gain. The loss is money loss. It is not considered that there are other losses involved, the loss to the workmen of their right to a day of rest, the spiritual and moral loss to multitudes and to the nation itself.

**Pleasure.** The other great cause of encroachment on the Sabbath is pleasure seeking. The desire to have a good time overrides duty, obligation, the value of spiritual instruction, the building of character, everything in its way. Multitudes have little thought of anything but to do as they please, go on excursions, drive, picnic, hunt or fish, and play games. So the very existence of the Sabbath as a holy day, as sacred to rest and worship, is threatened seriously.

**Perils Today.** Sabbath desecration, as found today, is a very serious and real peril. It threatens spiritual disaster to multitudes. It threatens to bring upon our people an increase of nervous evils through lack of a needed break in the busy, over-burdened week. The open stores, open factories, Sunday railway trains and traction cars, Sunday theaters and newspapers, the widespread custom of Sunday excursions and picnics, are among the evils that are leading thousands to violate the Sabbath.

America is no more assured of permanence than were those nations of the past that have perished. Many nations have fallen through disobedience to the Divine laws. We, too, must fall if we abuse the good gifts of God.

Lord Macaulay declared it was his observation and experience that a literary man would do more and better work, year after year, by observing Sunday as a day of rest. An association of twenty physicians voted "yes" unanimously on the question: "Is the position of Dr. Farre, in his testimony before the committee of the British House of Commons, in your view, correct?"—that men who labor six days in a week will be more healthy and live longer, other things being equal, than those who labor seven; and that they will do more work and do it in a better manner?

**Practical Truths.** 1. Our Maker understands our needs and has arranged for our well-being, if we observe His laws. 2. It may be a trial at times to be loyal to our convictions in regard to the Sabbath, but in the end we will be happier and better for so doing. 3. The temptations, in our day to non-observance of the Sabbath are more numerous and alluring than ever before. To keep the Sabbath holy demands strength of will and force of character. 4. It is a common observation that those who begin by an occasional ride or picnic or excursion on the Sabbath soon come to a point where religion largely drops out of their lives and thoughts.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## ESTHER BEFORE THE KING

Now it came to pass on the third day, that Esther



her royal apparel,  
and stood in the  
inner court of  
the king's house,  
over against the  
king's house:  
and the



sat upon his royal throne in the royal house, over against the



of the  
house.  
And it  
was so,  
when the  
king saw  
Esther  
the



that she obtained favour in his sight: and the king



to Esther  
the  
golden  
sceptre  
that was  
in his  
hand.  
So Esther  
drew near,  
and



the top of the sceptre.





## ESTHER BEFORE AHASUERUS

BY JULIUS SHRADER

The great king Ahasuerus was the sovereign of a vast territory in Asia; the most important part being Persia. In this country were many Jews who were captives but had climbed to the holding of high office. Among these was Mordecai, a favorite at court. These Jews were hated by the heathen officials. One of these, named Haman, had an important place in court. As Haman passed in and out, the Jew, Mordecai, refused to salute him. So Haman conspired against the Jews, to exterminate them, and he built a lofty gallows, especially to hang Mordecai on.

Ahasuerus had decreed that no one should enter his presence without a special invitation. To any intruder the king might reach out his scepter as a token of good will or he might condemn such a person to death. Queen Esther was a Jewess, a beautiful woman, who had been brought up in the family of Mordecai. She was induced to visit the king and attempt to protect the Jews. In appearing at court Esther risked her life. But her beauty moved the heart of Ahasuerus, so he reached out his scepter, and she secured the king's attention and checked the plottings of Haman, and finally caused this hater of the Jews to be hung on his own lofty gallows.

The artist Shrader is of the school which creates elegance, high finish and much beauty, not attempting to be absolutely literal. The king is dressed in magnificently embroidered robes so heavy that the wrinkles are ponderous. He reaches out his scepter. Esther is represented as greatly affected, but she is supported by a faithful servant. Here is an arrangement, used by many artists, to give effect to the graceful lines and beautiful faces of young Jewish women. He introduced immediately the strong square features of the old attendant, and the faces of the two charming children. One of these is the king's fan bearer. Every detail is carefully wrought out and the story is completed by the presence of the armed guard with his spear.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





**JULIUS F. SCHRADER. 1815-1900.**

Julius F. Schrader was born in Berlin, on the 16th of June, 1815, two days before the battle of Waterloo. In this great battle many relatives and friends of his father undoubtedly fought, for Berlin, the capital of the kingdom of Prussia and of the present German empire, nine years before had been captured by the great Napoleon, who at Waterloo went down to defeat at the hands of the English and Prussian armies, under command of Wellington and Blucher.

When old enough to walk, hand in hand with his father, up and down Unter den Linden (under the lindens), Berlin's imperial highway, he often strolled. With the great Brandenburg gate at the one end, and on either hand the palaces of German kings and princes, with monuments and statues of many of the historic and allegorical heroes of the German people, there quickly arose in the growing lad a sense of the romance of the past years of his country's history, which for the Germans, perhaps, more than for any other folk, bulk large in imagination, with a sort of mythological grandeur.

Painting and drawing continually, with such material as he could obtain, it was presently decided by the family council that Julius must make something of his talent, so at fourteen years old to drawing school he went, at the famous Academy of Berlin. Here for long hours every day he drew and painted from the living model till after some time of faithful work every exterior form and appearance of man, woman or child, of every conceivable type, representing all imaginable actions and sentiments, was as certain to him as the recital of the alphabet. From the earliest of his student days he was endowed with a rare sense of color and ambitious of its realization. With stern self-discipline he repressed impatience and studied form faithfully, till at last, painting with a full palette, there was in his work such a perfection of form, especially in the nude, in union with a splendid sense of color that marks him among painters.

In the realm of history, to illustrate the wideness of his knowledge, Schrader's grasp of a subject was so complete, so fully realized that his historical pictures are noted for their archaeologic accuracy, quite apart from their greatness of conception as works of fine art.

For eight years the young man studied and worked at the Berlin academy. In 1810 in Rome a little group of devout-minded men

had gathered—the German Pre-Raphaelites, —whose aim as painters was to revive German art as a means of religious and moral expression. They felt that the painter's work should be consecrated to the service of morality and religion—that unless it was for the mental and moral elevation of mankind, art was vain. Their influence reached young Schrader, and in 1837 he placed himself under the tutelage of one of the most famous of this body, Herr Schadow, of Düsseldorf.

Wilhelm Friedrich von Schadow, of Berlin, director of its academy till 1819, and of that at Düsseldorf from 1826 to 1859, was the founder of a great school of German religious painters, as his brother, Johann Schadow, the sculptor, was founder of the Berlin School of Sculpture.

For eight years more the growing man worked under Schadow. In 1845 he went to Rome. As with many others, this was the keystone that made complete with inspiration the structure of scholarship and mastery that had all these years been a-building. He painted his first really important picture, "The Capitulation of Calais," founded on that most romantic incident of English and French history: the siege of the city by Edward III and the British forces in 1347. This is in the National Gallery at Berlin. Two years later a notable incident of German history was pictured, "Frederick the Great After the Battle of Kolin" (1849, Leipsiz Museum). The year after this came another, "Wallenstein and Seni." The "Death of Leonardo da Vinci" (1851) was the work that firmly established his reputation as a leader of German painters of his time, and a professorship in the Berlin Academy, in which he had been a student, was offered him.

In mural painting, as well as in easel pictures, his strength was shown, as in the fresco in the New Museum at Berlin, "The Consecration of the Church of Saint Sophia at Constantinople," an impressive occurrence in the early history of the Christian church; and in the mural paintings in the Chapel Royal, Berlin.

Other well-known works are "The Parting of Charles I from His Family," in which is shown the farewell of the ill-fated King Charles Stuart of England to his children, prior to his execution by order of Parliament, under the protectorate of Oliver Cromwell; "Esther Before Ahasuerus" (1856), and the "Homage of Berlin and Cologne, 1415" (1874), all of which are in the National Gallery at Berlin.

JAMES BEALINGS.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ESTHER 5:1-14.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we always have that confidence in Thee which may lead us into Thy presence with our petitions in all our seasons of need, knowing that the scepter of Thy favor will be held out to us. We would venture thus with boldness, since Thou art our Father and Thou art merciful and good. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"If only we strive to be pure and true,  
To each of us all there will come an hour  
When the tree of life shall burst into flower,  
And rain at our feet a glorious dower,  
Of something grander than ever we knew."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 488. Place, Susa or Shushan, the capital of the Persian empire. Its ruins are three miles in circumference. The remains of the great palace built by Darius, the father of Xerxes, in which the scenes of this lesson occurred, have been found. The great central hall is 343x244 feet. **Persons,** Esther, Ahasuerus, Mordecai and Haman.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Confidence in God. Boldness, Heb. 4:16. The Lord our confidence, Prov. 3:26; Psa. 65:5. Hold it fast, Heb. 3:6. A great recompense, Heb. 10:35. A clear conscience helps, 1 John 3:21. The measure of, 1 John 5:14. In Christ, Eph. 3:12. Concerning others, 2 Thess. 3:4. In death, 2 Cor. 5:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "The destiny of God's people depended not only on the humors of this Persian king in general, but also upon the impression which a woman might make on that monarch. This must appear as very peculiar and highly significant. Women have exerted a decisive influence upon the destinies of nations. We have the view of Esther standing before the king, not as a wife before her husband, but as a petitioner before a sovereign. This represents the condition of the church of the dispersion. The king represents worldly power bearing rule over God's people. . . . But true worth dwells with Esther, who, impelled by love for her people, risks even her life."

### TWO WOMANLY QUEENS.

Esther is one of the few women who have a holiday in their honor, and she well deserved this tribute from her countrymen the Jews. The Feast of Purim, which, among the Jews, celebrates the deliverance from foes as recorded in this book, has as its central character the queen Esther. She stands in the grateful remembrance of Jews with Deborah and Judith. If, however, holidays were appointed for all the good women who have dared and suffered for their loved ones the whole year would be devoted to such celebrations. We can honor them, however, in other ways, and one way is to be worthy of them by living brave, good lives and making the world better. The effect of Esther's heroism upon the Jews has been to make them love their nation more, as well as honor her memory. And that is the true effect of an inspiring and noble life.

**The King.** The king, called in this book Ahasuerus, is known to secular history as Xerxes, and it was he who tried to invade Greece and was driven back so disastrously by those brave people. The book of Esther opens shortly after that event, when Xerxes had returned to his own country. It is possible he wished to display to his own followers that he was still glorious and powerful, and so he proclaimed a great feast. He invited all the important people of his vast empire and they came from far and near. He erected an immense tent capable of holding ten thousand guests, adorned it in the most magnificent manner, and in this his great feast was held. In addition he enter-

tained the lords and governors elsewhere in the most magnificent way. He showed them his palaces, his jewels and his vast hoards of gold and silver.

**The Feast.** Then he assembled them for the feast. There they were served from vessels of pure gold, and every conceivable luxury was set before them, while all drank to excess of the wines provided. Such a royal feast is supposed to reveal to us high life, but in fact it shows us low life. The abundance, the luxury, the lavish display, cannot hide the fact that it was a drunken revel, disgraceful to human nature. The drunken men were in fact just as repulsive and beastly as the lowest outcast in his cups. Ahasuerus' real disposition came out as that of a boaster and a capricious tyrant. His queen, Vashti, was at the same time giving a feast to her ladies, but we may be sure it was of a different character, as she showed her womanly nature in all she did. The drunken king, having boasted of everything else, began to boast of his queen, declaring she was the most beautiful of women. Certain of his excited guests proclaimed their wish to behold her, and the king, to satisfy a drunken fancy, ignoring the law of the kingdom which forbade such an action, summoned the queen to the feast of men. Nobly did Vashti reveal her dignity of character in refusing to come. So is every good woman justified in declining to enter conditions that compromise her dignity and womanhood.

**Vashti's Fall.** It is not to be expected that a sane view of her conduct would be

taken under the circumstances. The king should have been proud of her womanliness, but instead he was angered. His wine-inspired councillors declared he should make an example of her to other women; that if such an influence got abroad among their wives they would all rebel against what men bade them do. On such advice Ahasuerus declared he would divorce Vashti, which he did.

**Esther Made Queen.** Then he sought among the maidens of his empire for the most beautiful one to take the place of the ex-queen. She who proved to be the most charming was a Jewess, named in the Persian language Esther, or a star, and in the Hebrew, Hadassah, or myrtle. She was the adopted daughter of a Jew, Mordecai, who was also her cousin. They were of the people who did not return to Jerusalem at the restoration, and Mordecai held some position among the officials of the monarch. Esther became queen and gained great influence over the king.

It is extraordinary how events that seem small in themselves, and come as it were by accident, play a great part in the larger issues. This Mordecai, who was relatively obscure, and who, apparently, after her elevation to the throne, kept apart from Esther lest the fact that she was a Jewess should become known, happened to overhear certain conspirators who were planning to assassinate the king. He made the plot known and the would-be murderers were hanged. Record was made of the occurrence in the chronicles of the court, but in the hurry of events the king forgot to reward Mordecai. This happening proved later to be of great significance. We should not despise the relation of events to each other, but should do well the duty that is nearest and be sure every good deed will bear upon the future.

**Haman's Pride.** There are people who are never satisfied with what they have gained, no matter how much this may be, but are always reaching after more and more of honor or power. Haman was such a man. He was a high officer of the king, chief vizier, and he was possessed of so great authority that whenever he passed by, in his chariot on the streets or walking in the palace, all men rose up and bowed to him. But Mordecai, perhaps knowing the real character of the man, had often provoked Haman by refusing to stand up in his presence. This appears a trifling matter, but with Haman's disposition it became a great grievance. It was not enough that all other

people should salute him; all was spoiled since one man did not. Others are often equally foolish. They forget the good they have and magnify what they do not have.

Mordecai's conduct became a thorn in the flesh of Haman, and since he could not kill him legally, he hit upon a plan to excite the hatred of the king against all Jews. Slandering the Jews to the monarch, he persuaded Ahasuerus to sign a decree authorizing a general slaughter of these people on a certain day.

**Esther's Lack of Courage.** Terrified at this dreadful news, Mordecai sought a private interview with queen Esther, urging that it was her duty to save her people, and that she herself might be in peril if it became known that she was a Jewess. She was a true woman, loyal to her people, anxious to save her relative Mordecai, and she determined to brave all difficulties to this end. But she faced the peril in her own way. She used shrewd judgment and all her faculties of charm. No one dared enter the presence of such an Oriental tyrant as Ahasuerus without special summons, and he had not asked for Esther in many days. But she must reach the king. She arrayed herself in her most beautiful garments and ventured into the throne room. Beside the king stood the axemen, ready at a signal from him to sever the head of man or woman if so commanded. On the throne sat the king, holding his golden scepter. There was the moment of suspense, and then the king smiled upon his beautiful queen and extended his scepter.

When graciously received and bade to offer her request, unto the half of his kingdom, she smilingly asked that the king and his vizier Haman accept her invitation to a banquet. Ahasuerus, in his gentlest mood, accepted. And from that feast Haman went to his home exulting over the honor done him, and dreaming of future honors, not knowing that a plan was being laid which would end sadly for him and his ambitions.

**Practical Truths.** 1. There is an opportuneness in duty. Mordecai said to Esther that she "had come to the kingdom for such a time as this." She had risen to such a height for the purpose of meeting a crisis in the affairs of her own race. She nobly met the crisis, was equal to the time and its demand. 2. It is by love for a cause, for God, for humanity, for country, for home, for righteousness that any become capable of rising to the performance of great duties. 3. Esther used the means at hand. She was not foolhardy, but wise and even shrewd. She risked life, it is true, but she was forced to do that to accomplish anything. When the king received her graciously, she did not spring on him suddenly her real object. She asked him to a feast. The best ends may be defeated by abrupt, too hasty words and actions.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## HAMAN AND MORDECAI.

On that night could  
not the king sleep,  
and he commanded to  
bring the book of  
records of the chronicles;  
and they were  
read before the



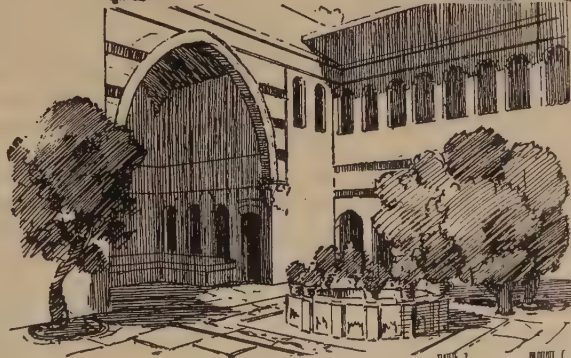
And it was found  
written, that  
Mordecai had  
told of Bigthana  
and Teresh, two  
of the king's  
chamberlains, the



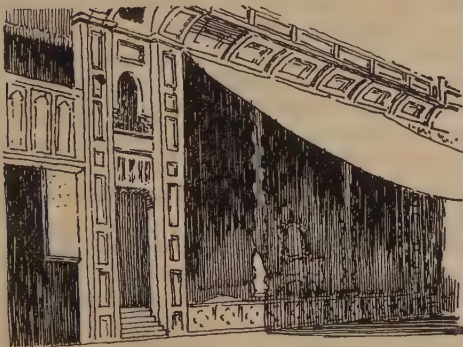
who sought  
to lay  
hands on  
the king  
Ahasuerus.  
And the  
king said,  
What  
honour and  
dignity  
hath been  
done to



for this? Then said  
the king's servants  
that ministered  
unto him, There is  
nothing done for him.  
And the king said,  
Who is in the



Now Haman  
was come  
into the  
outward court  
of the king's



to speak unto  
the king to hang  
Mordecai on the  
gallows that he  
had prepared  
for him. And  
the king's



said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in.

ESTHER VI: 1-5.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ESTHER 6:1-14.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Purify our hearts, we pray Thee, from all evil passions. Help us to guard against envy, hatred, jealousy and all malice. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"Envy at others' good is evermore  
Malignant poison sitting on the soul;  
A double woe to him infected with it.  
Of inward pain the heavy load he bears,  
At sight of joy without, he ever mourns."  
—Lewis.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 488. Place, Susa. Persons, Mordecai, Haman, Esther and Ahasuerus.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of the Heart. A clean heart, Psa. 51:10. A bad heart, Psa. 55:21. A wise, 1 Kings 3:12. To God, Prov. 23:26. Abominations in, Prov. 26:25. Folly of trust in, Prov. 28:26. Keeping commandments with, Prov. 3:1. Law on, Prov. 3:3. Trust God with, Prov. 3:5. Retaining His words, Prov. 4:4. With diligence, Prov. 4:23. Worthlessness of wicked, Prov. 10:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "Remark in Haman the stupendous and wonderful judgment of God."

For the impious Haman is most exultant and fearless as regards the preservation and augmentation of his dignity and power; and he is most certain also of the destruction of Mordecai, whom he prosecutes with hatred. But behold now the end of the thing. The impious and secure Haman shall perish with sudden destruction, while the pious and afflicted Mordecai is unexpectedly raised to the highest dignity. Let us therefore cast away all impious security and fear God; so that, walking according to the calling of God, we may be preserved though the sky fall and the earth be removed."

## THE DEFEAT OF A WICKED PLOTTER.

At the first banquet Esther gave the king and Mordecai she requested Ahasuerus that he and his vizier should come a second time. He was so fascinated by his queen and her hospitality that he gladly granted her wish. When Haman boasted to his family that night of his honors, he confessed that all was marred by the fact that on his way to the queen's feast Mordecai declined again to salute him. But his wife appeased him by suggesting that he have Mordecai hanged, and he declared that this would be a good end of his foe. So sure did he feel he could carry out this infamy that he at once ordered a gallows to be made.

**The Turning Point.** The thoughts of the king that night differed from Haman's. He could not sleep, and after his custom he called for a scribe to read from the court chronicles. During those hours of diversion the account was rehearsed of what Mordecai had done to save the life of the king. Ahasuerus, in a moment of realization of his rescue from peril, learned that nothing had been done as a reward to Mordecai. He vowed he would honor him above all men in some manner.

On the very next morning Haman came to ask the king for permission to hang Mordecai, but the king, full of his enthusiasm for the man who had saved his life, broke in with a question as to what the king should do for the man he most delighted to honor. Haman, thinking himself to be the man, pictured a street scene in which he should be the central figure. The king should clothe the man with his own apparel, mount him on the king's horse, place his crown on his head, have the horse led by one of the greatest princes through the streets, and proclaim be-

fore him, "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor."

This dream of selfish glorification was speedily shattered when Ahasuerus bade him deal thus with Mordecai. That was perhaps the bitterest hour of Haman's life. All his plotting had come to nothing and he was personally forced to act that which seemed to him a degrading part. We may be sure that his voice rang with little enthusiasm as he called out the words of the king's proclamation.

**Haman's End.** Ashamed, humiliated, covering his head, he hastened home. But he had brief space to nurse his grief when a messenger came to take him to the queen's banquet. There came the dramatic climax of his troubles in which his insane folly had involved him. When the king, well pleased, bade Esther make further requests, she cried out for mercy upon her people. She reminded the king of the cruel decree and of the approaching slaughter of the Jews. The monstrous story touched the king and he demanded the author of such a villainy. Esther terrified Haman by pointing him out and declaring that it was his evil doing. Justice speedily followed, and Haman was suspended upon the gallows he had ordered for Mordecai. As the king's decree was irrevocable, it was met with a second decree permitting the Jews to arm themselves and make their defence. In this they were successful, so that comparatively few were harmed. Haman's house was presented to Mordecai and he was exalted to a high place and covered with many honors.

**Results of Jealousy.** All Haman's disasters arose from a groundless and needless jealousy. He was jealous of every one who



had the least credit or position and who retained pride enough to refuse to bow to him, though it could not but be known that he was unworthy of his position. We enter the zone of danger whenever we allow this over-estimate of ourselves and under-estimation of others to find place in our lives. Haman not only had enough, but he had too much. "Ambition grows by what it feeds on." The appetite for praise becomes insatiable, monstrous, all-devouring.

Nothing is more perilous than attempts at vengeance for real or fancied wrongs. It starts trains of evil that go beyond our power to stop. It is like dealing with something too strong for us. It is an engine that gets up high speed while the man in the cab is ignorant of how to shut off the power. Haman could have lived a life of honor if he had chosen; could have continued a favorite of the king all his life, but in attempting to destroy another he destroyed himself.

The folly of his course is monstrously shown in the growth of his hatred until he was willing to slay thousands of innocent people who had never offended him in order to reach one single man. When the evil passions have way they become immeasurably cruel. No demon could have devised anything more irrational, unjust, merciless, than to plot to murder thousands of Jews in order to kill Mordecai. We should never forget that all evil hardens the heart. It is its very nature to do so. The cruelty of sin is unspeakable; nothing is considered that stands in its way; home, friendships, country, decency, honor, all are overridden; everybody concerned is trampled upon.

**Mordecai's Advancement.** Mordecai was justly honored. He quietly attended to the duties of his office. When he had opportunity to save the life of the king, he did so and made no fuss about it, did not advertise himself, did not complain when no reward came. He pursued his way. He effaced himself that Esther might be advanced; he kept away from the queen lest the knowledge that she was a Jewess would injure her. He did not seek her until a crisis arrived when it was evidently her duty to save her people. Mordecai did not speak for himself but for his race, and doubtless for the safety of the queen herself. When Mordecai was advanced after the death of Haman it appears that he fulfilled his duties in a sane, wise way for the honor of the king, the good of his own race, and the welfare of all the people.

Haman was an upstart. He is called "an Agagite," probably an Amalekite. Such a man would have a strong dislike of Jews. He had risen to power through one of those revolutions that occurred among Oriental monarchies, by which suddenly the ruling powers were destroyed, new rulers arose, and their followers, often of the basest kind, got to the top. If he had been born to power he would not have been so exacting as to every trifling sign of respect. It is of the nature of the upstart to suspect others if they omit the least observance or outward honor toward him.

In the overthrow of Haman and the exaltation of Mordecai we may behold the workings of the overruling Providence. While wrong is often temporarily enthroned, in the end the good comes into its own.

Envy produces all manner of evils. Caligula killed his own brother because he was handsome, while he himself was ugly. A Roman named Mutius was of such a notoriously envious disposition that one Publius said, when he observed that he looked sad, "Either some great calamity has happened to Mutius or some great good to another." Plutarch said in regard to Dionysius the tyrant, he "punished Philoxenus, the musician, out of envy because he could sing, and Plato, the philosopher, because he could dispute better than himself." Cambyes killed his brother Smerdis because he could draw a stronger bow than he or any of his party.

There is a Greek story of one who was envious of one of his fellow citizens to whom a statue had been erected. This man had been a victor in the public games. The other was so jealous of his reputation that he went several nights to the spot where the statue stood and strove to cast it down. After he had tried this several times he succeeded in moving it from its pedestal. But in its fall it crushed himself. This is the legitimate result of envy.

A youth who had been wronged by another visited an old hermit and told him he had made up his mind to be avenged. The good man tried to persuade him from his purpose in vain. Finally he said, "At least, my young friend, let us pray together before you execute your purpose." He began to pray thus, "It is no longer necessary, O God, that Thou shouldst defend this young man, and declare Thyself his protector, since he has taken upon himself the right of seeking his own revenge." This prayer so smote the youth's conscience that he fell on his knees and prayed for pardon for his wicked design.

**Practical Truths.** 1. It is essential that by a good life and kindly deeds you should deserve honor. If you do not meet with recognition, you will still have done your duty. If recognition comes, it should be utilized not for vainglory, but for further service. 2. We must always count upon the misunderstanding, dislike or hatred of a certain kind of people against righteousness and religion. 3. The Christian does not assume to be better in himself than others, but he strives to get on the right side with God, and that is the strong side. 4. Evil carries in itself the seeds of decay. Haman, being like a tree decaying at the heart, was certain to fall.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

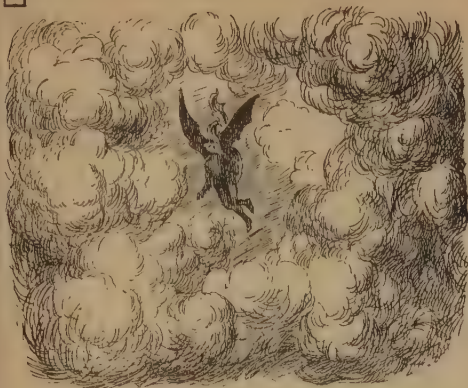




THIRD DIVISION  
THE POETICAL BOOKS

# THE AFFLICTIONS OF JOB

So went



forth from the  
presence of  
the Lord, and  
smote Job  
with sore boils,  
from the



unto his crown. And he took him a potsherd to



withal;  
and he



among the ashes.  
Then said his



unto him, Dost thou  
still retain thine  
integrity? curse God,  
and die. But he said  
unto her, Thou speakest  
as one of the foolish



speaketh.  
What! shall  
we receive  
good at the  
hand of God,  
and shall we  
not receive



In all this did not Job sin with his lips.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOB 2:1-10.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We pray that Thou wilt help us to be strong and patient in the midst of all our experiences, even as was Thy servant Job. May

we believe in Thy goodness though at the time it may not be plain to us what is the meaning of Thy chastening. In Christ's name. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about 1520 B. C. Place, the Land of Uz, probably the Hauran. Persons, Job, Satan, Job's wife.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Design of Suffering. To prove men, Deut. 8:2, 3. To keep from the pit, Job 33:16-30. To refine, Mal. 3:3. To manifest works of God, John 9:2. To produce more fruit, John 15:2. For consolation and salvation, 2 Cor. 1:6. To manifest life of Jesus, 2 Cor. 4:11, 17. To chasten, Heb. 12:5-11. For glory of Christ, 1 Pet. 1:7. To perfect and establish, 1 Pet. 5:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Mystery of Pain. 1. Suffering makes the most thoughtless to think. 2. The Bible reveals the goodness of God even in the most painful experiences. 3. One of the greatest problems in the world is that of the existence of

pain and evil. 4. The wife of Job was blind to the deeper meaning of events. There is in fact light beyond the pain. 5. Nearly every good in human nature and in the world has come to us out of sacrifice and pain. 6. All suffering is not punishment for sin, though sin brings dreadful consequences. 6. God chastens as a Father. God desires to have us grow into the best possible men and women. The best people who have ever lived have believed most firmly in the value of the trials that came to them. 7. Remember that the common view of un-Christian men and women is sure to be wrong. Let us look to the Word of God for such views of life and experience as are noble, high, ennobling and strengthening.

### HOW A GOOD MAN TRIUMPHED.

**A Real Hero.** There is no greater literature in the world than the book of Job, and no more pathetic; but no more heroic figure ever marched across the stage, upon which the mighty drama of life is being enacted. His was a soul well worth that desperate game which the devil played. And what a devil! Cynical, subtle, malignant, the utter incarnation of evil. The thought that a Titanic personality like this is striving perpetually to break down the characters we build with such pain and struggle is a solemn one, indeed.

Behold the grand old victim of this fiendish malignity; object of this supernal trial; vicarious offering to the list of the world's heroes, passing across the stage in solemn dignity; scraping his boils with a broken piece of pottery; sitting down to rest his aching bones upon a heap of ashes, but calm, serene, composed! It is, indeed, a sight to thrill the hearts of men and angels. Stripped of his property; cast down from his high estate; deserted by friends and maligned by the wife of his bosom, he stands like a rock in an ocean of sorrows, immovable, impregnable, sublime! I would rather have seen the unconquerable Job upon his ash heap than Hannibal crossing the Alps, or Cæsar the Rubicon. It is a nobler sight than Demosthenes or Cicero in the agora or the forum. No other struggle is so sublime as a moral struggle; no victory so grand as a spiritual conquest.

If you look on the wrong or back side of a piece of tapestry, while it is being woven, it seems all

wrong. There is apparently no plan to the work. All is confusion. Yet the weaver works according to a pattern that is plain to him, and at the end the beauty of it is revealed. So God works, as it were, from behind the scenes; we do not see the pattern in His mind. But we are foolish if we conclude there is no plan in His work. In due time all its beauty will be seen.

**A Foolish Wife.** In the whole great story nothing is more dramatic than the appearance of Job's wife. Wringing her hands she comes; beating her breast, tearing her hair, and uttering wild reproaches. Her shrill voice rises above the din of traffic. A crowd gathers around, to ridicule and enjoy. Blushing for shame and trembling with sorrow she utters that mad, immortal interrogation, "Dost thou still preserve thine integrity?" "I have seen something of this world, and there are but two kinds of women in it,—those who take the strength out of a man and those who put it back," said the old Sahiba, in Rudyard Kipling's story "Kim."

**Integrity.** Of course Job preserved his integrity! It is the glory of all God-inspired manhood that it still preserves its integrity; through good report and evil report; prosperity and adversity; success and failure. George Washington and Abraham Lincoln still preserved their integrity, even when friends deserted and enemies stabbed them in the back. "Chinese" Gordon preserved his integrity even when the savage Moslems stormed the walls of Khartoum. Joseph preserved his integrity, and so did Daniel, although assailed by temptations fierce as hell itself. "Integrity!" Sound, whole, un-

impaired, unbroken manhood, womanhood, boyhood, girlhood! This is what God demands and expects of every one of us. An "integer" is a complete person, or thing. Job was as whole a man in his temptation, and after it, as before. Trials reduce some men to fragments, as a stone does a gas lamp on a street corner. Troubles turn others into such tatterdemalions as a thaw makes of a snow man. How few of us came out of the terrible struggle—whole! There is a picture of a boy climbing over a fence and crying out exultantly, "He never touched me"—although a big dog on the ground has his mouth full of **pantaloon**s! What the boy meant was—he never touched **myself**! He may, indeed, have torn my trousers, but the real **me** is as whole as a dollar! Many a boy and girl, many a man and woman, comes out of the conflict in tattered clothing, but with body and soul unbroken!

"**Renounce God and die,**" said the foolish woman (trying to take more strength out of the man). Renounce God and you will die! It is like renouncing sunlight or air—the absolute conditions of existence. Imagine a kitten in a basket renouncing its mother's milk. Imagine a hollyhock in a garden renouncing the rain! Imagine a little boy in a street renouncing his father's hand! Love, hope, joy, peace (those soul essentials), can no more live without the presence of God in the heart than a tree can live without sap in its veins.

If I did not see God when I look at the world or into my own heart, I should be staggered, like a man who should look into a mirror and not see his face. No man could survive the shock.

There is a story of an American in Paris who had spent all his money and decided one evening to kill himself that night. While he was in his room, making ready for the act, a robber entered and tied him in his chair and left him there unable to carry out his design. The next morning the mail carrier arriving with the mail, unfastened him and handed him a letter. The letter announced that he had inherited a fortune through the death of a relative in America. That letter was already almost within his reach the night before when he was contemplating suicide. He was rich without being aware of it.

**"What? Shall we receive good at the hands of God and shall we not receive evil"—also!**

All the noblest spirits of all the ages have also felt like that. "A man is born, not for prosperity, but to suffer for the benefit of others; like the noble rock-maple which all around our villages bleeds for the service of

people," said Emerson; and Huxley has left behind him this noble personal testimony, "I cannot but think that he who finds a certain proportion of pain and evil inseparably woven up in the life of the very worms, will bear his own share with more courage and submission."

It is the greatest of all arts to expect troubles without anticipating them. We know that they must come, and yet we ought not to permit them to take us by surprise and bowl us over. You would think, to hear the average man and woman whimper and fret when the commonplace sorrows of life fall upon **them**, that they had never seen **others** suffer! It may not make the pain less to have been prepared for adversity, but it does take away the sting of surprise and astonishment. You know you have to take the bitter with the sweet; how then does it happen that you can not do so with quietness and submission? Why do you not meet trouble with the patience of Job; or with the heroism of a Huxley?

"Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever Gods there be,  
For my unconquerable soul.  
In the fell clutch of circumstance,  
I have not winced nor cried aloud;  
Under the bludgeonings of Chance,  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.  
It matters not how straight the gate,  
How charged with punishment the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate,  
I am the Captain of my soul."

The leaders of the Roman republican party at the battle of Philippi, when they saw they were defeated, believed their cause at an end. Brutus and his friends slew themselves on the battlefield in despair. Yet shortly afterwards the tide turned in favor of liberty. They slew themselves too soon. So all err who give way to despair and fail to have patience until a favorable change comes.

**Practical Truths.** 1. There is an Adversary. The more we realize that the better. We get ready for the trial when we know that it is to be one. 2. Job's wife thought his religion had proved to be useless. She had the heart of a heathen. 3. It is a sad thing to misjudge God. We should try to be fair with men, and much more with God. To misinterpret the kindness of God grieves Him. 4. "Sin is not only vile, but foolish; it offends against our true interests as well as against God's honor." 5. Times of adversity are those which prove who are and who are not our real friends. How precious is sympathy and good counsel at such times. 6. Paradoxes lie all through the New Testament; and one may walk on them, like stepping-stones, from side to side. Sorrow is joy. Death is life. Down is up. Weakness is strength. Loss is gain. Defeat is victory. The world's mightiest men, the very monarchs of its joy, are they who died deaths daily.

DR. CHAS. F. GOSS.

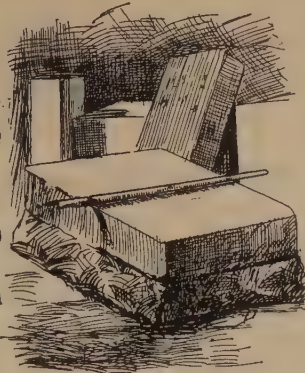


# JOB'S CONFIDENCE.

Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a



That  
they  
were  
gra-  
ven  
with  
an  
iron



and  
lead  
in  
the



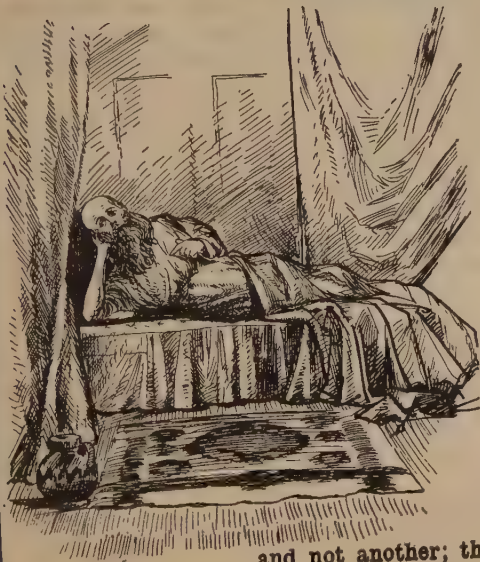
for ever! For I know that my



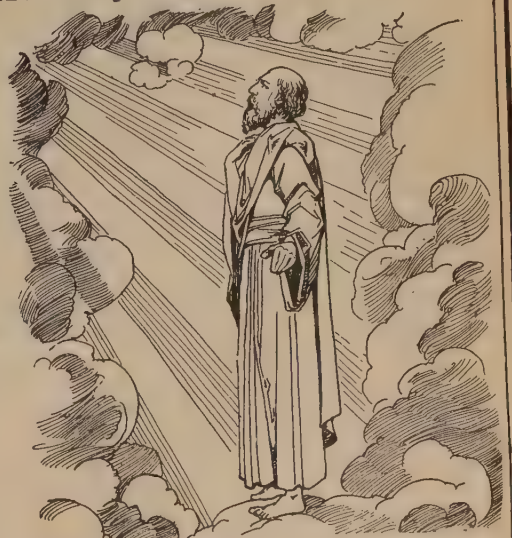
liveth  
and  
that he  
shall  
stand  
at the  
latter  
day



And though, after my skin worms destroy this



yet in  
my flesh  
shall I  
see God:  
Whom I  
shall see  
for myself,  
and mine  
eyes shall



and not another; though my reins be consumed within me.

JOB 19: 23-27.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOB 19:23-27.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we ever live as in the presence of the life eternal. May our faith in immortality be as a light upon our pathway. Help us so to live now as to come in peace to the end of our days and unto the Heavenly City. In the name of Christ. Amen.

These through fiery trials trod;  
These from great affliction came;  
Now before the throne of God  
Seal'd with His Almighty Name,  
Clad in raiment pure and white,  
Through their dear Redeemer's might.  
—Montgomery.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1520. Place, the Land of Uz. Persons, Job and his friends.

**Scripture Setting: Study of Immortality.** Through transition, Gen. 5:24. By the chariot of fire, 2 Kings 2:11. In God's presence, Psa. 16:10. Assurance of, Psa. 23:6. God receives soul, Psa. 49:15. Man's spirit goes upward, Eccl. 3:21. Returns to God, Eccl. 12:7. Of life and death, Dan. 12:2, 3. Eternal life, Matt. 25:46. God of the living, Mark 12:26. Life through Christ, John 3:14, 16, 36. Gift of Christ, John 10:28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "As surely as that Christ, our Redeemer, is risen from death by His power and is entered into glory, so surely will all who believe in Him rise again to eternal life by His Divine power. The Messiah is in such wise the Living One, yea more, the Life itself, in that He proves Himself to be the Living One by making us alive. This is the best comfort in the extremity of death, that as Christ rose again from the dead, therefore we shall arise with Him."—Starke.

### A BLESSED HOPE.

At the beginning of this great tragedy we behold a man tormented with physical pain and overwhelmed with the sense of financial loss. But his experience widens and deepens as the full consciousness of what he has to endure is gradually disclosed. He begs for help, but no one hears; he invokes justice, but it is everywhere denied; he finds himself despised and stripped of his glory; hope has been plucked up like a tree; wrath has been kindled against him; his enemies have encamped upon his trail; his acquaintances are strangers; his kinsfolk have failed him; his familiar friends have passed him by; his servants refuse to answer when he calls, and the wife of his bosom, together with his children, repudiate his affection and scorn his name.

**Anguish.** The misery of man becomes at times complete. His agony can not be exaggerated. Even Shakespeare could not portray the grief of Lear in all its unconsolable wretchedness. People actually suffer up to a pitch of intensity which no extra amount of pain could increase. And to this point Job had come. He could not express himself, for such grief is inarticulate. He could only moan and wish in vain that the awful torment could be adequately described.

"Oh! if my feelings could be uttered.

"Oh! if they could be written in a book.

"Oh! that with an iron pen and leaden hammer they could be carved upon a rock!"

Thank God, that such grief is sometimes cured by reaction. The advancing tide of the ocean even, can only go so high, then breaks and ebbs. And so sorrow (even oceanic sorrow) is broken by its own impotency. Upon the heels of his despairing out-

burst there follows a sudden calm; a wonderful peace, an uplifting hope. Up from the depths of his spirit arose a sublime conviction. A star appeared suddenly above the dark horizon. He felt a strange security.

**Hope.** "In spite of all, I feel (I know) that there is salvation from this sorrow! There must be somewhere a Divine Spirit of love and consolation. It is inconceivable that existence should form an unmitigable curse. There **is**; there **must** be; it is necessary that there **should** be, a great and powerful Saviour. I know that my Redeemer liveth! You need not ask me how I know! I know!

"I know that He will come to earth and mingle among men, bearing their sorrows; enduring their griefs."

"I know that death does not end all; but that, emerging from this body, my soul like the life of a seed, shall arise in a new and exalted state, in which I shall be able to recognize this Divine being."

"I know that I shall see Him for myself! His being and nature shall not be revealed to me second-hand! I shall not behold Him through a stranger's eye, but through mine own!"

That many people besides Job have had convictions as profound as these, there is not any room to doubt. The pages of the world's literature abound with narratives of the sublime revelations that have come to great souls; of the certainty of eternal life, eternal consolation and eternal justice!

"I believe with all my soul; I feel, I know with certainty that, dying, I shall be happy. I shall enter a world more real!" exclaimed Tolstoi on his eightieth birthday.

At a dinner given to him in Paris, Victor



Hugo, in an impromptu address exclaimed with resistless conviction and eloquence: "When I go down to the grave, I can say I have finished my day's work; but I cannot say I have finished my life. My days will begin again the next morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight, to open on the dawn."

**Faith.** Why should we not believe these words of the great seers? To their testimony we lesser people ought to pin our faith, for they are men who speak as they are moved by the Holy Spirit. Theirs are souls which are strangely sensitive to the unseen universe. As the sensitive plant vibrates to the tread of the hoofs of horses entirely out of the sight or hearing of men, so their spirits are agitated by influences which average people do not feel at all. No greater folly can be committed than that of placing the testimony of the great "materialists" above that of these mysteriously sensitised beings. It is not to the man accustomed to examine and test the physical elements alone, that we should refer the problems of the spiritual world! We ought to pin our faith to the great experts of the spiritual universe, like the author of this book.

And so ought we to pin our faith to those ideas which exert the most powerful influence for good, like those in this sublime passage about the "living Redeemer." Multitudes of people are dominated by the cares and feelings which belong to the lower realms of man's existence. Can anything be stranger than their not seizing with insistent eagerness upon those that have made the world better? "Give me a great thought to rest my head and heart upon," said a dying philosopher. It is the **great** thought that we need!

**High Ideals.** There is another thing. We owe it to ourselves to govern our lives by the best and noblest thoughts and emotions which visit our own souls. We may not be inspired prophets, but we all are visited by great, as well as feeble thoughts. Why then is it that so many people govern their lives by the thoughts that come in the ebb tides, when the whole head is sick and the whole

heart faint? Instead of remaining under the dominion of the cynical or skeptical thoughts that came to him when crushed by the sense of his loss, Job put himself at beck and call of the mighty faith that welled up from the depth of his nature, in that supreme moment of victory. What we need is the hope inspired by those exalted moods! With such hopes burning in our hearts we can survive the loss of all things.

Before Alexander set out for Asia, he divided his kingdom among his friends. "What have you left for yourself, my lord?" asked Perdicas. "Hope," he replied. "If it is good enough for Alexander, it is good enough for Perdicas," said the young nobleman. It is good enough for any one!

No mother, sorrowing over the loss of a little child; no man, contemplating the wreck of his business; no ambitious youth, defeated and baffled in the attempt to realize his fondest dreams, could be cast down utterly with a hope like that of Job's illuminating the pathway over which he had to go.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS.

A bulbous root found in the hand of a mummy three thousand years old, when placed in the earth grew and blossomed into a beautiful flower. If the life of a root can be thus retained in darkness for so long a period, does it not well-nigh demonstrate the persistence of the spirit of man?

A certain lord had, according to the old custom, a fool to make jests for him. He gave him a staff and bade him keep it till he met a greater fool than himself. Some years later, the lord became ill, and seemed likely to die. The fool visited him, and his master said, "I must shortly leave you." "Where are you going?" asked the fool. "Into another world." "And when will you return? within a month?" "No." "Within a year?" "No." "When then?" "Never." "Never? And what provision have you made for entertainment where you are going?" "None at all." "None at all?" cried the fool. "Here, then, take my staff, for with all my folly, I am not guilty of such folly as this."

**Practical Truths.** 1. A vivid faith in Heaven is one of the most practical forces for right living. "He who has no hope of immortality but half lives." 2. Belief in another life is the greatest consolation in the midst of the trials of this. 3. There is nothing more reasonable than the conviction that God does not build up merely to tear down. 5. We can keep the faith of eternal life real to us by daily giving it a place in our thoughts. 6. We must strive by all means, by prayer, by study of God's Word, by entertaining sound and wise ideas, to keep before us the reality of Heaven.

DR. CHAS. F. GOSS.



# JOB'S RESTORATION

Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his



and all they  
that had  
been of his  
acquaint-  
ance before,  
and did



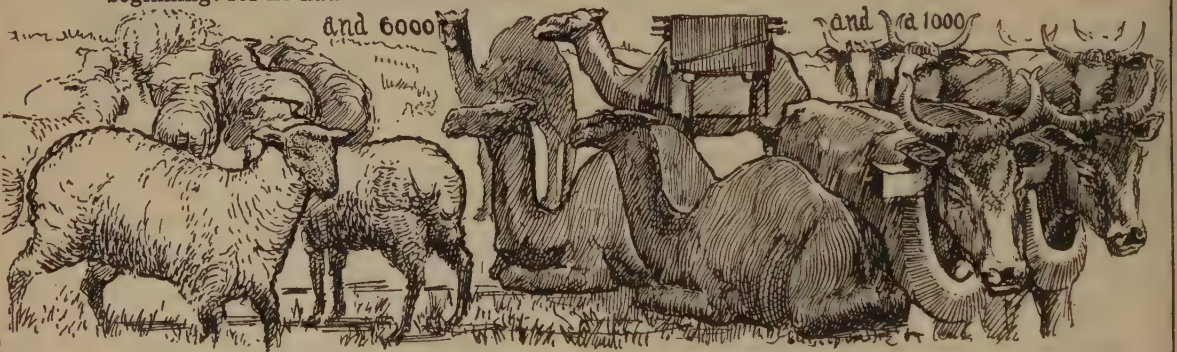
bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and



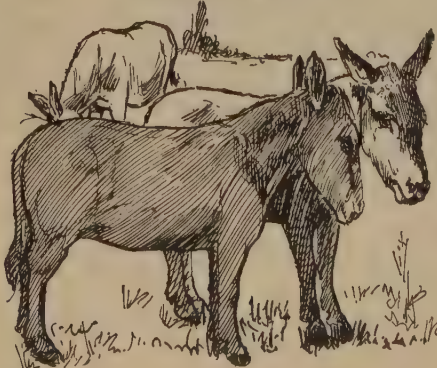
him over all  
the evil that  
the Lord had  
brought upon  
him: every  
man also gave  
him a piece



and every one an earring of gold. So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his  
beginning: for he had fourteen thousand



and a thousand she



He  
had  
also





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOB 42:1-13.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Bring us, we beseech Thee, through all our distresses, even as Thy servant Job came through darkness again into the light. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"E'en the hour that darkest seemeth  
Will His changeless goodness prove;  
From the gloom His brightness streameth,  
God is wisdom! God is love!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1520. Place, the Land of Uz. Persons, Job, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Prayer for Others. Abraham for Sodom, Gen. 18:23-32. For Abimelech, 20:17, 18. Abraham's servant for his master, Gen. 24:12. Jacob for his children, Gen. 49. Moses for Israel, Num. 16:20-23. For Miriam, Num. 12:13-15. David for Israel, 2 Sam. 24:17. Solomon for Israel, 1 Kings 8:29-53. Syro-phenician woman for daughter, Matt. 15:22. Disciples for Peter's wife's mother, Luke 4:38, 39. Parents for lunatic son, Matt. 17:15. Paul for the church, Acts 20:32. Paul for Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. 1:16, 18. For Paul by the

churches, Acts 14:26; 15:40. Centurion for servant, Luke 7:3. Christ for His disciples, John 17:13-24.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "The inward restoration of Job; his deliverance from the errors which had beclouded his heart and his knowledge, and his penitent submission under God's righteousness and gracious will, is immediately followed by his outward restoration and redemption. This comes to pass in immediate connection with the sharp rebuke which God visits upon Job's friends because of their unreasonably harsh condemnation of him, and also in connection with the brotherly prayer which Job offers in their behalf, thus heaping coals of fire on their heads."—Lange.

### HOW A PRAYER WORKED WONDERS.

**Turning Point.** In every human life there are pivotal points upon which its destinies turn as on a hinge. One man's turned, for example, upon a conversation. Perhaps it was the thoughtful advice of a friend; perhaps it was the malignant sneer of an enemy; possibly it was an accidental word overheard on the street. At any rate, upon it his whole career turned around. From a bad man he became a good one; or from a good, a bad one. Another man's turns upon an accident; another, upon an incident; another, upon a chance acquaintance. Nothing seems more incredible or unreasonable than the power of mere trifles to deflect the careers of men to Heaven or hell; but no fact is more demonstrable and no experience more real.

Job's destiny turned upon a **prayer**. All that he had endured was impotent to restore him to his right mind or lead him into the right path, until at last he prayed! That prayer proved revolutionary in its effect. A skeptic would not have believed it. "What difference can a prayer make with him?" a skeptic would have asked. "He will be just the same **after** he prays as **before**." But he was **not**! No sooner had all the pent up feelings of his burdened soul poured out, than a great change came over him. Up to that moment his thoughts and hopes and purposes had, as it were, been carrying a ball and chain upon their feet. After that moment they were freed! His chains fell off. The door of his prison was opened. He passed into liberty.

**The Change.** Upon a thousand different kinds of prayers the destinies of men have

turned. One man has to pray a prayer of penitence before his captivity is turned. Another must offer a prayer of self-surrender. Another of forgiveness, another of aspiration. Job had to offer a prayer for the men who tortured his spirit with their criticisms and confused his thoughts with their false philosophies. He had tried in every other way to be rid of them and, at last, he prays. He prayed for their help and enlightenment, and suddenly a great change came over his own thoughts and feelings. He felt a new kindness and a new peace. Nor did the change confine itself to his interior life, but was reflected in the outer world. Everything began to "come his way." He could not understand it. It seemed to him, as to so many, no doubt, impossible that one little prayer could extricate a man from so many troubles and bring about so many wonderful and happy changes. But it was true.

**Prosperity Returns.** Yes, everything began to "come his way." His brothers and sisters, who had deserted him in his sorrow, were seen wending their ways toward the place where he sat in the ashes. Even those casual acquaintances who had turned up their noses at him in his adversity called to wish him well. They brought him food to eat; they expressed their sympathy with him in his troubles; they loaned and they gave him their money. Once more his crops made good. Again he heard the welcome evidences of cattle in his fields. Fourteen thousand sheep; six thousand camels; a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses came lowing and bleating around him. Above all,

it fairly rained children and little grandchildren, and the old man's heart was full of joy.

**The Seed and The Harvest.** Do not let any one persuade you that these events were too great to be the consequences of one little prayer. No events are too great to be the consequences of the **least** causes! A loud shout from the lips of a mountain climber in the Alps has started an avalanche, which destroyed a village. The pressure of a man's thumb upon an electric button has set in motion the machinery of national expositions thousands of miles away. A single sentence flashed through the telegraph wires across a continent has depreciated the value of stocks, into the millions. A wireless message for help shot out into the darkness of night has summoned a fleet to the help of a sinking vessel. The shot of a cannon precipitated a civil war. The decision of a man to cross a little river in Italy established a Roman empire. The sound of a hammer on the door of a cathedral brought forth a reformation.

When the books are opened at the last great day, the assembled multitudes are certain to hear stories of the efficacy of single prayers, that will fill the universe with wonder. Some feeble petition, uttered centuries ago by the lips of an obscure man or woman, will be proven to have been the source of immeasurable revolutions in the thoughts and feelings of the world. That prayer of Jesus on the cross, for example, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Who can establish the boundary lines of its influence? The effects which it produced are widening yet, and will until the heavens are old and the stars grow cold, and the leaves of the judgment book unfold.

Who knows how to measure the consequences of that prayer which (nobody can doubt) the mother of Moses put up to Heaven, when she launched the little boat which bore her baby to the feet of a royal princess! No, do not for one moment be disturbed by the sneers of the doubters of prayer. They laugh at us for our simplicity and ignorance. We pity them for theirs!

"You are hopelessly ignorant! I do not believe you know how many letters there are in the alphabet," exclaimed a teacher to a little boy. "But neither do you know how many letters there are in the post office," he replied.

We Christians may know but little about the great mysteries of life; but we cannot help but think that the skeptic knows much less. At any rate, we do not propose stupidly to lose the mighty possibility of influence opened to us by prayer. If it does no one else good when we pray, it does ourselves. Whatever effect his prayer for his friends had, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar, it turned the captivity of Job.

## Illustrations.

Alexander the Great visited the noted Greek philosopher Diogenes and asked him if there was anything he could do for him. The abrupt reply was, "I want nothing but that you should stand from between me and the sun." Doubts, fears, unbelieving persons, sins, get between us and the light, and we need to get these out of the way.

When George Stephenson, inventor of the railway engine, was on a visit to Sir Robert Peel, in company with some other celebrities, they observed a railway train dashing along. "Now," said Stephenson, turning to one of his friends, "I have a poser for you. Can you tell what is the power that is driving that train?" "Well," his friend began, "I suppose it is one of your big engines." "But what drives the engines?" "Oh, very likely a canny Newcastle driver." "What do you say to the light of the sun?" "How can that be?" "It is nothing else," replied Stephenson, "it is light bottled up in the earth for tens of thousands of years, light absorbed by plants and vegetables being necessary for the condensation of carbon during the process of their growth, if it be not carbon in another form; and now, after being buried in the earth for long ages in fields of coal, that latent light is again brought forth and liberated—made to work, as in that locomotive, for great human purposes."

So it is light from God that moves human life in right directions. It was light that cheered Job after all his troubles.

When John Knox was dying, he was asked if he had "hope." He was unable to speak but he raised his finger and pointed upwards. It is hope that carries us through all our troubles. Job had been in the depths and now he was coming into the light. During the worst he had been supported by hope that the issue of all his tribulations would be good.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Often friends speak ungently and unfeelingly because they do not understand. 2. The better and loftier view of the problems of life comes after passing through lower and ignobler views. A better understanding of great problems comes by experience. 3. Presenting any interest before God in prayer is certain to give us a better view of it and to put us into a different attitude toward it. 4. To pray for people is to learn to take a new interest in them and to see them in a new light. 5. Job's experiences and their issue in his restored happiness on earth contradict the oft-times repeated error that religion is chiefly for a future life. His godliness triumphed in the present life. It is gross injustice to religion, gross misrepresentation, to defer its benefits to the hereafter.

DR. CHAS. F. GOSS.



# THE WAY OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Blessed is the man that



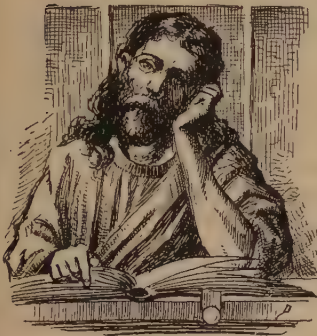
not  
in the  
counsel  
of the  
ungodly  
nor



in the  
way of  
sinners,  
nor



in the seat of the scornful: But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he



day and  
night.  
And he  
shall be  
like a



planted  
by the  
rivers  
of water,  
that  
bring-  
eth  
forth  
his



in his season; his leaf  
also shall not wither;  
and whatsoever he doeth  
shall prosper.  
The ungodly are not  
so: but are like the



which the wind driveth  
away.  
Therefore the ungodly  
shall not stand in the



nor  
sinners  
in the



of the righteous. For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly  
shall perish.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS THE FIRST PSALM.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We desire greatly that we may be in all things obedient, that we may receive the blessing of the righteous and live worthily for Thy glory. In the name of Christ. Amen.

He shall be like a tree that stands  
Near planted by a river,  
That in his season yields his fruit  
And his leaf fadeth never.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about 1052 B. C. Author, David. Place of composition unknown, but this Psalm was probably written in Jerusalem.

**Scripture Setting: The Righteous Contrasted with the Wicked.** Tested and hated, Psa. 11:5. Protected and afflicted, Psa. 32:10. Kept and cut off, Psa. 37:17-22. Prosperity of each, Psa. 73:1-28. A chain of contrasts, Prov. 10:15; 21; 22; 28. Rewards, Rom. 2:7-10. With and without hope, 1 Pet. 4:18. Children of God and Devil, 1 John 3.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "Blessed"—see how this Book of Psalms opens with a benediction, even

as did the Sermon of our Lord upon the Mount! The word 'blessed' is a very expressive one. The original word is plural. Hence we may learn the multiplicity of the blessings which shall rest upon the man whom God hath justified, and the perfection and greatness of the blessedness he shall enjoy. May the like benediction rest on us!"—Spurgeon.

"As the book of the Canticles is called the Song of Songs because it is the most excellent, so this Psalm may not unfitly be entitled the Psalm of Psalms, for it contains the very pith and essence of Christianity."—Thomas Watson.

### GRANDFATHER'S APPLE TREE.

Commenting on this wonderful psalm is like trying to improve a lily with a coat of paint and varnish. When a group of beholders watch the sun go down, the fool expatiates but the philosopher is silent. And yet, in every art gallery and library there must be an interpreter. Not every one possesses insight, penetrative power, ability to comprehend, and those who do must therefore teach. The thing to be careful of, is, blowing one's own thoughts upon transparent loveliness like this and letting it freeze like your breath on a widow pane, so that neither yourself nor anybody else can see through it.

There is a legend in the Orient that tells of a marvelous tree. On it there grew apples of gold and bells of silver. When a breeze arose and moved the branches a shower of these apples fell and the bells rang sweetly. Pure religion makes the righteous bear golden fruits, and the harvesting is accompanied by great joy.

**Blessedness.** We cannot go astray if we begin by saying that there is such a thing as "blessedness." The beatitudes of life are real. More ways than one are known to put the soul in a beatific state. Blessed is the man who is loved by a good woman. Blessed are the parents who have dear and obedient children. Blessed is the little child which grows up in a home where love abides. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. Blessed are the pure in heart; the merciful; the mourners; the seekers after God; etc., almost ad infinitum. Do not doubt this for a moment. You may yourself be miserable, unhappy and dissatisfied. It may appear to you that every one in the world is wretched and rebellious. But you are wrong! There are millions who are in a state of mental

peace; of blessedness. They have simply found the path which you have missed.

**Wickedness.** No one, in the whole long history of the human race, has found blessedness by walking in the counsel of the ungodly nor standing in the way of sinners, nor sitting in the seat of the scornful! You might as well expect to find partridges, if you were a hunter, by walking down a city street; or an alms, if you were a beggar, by standing on the north pole; or a dinner, if you were hungry, by sitting on a camp stool in a desert. Wickedness, sinfulness, and scornfulness cannot produce blessedness any more than fire, acid and dynamite can produce flowers and fruit. They have their inalienable characteristics, which can no more be separated from them than qualities from substances, as for example: acid from a lemon, or bitterness from gall. They agitate the soul and drive men along as wind does chaff. Look sharply at a crowd of wicked people, old or young, and see. They are restless, uneasy, impatient, rampant and perturbed. They wander about the house, the town, the world. I have seen an autumn wind sweep down a street, gather up the leaves and send them whirling before it, as a victorious regiment puts its enemies to flight. And in a rout like this sin sweeps its victims along a troubled pathway to the grave.

**Righteousness.** But the righteous are not so! They are like trees planted by the streams of water, bringing forth unwithering leaves and incorruptible fruit. Is there anything else in the world more like a good man than a tree? No wonder that we love those beautiful emanations of the Divine Spirit of life! "Under the shade of a tree



Gotama was born; under the shade of a tree he overcame the god of the world and the fear of death. Under the shade of a tree he preached his first sermon clothed in a shroud; under the shade of a tree he died. Between men and trees there is a mysterious kinship. Our Saviour loved to compare men to trees. "Like them," he said, "we must bear fruit." Now and then, we have to be patient with and cultivate them as the gardner does the tree, and give them a chance. But, at last, they must yield fruit or go down under the axe. Like a grand and noble tree with its roots amidst the living springs of water stands a true man, yielding year by year his never-failing crops.

**Fruitfulness.** In the rear of my grandfather's house stood a magnificent old, sweet harvest apple tree, which became my earliest symbol of bountifulness. I never knew it to fail of a crop; nor have I ever seen such apples since. We little people used fairly to live among its wide-spreading branches. From our various points of advantage we watched each apple as it slowly ripened in the sun and turned to gold. In the mornings we scrambled out of bed and rushed half-dressed to see if any of them had fallen to the ground. To munch one of them on the road to the swimming pool or eat it cut up in a bowl of milk was bliss. Our faith in the tree was boundless. We should as soon have expected to look up in the sky and see no stars; into the old well and see no water; into our mother's face and see no smiles, as into the branches of that old, sweet harvest tree and see no apples!

Then, as our comprehension of life deepened, the tree became a symbol of the old grandfather. He, too, bore fruit! To him also, we could go with perfect assurance of finding a crop! No more than the old apple tree did he refuse us a smile, a kindly word, a helping hand, a loving look. Before he died he all but impoverished himself by his gifts to his children. Is it not blessedness to live like that?

Of course, not every human life can be so very bountiful in fruit as those of the "great hearts" of history; but we must never forget that the mission of some men, like that of

some of our trees, may be the bearing of only nuts, and even leaves.

We knew of a stranger who built a costly house in a beautiful suburb where the residents in general cultivated and highly prized their trees. The whole place was like a park. But this man prepared for the building of his home by cutting away all the trees on his grounds in order to have an open lawn. After the house was finished, he changed his mind and went to live elsewhere. Then he wished to sell the property in which he had invested much money. But those who came to inspect it, while they admired the house, were disappointed at the absence of trees, and declined to buy. The property remained unsold for several years, until other trees had time to grow.

**Generousness.** There is a charming tradition in China of a tree in the cemetery where the body of Confucius lies buried, any one of whose leaves, laid upon a difficult passage in his writing, will shed a mysterious interpretative light, by means of which its meaning may be known. Such a tree as that would not be worthless even though it never bore an apple, a peach, or a nut! Let's try to shed our leaves and fruit; not be like one of those trees which have to be clubbed before you can get anything from it, fit to eat! And do not be like the maple tree, whose hard bark has to be bored into to make the sap run! Shake your own boughs! Exude your own sap! Be generous, be bountiful! Keep on bearing fruit—no matter who gets it and no matter who appreciates it. Say to the world—here is my gift to the race. Take it, or leave it. My mission it to produce it.

**Practical Truths.** 1. It is not enough to avoid evil and to keep separate from bad companions. This Psalm presents a positive side. "His delight is in the law of the Lord." Observe the "don'ts," at the same time follow the "dos." Positive goodness should be our delight. 2. There are stages in wrong-doing. There is a beginning time and act. First the sinner merely walks by. Then he stops, stands. Presently he is seated among the scornful. 3. It is pleasant to realize that God has knowledge of our ways, if we are true and loyal. He who does right is not alone, is not unobserved. God sees and approves. 4. Religion does not hinder happiness, but furthers it. The Bible and Christian experience prove that real and abiding welfare and joy come alone through well-doing. 5. There is a mocking play on the saying, "Be good and you will be happy," which asserts, "Be good and you will be lonely." That is false. It is sin that is lonely. Sin separates the best friends.

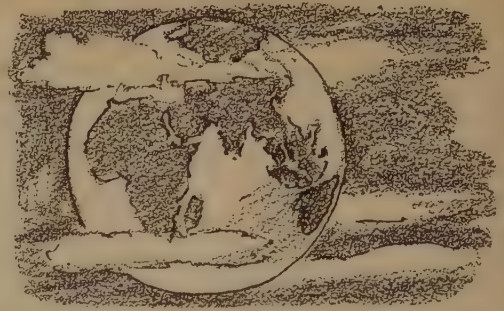
DR. CHAS. F. GOSS.

# THE KING OF ZION

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the



for thine inheritance,  
and the uttermost  
parts of the



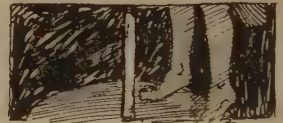
for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a



of iron;  
thou shalt



like a



Be wise now therefore, O ye



be  
instructed.  
ye



of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear, and



with  
trembling.  
Kiss the



lest he be  
angry, and  
ye perish

from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 2:7-12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, The world is Thine, for Thou madest it; and I am Thine, for Thou gavest me being, and that I might usefully live here and afterwards live forever, Thou wast born in a manger and didst die upon the cross. I come to Thee to offer my allegiance and service, praying that the kings of earth and princes of the people may all bow to Thee, Thou Prince of Peace and King of kings. Amen.

Jesus lives, O blessed words,  
King of kings, and Lord of lords!  
Lift the cross and sheathe the swords,  
Jesus lives!

See, he breaks the prison wall,  
Throws aside the dreadful pall,  
Conquers death and once for all,  
Jesus lives!

—Rev. John R. Colgan.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** An ancient Hebrew song of royalty, prophetic in teaching. A poem of four stanzas of three verses each, the lesson including only the last two stanzas. Written undoubtedly by David, and so credited in Acts 4:25, 26. Quoted with chapter number in Acts 13:33. See other quotations, Heb. 1:5, 5:5. The one place mentioned (verse 6) refers to Jerusalem. Three speakers, Jehovah, the Messiah, and the Psalmist.

**Scripture Setting: Steps to the Throne.** Making a way for the King. Isa. 40:3-10. The missionary commission. Matt. 28:16-20. True nature of idols. Isa. 44:9-20. The wrath of royalty. Rev. 6:15-17. Allegiance of earthly kings. Isa. 60:1-12. Christ's coronation. Rev. 14:14-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage sets forth the opposing powers in the age-long struggle for the world-wide kingdom. 1. Christ's right as universal King rests on His work as Creator, His love as Redeemer, and His life as a perfect example. 2. Those subjects alone are worthy of prayer which embrace humanity and touch eternity. 3. The rule of the kingdom is service—the greatest is greatest in service. 4. National idols to be broken are the goddess of pleasure, the calf of gold, and the blindfolded god of unbelief. 5. That nation is most Christian which most fully exhibits the Divine Fatherhood and human brotherhood.

### THINE IS THE KINGDOM.

**The Royal Decree Published.** Only in the history and character of Christ can we find a sufficient explanation for the prophetic language of this Psalm. Its imagery of forces fiercely contending reflects the war-like events of David's reign. The king was forced to assert himself against many plotting foes. Following an ancient royal custom Christ is represented as inaugurating His reign by proclaiming the fundamental law upon which His government rests—His Divine Sonship. Christ's relation as Son of God gives Him the right to universal dominion. Historically the Catholic faith has rested its claim upon the authority of the church, while the Protestant faith has rested upon the authority of the Bible. It would seem here that the true foundation is the personality of Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever.

**Prayer and Missions.** "Ask of me and I will give thee the nations." When they complained to the Marquis of Salisbury about his colonial policies he answered their little minds by saying, "Gentlemen, you need to study larger maps." Christ thought in the terms of continents and taught us to pray, "Thy will be done on earth." The purpose of prayer is not to drag God down to our narrow plans and feeble policies, but to lift us up to God's imperial and ageless purpose. Men can do nothing so far-reaching as to pray, for prayer links each separate life to all other life, both human and Divine. A

man cannot remain selfish and provincial if he truly prays. Some men pray only when driven into a corner, and then with a spirit of pessimism they exclaim, "There is nothing else left to do but pray!" That is the lowest view of prayer. This lesson puts prayer before us as the first privilege. It calls for a church-wide enlistment for world-wide evangelism. It is the imperial view. Through prayer we are led to the mountain top of the Great Commission where the imperial mind of our Lord is revealed in four directions,—to boundless space, "Go ye into all the world," to boundless need, "to every creature," to boundless truth, "all things which I have commanded you," to boundless time, "I will be with you always."

**Thy Possessions—the Uttermost Parts of the Earth.** How true is it that those nations which have withstood Christ have been broken with a rod of iron, and dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel. Herod and Pilate passed, Rome and Greece perished, but Christ and His Kingdom live. Christianity is more than a hope that lingers around Joseph's rock-hewn tomb; it is a living, pervasive, conquering force.

Uihern, the historian, says, "Never in the whole course of human history have two such unequal powers stood opposed to each other as ancient heathenism and early Christianity, the Christian church and the Roman state, apparently the weakest of forces confronting the strongest." Yet follow Christianity's growing force. In 300 years Paul's epistles were the Magna Charta of the

Roman empire; in a thousand years there were 50,000,000 Christians; in 1,500 years there were 100,000,000; in 1,800 years there were 200,000,000; and in the twentieth century there are 400,000,000. In fact in the year of our Lord 1910 there were 800,000,000 people living under Christian government. This is the testimony of history. Christ is possessing His own.

**The Iron Scepter.** He who wept over Jerusalem and prayed for His enemies spoke also the austere words man ever heard as He pictured the doom of His enemies. He was walking the very ground where He saw in anticipation a century later the Tenth Roman legion encamped. In that most terrible siege on record thousands died from the horrors of famine; 97,000 of the Jews were taken prisoners; and 1,100,000 perished. For planting that central cross and shouting "His blood be upon us and upon our children" Jerusalem saw later the ground so thickly planted with crosses bearing crucified Jews that there was no more room.

The idols of the heathen are rapidly being shattered in our day. Our God is a jealous God who will have no other gods before Him. At the Laymen's Missionary Congress in Chicago a missionary declared that in northern China there are great stretches where the vast temples of heathendom are being converted into schools. The gods of the temple are sometimes piled together into some little room, where they are kept for a year or two until the people forget; then they are burned or cast into the sea. The idols of the heathen are to be dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel. The overthrow of idolatry is to be complete.

**An Ideal Reign.** After Jehovah and Messiah both have spoken David himself utters the concluding words of this Psalm. He calls upon rulers in general to serve with godly fear. One is reminded of David's last words as he looks backward on his own reign, and forward to Solomon's:

"One that ruleth over men righteously,  
That ruleth in the fear of God."

These two ideas, justice to men, reverence to God, not only guided David in the duties of his realm, but were deemed worthy to be handed down to other kings as changeless principles.

Victoria, it is said, believed her family history could be traced back to David's royal line. When, in 1837, she was crowned at Westminster Abbey the young girl was instructed to remain seated while all others stood during the singing of the halleluiahs chorus of the Messiah. But her religious feelings gained the ascendancy over her regard for court decorum, and she fell upon her knees before her Christ, her young face diffused with tears. It was a favorable omen of her long and glorious reign. She never forgot that she was "Victoria by the grace of God."

**The Gospel of Reconciliation.** In ancient

times princes were kissed in token of homage. When Samuel the prophet anointed Saul as Israel's future king he kissed him as a sign that Jehovah had made him ruler (1 Sam. 10:1). It behooves all, says David, to kiss the Son, lest by His anger ye perish. It was considered an unpardonable offense not to pay the full respect due to royalty.

When Xerxes passed over the bridge of the Hellespont the whole distance was strewn with branches, while the burning of rare perfumes filled the air. When Alexander entered Babylon they scattered flowers. When Queen Elizabeth came to a miry place in the road young Walter Raleigh took off his new and costly mantle and spread it on the ground to protect her feet. Christ had His day of triumph as He entered Jerusalem amid the song of children and the spreading of palm branches. Nor did Jesus silence them. If these held their peace the very stones would cry out, He declared.

The public acknowledgment of Christ as Sovereign in the spiritual realm is the immediate duty of every man. To neglect or to refuse is fraught with greatest peril.

When the emperor Justinian II entered Constantinople in 710 he was required to recognize the temporal power of the pope, Constantine I, by kissing his toe. Later the popes wore a slipper with a cross which was to be kissed. In recent years Protestants who wished an audience were required only to slightly bend the knee. But Christ, the true and only vice-gerent of God, has never changed the one clear way of reconciliation with the Father. It is the way of a full, personal, spiritual allegiance to Christ as Son of God.

If Jesus Christ is a man,  
And only a man, I say,  
That of all mankind I cleave to Him,  
And to Him will I cleave alway.

But if Jesus Christ is God,  
And the only God, I swear  
I will follow Him through Heaven and hell,  
The earth, the sea, the air.

—R. W. Gilder.

**Quiz and Study.** What was the meaning of Christ's answer to Pilate's question, "Art Thou a King?" 2. What are four national obstacles to making Christ King? 3. In what three realms corresponding to the three languages nailed to the cross may Christ be my King? 4. By what means does Christ inspire and compel loyalty to His Kingdom?

**Challenge Text:** "And He shall speak — unto the heathen; and His — shall be from — even to —, and from the — even to the ends of the —." Zech. 9: (7).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The human manifestation of Jesus as Son of David does not preclude His everlasting Sonship. 2. The foundation stones of Christ's throne were cemented by His own blood. 3. Rebellion against established government is worthy of death. There is something in God to fear. 4. The miracle of modern missions reveals Christianity as a virile, conquering force.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

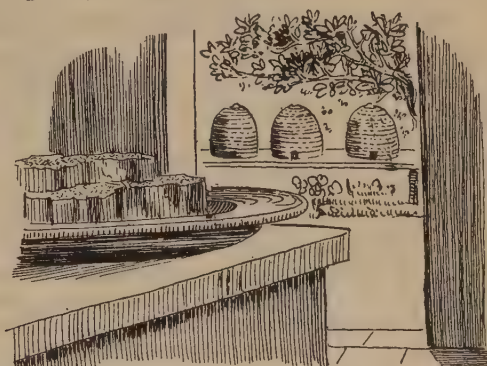


The Law of the is perfect <sup>converting the soul.</sup>  
 Testimony is sure <sup>making wise the simple.</sup>  
 Statutes are right <sup>rejoicing the heart.</sup>  
 Commandment is pure <sup>enlightening the eyes.</sup>  
 Fear is clean <sup>enduring for ever.</sup>  
 Judgments are true <sup>and righteous altogether.</sup>

More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine



sweeter  
also than  
honey  
and the



Moreover by them is thy



warned:  
and in  
keeping  
of them  
there is  
great



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 19:1-11.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, my Teacher, I long to know Thee, who art the Way, the Truth and the Life. Lead me as Thou didst lead the wise men of old, by the light of Thy star, and the prophecies of Thy Word. I would search for truth as the bee searches for nectar; lead me to Thy Book, which is sweeter than honey and the droppings of the honeycomb. I would dig after nuggets of truth as the miner delves for nuggets of gold; lead me to Thy precepts which are more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold. Teach me all I can learn while I live, and teach me the rest in Heaven. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

The heavens declare Thy glory, Lord;  
In every star Thy wisdom shines;  
But when our eyes behold Thy Word,  
We read Thy name in fairer lines.

The rolling sun, the changing light,  
And nights and days Thy power confess,  
But the blest volume Thou has writ  
Reveals Thy justice and Thy grace.

—Isaac Watts.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** A nature piece by David. Time, his early manhood. Like Psalm 119 it extols God's law, giving to it various epithets. Verses 1-6 reveal God through nature, verses 7-11 reveal Him through revelation.

**Scripture Setting:** The Seeker After Truth. Wonders of nature, Job 38:19-38. Natural and spiritual wisdom, 1 Cor. 2:6-16. Led by star and prophecy, Matt. 2:1-10. The heavens great but man greater, Psa. 8:1-5. Value of Bible study, 2 Tim. 3:14-17; Psa. 119:1-8. Unbounded knowledge, Psa. 139:1-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage gives us the signposts of religion, natural and revealed, on life's journey. 1. The regular appearances of the

sun by day and the moon by night teach us the unflinching faithfulness of God. 2. Even the blind feel the warmth of the sun, and the ignorant are helped by reading God's Word. 3. The books of nature and revelation claim the same Divine Author. They should be used to interpret each other. 4. Everything visible and material is a symbol of something invisible and eternal. 5. Arguing from the less to the greater the seed supplied the sparrow assures me I shall not lack; and the Hand that guides the planets with precision will guide my steps aright. 6. Faith need not wait on scientific demonstrations. The pure in heart may see God without mastering the laws of optics.

### THE DIVINE AUTHOR'S TWO VOLUMES, NATURE AND REVELATION.

**The Point of Contact.** It was evening. A shepherd lad lay stretched upon the green slope overlooking Bethlehem. He gazed long into the starry depths where Orion marched with his jeweled sword. He studied the glowing Sirius, the Dog-star, and watched Arcturus, of whom Job had written ages before. With his keen shepherd eyes used to long distances he tries to compute the distance to the changeless North star. To the young David with his poetic nature there came a mighty sense of vastness, a suggestion of infinite distance, and from his lips there escapes an exclamation deeply religious, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."

**Day Unto Day Uttereth Speech.** We are all born with a thirst to know. The baby in the cradle awakens one morning to see a bright spot on the nursery wall he has never seen before. He is outgrowing his cradle. Another morning he catches sight of the bright red flowers in the garden. He is outgrowing the walls of his nursery. Another morning he is in the garden but sees beyond the garden wall a vast world carpeted with turf, and canopied with blue. This young explorer has outgrown his garden. When you have taught him a little of the geography of earth and the astronomy of heaven his imagination will expand beyond these confines. He asks, "Father, Mother, what lies beyond the stars?" The answer may

make him a believer or an infidel. It is more natural for him to believe. For the infant mind is born with a sense of infinity, and the baby soul is haloed with the gleam of eternity.

**The Glory of the Heavens.** No star-charts of scientific astronomy are needed to feel the vastness of the universe. "Their line is gone out through all the earth." When David exclaimed,

"When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers,  
The moon and the stars which thou hast ordained,  
What is man that thou are mindful of him,  
Or the son of man that thou visitest him?"

he did not know the force of his own words as we know them now. We have become quite well acquainted with some of our neighbors who are twenty trillions of English miles out there in space. They are so far that this string of ciphers we make carries no real conception to the mind. Even if we state their distance in the terms of centuries required for a cannon ball to reach them from us we are dazed rather than enlightened. But borrowing a shaft of light that radiates from the sun as our yard stick, we may reckon that it will travel from the sun to the earth, a distance of 92 million of miles in eight minutes and seven seconds. But there are known stars so far from us that their light at this rate would not reach us in thousands of years. So great are some



facts that it is possible to know, but impossible to conceive them. The space of the stars awakens reverence and awe. "The undevout astronomer is mad." In the study of the firmament, the handiwork of God, we can find no adequate words to describe our wonder, so we borrow the Psalmist's:

"O Lord, how great are Thy works!  
In wisdom hast thou made them all."

**Man's Greater Glory.** The computations of astronomy are wonderful. Yet greater are the mysteries of the human mind and eye. Not content with naming and numbering the host of heaven, man, the pigmy creature, determines their composition, approximates their weight, measures their vast distances, and photographs them when he cannot find them with the telescope. In this way in the last few months has Professor Hale discovered 60,000 new stars at Mount Wilson observatory. Think of all these worlds, but think of the tiny pupil of man's eye where all these 10,000 rays of light cross each other and give us a correct but inverted picture of the starry heavens. Think how the light falling from yonder star drops upon that delicate patchwork of nerves behind the eyeball and the human mind grasps and comprehends its significance. Man comes into this world with all the delicate organism of the eye attuned to see the stars and clambers up by thought and study to where he can think God's thoughts after Him.

"Thou madest him a little lower than the angels  
Thou crownedst him with glory and honor."

How it ennobles and dignifies man's existence to remember that the Spirit of the living God deigns to enter the narrow recess of the human heart. This little earth is only a waif amid the greater planets, but be it remembered that God's only Son walked its vales and died upon one of its hills. That makes our little earth the moral center of the universe. And how glorious is the lot of man since God becomes his Friend and Brother.

**The Glory of God's Written Revelation.** Some things truly the heavens teach us with their wondrous lights and perfect mechanism. The stars tell us of their Creator,

"Forever singing as they shine,  
'The hand that made us is Divine.'"

They say that God is great, that He is wise, that He is good. But for the great lessons that reveal the full proportions of the Divine nature we must search beyond the skies, we must go to the Bible. Those whose eyes have appreciated most the beauties of nature—flower, bird, and star, have appreciated more the beauties of the Bible.

Coleridge says that the fairest flower he ever saw climbing around a poor man's window was not so beautiful in his eyes as the open Bible which was lying within the poor man's window. The literature of the Bible is the poor man's university. Lincoln read it in his youth by his fire of logs, and long years after its spirit and style were distilled from his pen when he wrote his second inaugural or his Gettysburg speech. Bible teachings have transformed entire civilizations and converted cannibals into a great Christian power. Our own ancestors in the bogs of old England ate each other's flesh till Augustine took them the Bible. Luther's translation opened up the Bible to the plowboy, and awakened the intellectual life of Germany. This Book comes to us hoary with antiquity. Yet man's interest in the Bible is perennial. It is still to be reckoned among the best sellers. A few years ago the American revision of the New Testament was announced. It produced a literary sensation. The day it was published in New York it was telegraphed almost bodily from there to a great Chicago daily that it might arrive twenty-four hours in advance of steam. This was the longest message ever telegraphed, and it goes without saying, the very best.

The Bible is not a treatise on astronomy, nor an abstract philosophy of life. It is a glad personal message of salvation sent of God. The great signpost at the parting of the ways that leads the weary traveller home is the sure sign of the cross. This is the cardinal message of the Bible.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What special opportunities were given David to study nature? 2. Who was it dreamed that the sun, moon and eleven stars bowed down to him? 3. On what notable occasion did the sun stand still? 4. On what greater occasion was the sun's brightness eclipsed and the earth shaken? 5. Mention some of the rewards for observing God's law. 6. How many times does God's name appear in the ten commandments? In the beatitudes?

**Challenge Text.** Open Thou mine —, that I may — wondrous things out of Thy —. *Psa. 119: (?)*.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. We are in the habit of giving each flower a sentimental language, and the rainbow is a bow that speaks forth a scripture promise. 2. Christ used natural objects in His teaching—the seed, the wind, the lily, the sparrow and the mother hen. 3. Some men through custom kiss the Bible in court but treat its warnings and promises with contempt. 4. The stars are the signal lights on our Heavenly Father's veranda hung by the angels to show us the way home. 5. When the earth gets between us and the sun we are in darkness, and when the pursuit of the world gets between us and our Father's purpose, we are in spiritual darkness.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

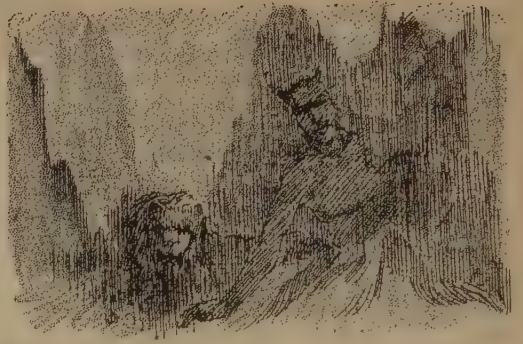


# THE LORD MY SHEPHERD

Yea, though I



I  
will  
fear  
no



for  
thou art  
with  
me; thy

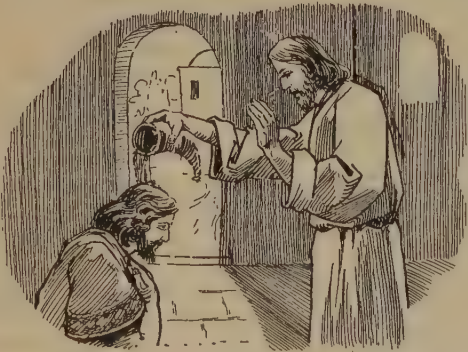


and  
thy

they  
comfort  
me.  
Thou



in the  
presence  
of mine  
enemies:  
thou



with oil; my



Surely goodness and mercy shall



all the days  
of my life:  
and I will  
dwell in the



for ever.



## THE SCRIPTURE LES SON IS PSALMS 23:1-6.

**Prayer:** Great Shepherd of the sheep, watch over this foolish and defenseless lamb. Once I loved to pick my path and I wandered far. I fed on poisonous herbs, I was torn in the thicket, till numb and bleeding, Thou didst find me, and bear me back. No wonder I know Thy voice, and love to follow Thee! Lead me in the paths of righteousness down to old age. Gather me at last into Thy presence where there shall be one fold, one Shepherd. Amen.

"An' de Shepherd go out in de darkness  
Where de night was col' an' bleak,  
An' dat lil' brack sheep He find it,  
An' lay it agains' His cheek.  
An' de hirelin' frown, 'O, Shepherd,  
Don' bring dat sheep to me!  
But de Shepherd He smile, an' He hol' it close,  
An'—dat lil' brack sheep—wuz—me!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** A pastoral poem describing in a beautiful metaphor God's loving care. Written by David, perhaps not long before he was called to walk through the shadowy valley of death. For the belief that Christ is the Lord here referred to as a shepherd see John 10:14; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25.

**Scripture Setting:** The Zion Sheepfold. David the shepherd, Psa. 78:52-55, 68-72. False shepherds, Ezek. 34:1-10. The fold restored, Ezek. 34:11-17. The duty and reward of undershepherds, 2 Pet. 5:1-9. The lost sheep found, Matt. 18:10-14. Christ the Shepherd and the Door, John 10:1-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Soul refreshment seems to be the key thought of the passage presented in the double figure of a green, well-watered pasture, and a joyous, bountiful feast. 1. God,

lifted out of the distant heavens, is placed with man, even more, He becomes "my Shepherd" in tenderest intimacy. 2. The sheep nature falls an easy prey to its enemies, hence the need of a shepherd possessing superior strength and wisdom. 3. A pasture where sheep lie down in content and a table where the cup overflows denote spiritual blessings without stint or measure. 4. There is no true proportion between our service and His goodness. He leadeth us for His name's sake, or regard for His own moral perfection. 5. A review of a life of Christian experience gives confidence that God will not cast us off in old age, or forsake us in death. The table spread by the Divine hand is not the banquet of a night or the reunion of a day, but the family meal where the partakers shall go out no more forever.

### THE ABUNDANT SUPPLIES OF GRACE.

**Point of Contact.** When John Muir was a young man fresh from college he spent a summer in the Sierras herding sheep. He calls it the most important year of his life. He left the corral in June with a flock of two thousand and fifty. He returned late in September, having lost only thirteen. The wild life in the mountains did much for the sheep, but it did more for the future geologist and explorer.

**What David Learned.** It is written of Israel's greatest king, "He took David from the sheepfolds to feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance. \* \* \* So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." The Bethlehem sheep ranch was a great university. The task of feeding and ruling a few hundred sheep developed the skill to feed and rule the hundreds of thousands of his kingdom. David's arm was strong, but we would miss our lesson if we should forget that David learned early to trust an arm that was stronger. Now in his old age he rests a bit, giving himself up to retrospect and reminiscence. He dwells upon his whole career, the days of his early pastoral life, and the years of royal responsibility. Conscious of the Providence that overruled and the Divine care that upheld, he gives glad testimony to the secret of his success. "The Lord is my shepherd."

**Attachment of Shepherd and Sheep.** The

Oriental shepherd made sheep raising a serious pursuit. Under that marvelous Palestinian sky, he had the occasion and the conditions for communing with nature. But he never forgot that first of all he was a shepherd. At any moment his serene musings might be broken by the attack of a lion or a bear. Then at great personal hazard he became their protector. David fought for his sheep as a father would fight for his children. Through such experiences there grew up the tenderest intimacy between the shepherd and his sheep. Having a small flock, the shepherd knew each sheep by name, and the sheep in turn learned the shepherd's voice, and followed him rather than a stranger. He led them where the grass was tallest and tenderest, and the water most abundant. Under his watchful eye they could lie down in restful content. Such is the tender relationship which may be established between God and the soul.

**Keeping the Count Full.** David kept his father's sheep, but he was not a craven hireling. His was a labor of love. Jesse knew that his son would keep the count full. 'The wild beast that stalked at night to prey upon his flock would pay for his presumption by his carcass. So the Heavenly Father knew when He sent forth the Son of David from the ivory palaces of Heaven that He would guard well the sheep fold, and destroy the last enemy of the race to keep the count

full. And when the Heavenly Father saw His darling Son's garments all dripping with blood, the guilty brothers said, "An evil beast hath devoured him." But the Father knew that His Son had slain the wild beasts, sin and death, and completed the work for which He was sent,—to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

"But the Master Shepherd shook His head; The count was short, and He gently said,—  
'I have a hundred to love and keep,  
And I must find my wayward sheep."

"The wood may frown, and the thorn may tear,  
And death creep forth from the rocky lair,—  
Through wood, and thorn, and death I hold  
My sheep, till all are in the fold."

**Paths of Righteousness.** The great superiority of the Eastern shepherd over the Western is that the Oriental herder goes before his sheep and picks out their way for them. If the sheep were left to themselves they might miss the greenest pastures, the deep, cool waters, the gradual, easy descent, and the safe way through the treacherous ravine. There is a world of difference between the sheeppaths made by sheep instinct and the path made by the sagacious, careful shepherd. When a human life chooses its own way, following appetite and impulse, it can only be a crooked, meandering path, oftentimes dangerously near forbidden ledges. It is as foolhardy to pick our way through this life without Christ's direction and presence as to cross the Alps without a guide.

Before His followers were ever called Christians at Antioch the manner and method of Christian living was referred to in the Acts of the Apostles as "the Way." And Christ declared that all He had to teach, all He was in character was included in that triple designation, "the Way, the Truth, the Life." In conduct He did only those things that pleased the Father. His counsels and precepts set for all times the boundaries of true ethics and morality. His life became the one historic example to men, the perfect and original career for all to imitate. In a very real sense Christ is still the Good Shepherd going before, leading in the paths of righteousness. The path of right living leads away from the slippery places of sin; though narrow and straight, it leads to life eternal; it is the only way that is pleasing to God. Ancient prophecy is the sign post directing thereto. "Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

**Through the Valley of Shadows.** We can well imagine those dark, deep, sunless ravines between the mountains through which David led his sheep. Here the beasts of prey would find a natural hiding place. The timid sheep of their own accord would never pass through these shadowy depths

But the shepherd going before armed with rod and staff inspired confidence. The staff supported the shepherd in hill climbing and was his weapon against wild beasts and robbers. The rod or crook guided the sheep, and in dangerous places helped to lift them out. There are many dangerous places in life that inspire terror, but it is a comfort to the good man to know that his steps are ordered of the Lord.

Man naturally dreads death; even to him who hopefully looks beyond it there comes an involuntary shudder. But in the presence of Christ's companionship shadows will flee. "There'll be no dark valley when Jesus comes." The walk down to the cold waters and through them will be like the walk to Emmaus. "I will fear no evil, for Thou art near me." This Psalm might well be called the friendship pillow of dying saints. This Shepherd Psalm has been whispered more by dying lips than any other passage of scripture.

**The Table of Goodness and Mercy Prepared.** Rich as is the Psalmist's figure of the sheep so contented and supplied that they lie down in the midst of the tender grass, it is not equal to the burden of his luxurious thought. So he changes his figure from a sheep to a banqueter, reminding us of the Savior's exclamation, "How much more, then, is a man better than a sheep."

The natural world to David was a feast. He had enjoyed good health; he had a full, bright eye to enjoy beauty whether of flowers or of stars. He had a musical and poetic nature. He drank deep of the cup of friendship, leaving in his attachment for Jonathan an immortal picture. Even his one-time enemy, Saul the jealous, had been compelled at times to sit in the gallery uninvited and look down upon David seated at the feast of popular favor. Perhaps David strikes a note of personal thanksgiving for his kingly favors when the one-time shepherd lad declares, "Thou anointest my head with oil," and his mind goes back to that glad day when old Samuel consecrated him to be a king. He completes this picture of spiritual abundance by declaring that the cup of grace overflows—kindness beyond measure. The delights and satisfactions of the Christian life are the royal bounty of God's overflowing cup. They include forgiveness of our sins, cleansed hearts fired with new motives, the gift of the Holy Comforter, the witness of Christ's abiding presence, the sure promises of God, unlimited possibilities for service, and the assurance of eternal life. No wonder David desired that in such a banquet-house he might live forever.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Contentment is found in absence of jealousy as much as in accumulation of riches. 2. Refreshment, guidance, protection, abundance, these are the four legs to the table the Lord prepares. 3. The still waters of God are not the boisterous currents of dissipation, neither are they the Dead Sea of stagnation and satiety. 4. A sense of God's presence is a silent rebuke to anxiety and fear. 5. The beauty of the rainbow comes after the storm, and the beauty of the Shepherd Psalm breaks through the tear-stained spectacles of old age.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



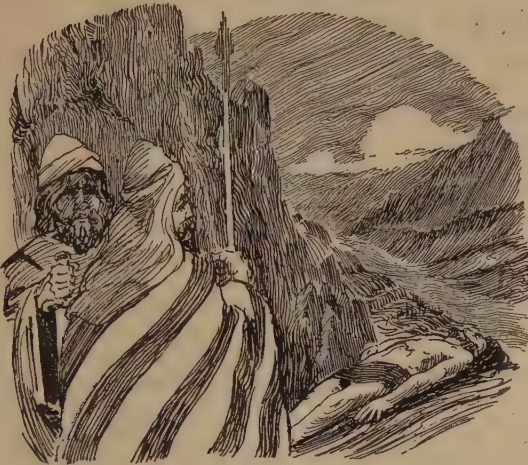
# CONFIDENCE IN GOD

The Lord is my

and my  
salvation;  
whom shall  
I fear? the  
Lord is the  
strength  
of my life  
of whom  
shall I be



When the



even  
mine  
enemies  
and my  
foes,



to eat up my flesh, they



Though  
an host  
should



against me, my heart shall not fear:



# CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 27:1-6.

Prayer: God of David, my Sword and Buckler, help me to drive out of my life the secret enemy of sin and the boasting giant of fear. With Thee on my side I have no enemy that can harm me. Make me not afraid of the leaders of opinion or the great host of the majority that may be encamped against me. Whether I am under the roof of Thy sanctuary or in the midst of the storm in Thy great out-of-doors Thou wilt hide me in the pavillion of Thy love. Amen.

Strong Son of God, immortal love,  
Whom we that have not seen Thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove;

Thou wilt not leave us in the dust:  
Thou madest man he knowns not why,  
He thinks he was not made to die;  
And Thou hast made him: Thou art just.  
—Alfred Tennyson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** A Psalm of fearless trust written by David probably soon after Absalom's rebellion. Deprived of the sanctuary service, he extols its gracious benefits. The reference here is to the tent erected on Mount Zion to receive the ark of the covenant.

**Scripture Setting:** The King's Token of Victory. David flees from Jerusalem, II Sam. 15:30-37. Jehovah's pledge to Jacob, Gen. 28:10-22. Jehovah encourages Joshua, Josh. 1:2-7. The pledge of the Divine presence, Isa. 43:1-7. Saved from slippery places, Psa. 73:1-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The whole passage shows how communion with the Divine furnishes reserve strength for the soul under trial. 1. The measure of a strong life is its ability to resist adverse conditions. 2. Our confidence in God grows through adversity as the cedar roots strike deeper by battling with storm. 3. "Sharper than an adder's tooth is the ingratitude of a thankless child." 4. Our appreciation of public worship is increased by forcible separation from it. 5. Some fitting temple inquiries: The benefits of suffering; the meaning of life; the destiny of the soul.

### DAVID'S CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

**Point of Contact.** On the supposition that David composed this Psalm shortly after Absalom's unsuccessful rebellion, we shall understand it best by remembering the conditions of the king's exile from Jerusalem. How sorely did he miss the services of the sanctuary. We have now followed David all the way up from the red-haired shepherd lad to the enviable position of Israel's greatest king. Hitherto we have seen him move forward through an almost unbroken succession of victories. In this lesson is exhibited the strength of his soul in adversity.

The truthful historian records that this great character was marred by sin. Under peculiar temptations he had fallen, but the sincerity and depth of his penitence we may judge by a study of the lesson which follows this. Irving says, "The hearts of a hundred men strove and struggled together within the narrow continent of David's heart." Because of David's sin against the house of Uriah, Nathan the prophet had declared that his child would die and God would raise up evil against him out of his own house. So that when Absalom raised his rebellion against his royal father, David remembered the warning, and fled from his home in Jerusalem suddenly unmanned. Not his sins, for they were sudden, erratic, and incidental, nor his fear, for it was brief, but his zeal and loyalty to Jehovah, ever steadfast and persistent, mark the strength of his character.

**Sustaining Power of Personal Faith.** "The Lord is my light." Here is the light that did not fail. Driven from the capital he had builded, David the exile was in the

dark. Hurrying up the side of the Mount of Olives, with head covered and weeping, he stops long enough to pray. Here his courage returns. God is the good man's light, and prayer is the instantaneous button by which the illumination is turned on. David thereupon sends back to the city the priests who are fleeing with the ark of the covenant. He is confident that he shall return also. He journeys forward conscious of the Divine presence.

**The Destroyers Destroyed.** Absalom had forfeited his right to live, first by murdering his brother Amnon, and afterwards by stirring up an insurrection against the king. His ambitions led to plot violence against his father. But in his eagerness to eat up his flesh he stumbled and fell. In the battle he set to slay David, Absalom himself was killed. Such is ever the irony of fate, the retributive stroke of justice. Haman builds a scaffold to swing Mordecai, and from it he himself swings. Wilkes Booth fires a shot against the government, and the flag of the government catches the spur of his boot, throwing him so heavily as to break his leg and prevent his escape. Ahithophel, the wisest of David's friends, turns traitor, his plans are foiled, and in remorse he dies by his own hand. Judas meets Christ in the midnight of His agony with a traitor's kiss, he lives long enough to say, "I have betrayed innocent blood," then rushes to adjust the halter to his neck. Soon his bleeding, broken body lies on the rocks beneath. Thus have evildoers plotted, stumbled and fallen. The body of Absalom swinging by the hair, struck through with arrows, is history's scarecrow for all evil birds of prey.

**Confident Against an Enemy's Host.** From Dan to Beersheeba the insurrectionists flocked to the colors of the young prince until they were like the sand by the sea for



multitude. Twenty thousand were slaughtered in the battle. Josephus says that David had but 4,000 mustered under him. But the king was not afraid. His soldiers see his courage and exclaim, "Thou art worth 10,000." How often do the pages of history corroborate the wise man's conclusion that "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong." It is not a question of opposing numbers so much as of unwillingness to surrender. It is the virtue of religion to destroy fear and inspire confidence. "One shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight."

It is wonderful how God clears the way for one resolute, confident man. Think of Robert L. Stevenson, the invalid courageous, who battling against hemorrhages, could write, "Acts may be forgiven, but not even God Himself can forgive the hanger-back." One Sunday afternoon when he was a boy his grandmother insisted on reading aloud a chapter from the Bible. "Well, Granny," he said, "if I must listen, read me a chapter from the fightingest part of the Old Testament." It was that part that David had a hand in making.

**Faith's Arsenal the Sanctuary.** We are indebted to David for the loftiest expressions of loyalty and regard for God's house. Throughout his life he consistently engaged in public worship. The temple service owed much to the suggestions and labors of David. He first of all planned a stone-built sanctuary, and collected much of the material for its construction and embellishment. He furnished the noble hymns afterwards sung by the temple choirs. But the sanctuary also did much for David. He never esteemed it so highly as when in his exile he was deprived of its gracious benefits. Its ritual and its praise unfolded the beauty of the Lord. It was there he contemplated the benign attributes of Deity and poured out his soul in adoration. Once he passed through a conflict of doubt and almost lost faith. His mind had stumbled over the prosperity of the wicked. They escaped trouble and had no pangs in death. Perhaps he had cleansed his heart in vain. In a noble Psalm he tells us the victory of personal faith:

"When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me;  
Until I went into the sanctuary of God, and considered their latter end."

By inquiring in God's temple we arrive at a correct philosophy of life. Christ, our example in all things, found as a lad in the

temple the great call to his Father's business.

**The Exaltation of Life.** When we are able to look down upon our enemies we have placed ourselves beyond their reach. It is something beautiful to see how David could pity his enemies. How carefully does he gather up the dust of Saul from a dishonored grave to give it decent burial. Yet Saul had struck at him with murderous intent, and hunted him as a partridge over the mountain. And when Absalom came on the field to slay him he gives orders to his captains to deal gently for his sake with Absalom. It was such generous impulses as these that made David a man after God's own heart. That man indeed can lift his head above his enemies who has learned that enmity weakens the nerve power, that envy is a slow poison, and that "He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city." A calm, settled conviction that the just Judge shall at last adjudicate all claims exalts a character far above littleness and meanness. His pigmy enemies may snarl and bite round about him but he is safe. Such a man is lifted up upon a rock.

**Songs That Never Die.** The sacrifices of joy which David vowed to offer in the sanctuary were the immortal Psalms he wrote. It was the peculiar province of this shepherd minstrel to leave a great body of national and religious songs. Thus imperishably with his songs of question and answer, strophe and antistrophe, has he written his name large upon the world's religious life. His harp was his magic wand. And in his last words he himself seemed to be the vibrating instrument upon which the Divine breath played.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How did Joseph's slave days in Egypt, Moses' flight into Midian, and Paul's imprisonment at Rome fulfil the Divine purpose? 2. In what particular incidents in David's life was God his (1) light; (2) salvation; (3) strength? 3. How does Divine worship contribute in making character (1) beautiful; (2) joyful; (3) exalted? 4. Where were nature's first temples? 5. Where did Christ tell the Samaritan woman that men would eventually worship? 6. What is John's reference to the temple in Revelation and its meaning?

**Challenge Text.** The — is my —, and I will not — what — shall do unto —. Heb. 13:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Faith is trusting God in the dark; the reality to the soul of things invisible to the senses. 2. David looked forward to his return to the sanctuary with the hope and dependence that a steamer captain looks forward to the next coaling station. 3. David was not the soldier who feared to strike a trial blow on the boss of his shield lest he break it. He had tried God, and God was his salvation. 4. Evil men, like beetles and bats, scurry for darkness, but David calls upon God to turn on the light, "Search me, try me, examine me."

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



BLESSED

is he  
whose  
trans-  
gression is



whose  
sin is  
covered.

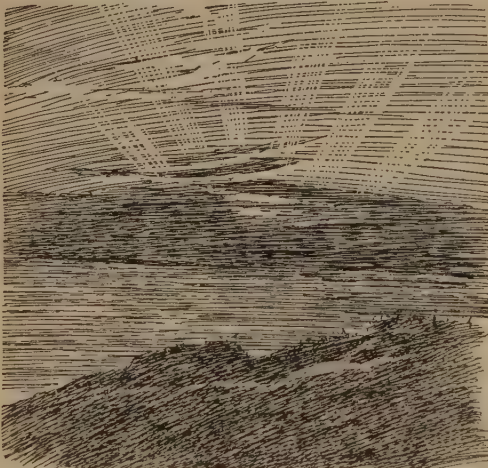
BLESSED

is the

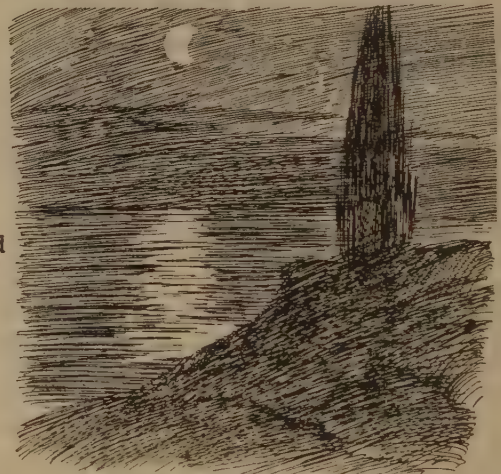


unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.  
When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

For



and



thy

hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledge my



unto thee,  
and mine  
iniquity  
have I  
not hid.  
I said,  
I will



my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 32:1-11.

**Prayer:** Thou, loving, patient Christ, who would not bruise the broken reed, nor quench the smoking flax, take my poor heart with all my sense of sin, and shame, and failure, and take my hand to lift me up. Make me glad with a sense of sin's burden removed, and with the assurance that Thou hast given me a clean heart. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

"Most quick to pardon sins is He;  
Who unto God draws near  
One forward step, God taketh three  
To meet, and quit his fear."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The second of seven penitential Psalms written by David about one year after the death of Uriah. Its historical background is found in 2 Sam. 12:1-10. Read in this connection Psalms 51, inspired by the same occasion.

**Scripture Setting:** The Welcome of the Home-Coming. The Heaven's rejoicing over the repentant, Luke 15:1-7. The call to repentance, Matt. 3:8-12. The gospel of a second chance, Jer. 18:1-8. The sinful woman forgiven, John 8:1-11. The reward of true repentance, Isa. 1:11-18. Final blessedness of the repentant, Rev. 7:13-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage suggests the warm welcome which awaits the sinner's return. 1. Even nature is a kind mistress, healing the ugly scars of last year's storms. 2. A broken bone can bear but little weight; and a heart broken by remorse is sensitive to love. 3. Only after we have wandered far do we appreciate the light in the window beckoning us back. 4. Our love for Him may flicker like a will-o'-the-wisp, but His changeless love shines like a steady beacon. 5. "As we forgive others." Here is the key that unlocks the treasures of Divine forgiveness.

### SIN CONCEALED, CONFESSED, AND CANCELLED.

**Point of Contact.** For men high as well as men low, for men on the throne as well as men on the scaffold, there is only one way to become reconciled to a sinful past. For David, whose word had become law, it was no easy task to submit to and acknowledge the Divine law which he had so ruthlessly broken. His guilty love for a beautiful face had taken full possession of him. He was willing to have the husband who stood in the way of the gratification of his covetous desire murdered in battle. Nathan recites a parable, as if an actual case, in which a situation of extreme injustice appeals to the shepherd-king's sense of fair play. He demands that the guilty shall pay four-fold restitution and forfeit his life. Suddenly the weight of the whole accusation is forced upon him. "Thou art the man." One element redeems the dark picture. David repents, renounces his own act, and resolves to arise from his shame.

**Blessedness of Forgiveness.** King David put in a miserable year from the time he conceived the murder of Uriah to the critical moment when by the point of the prophet's parable and the point of his accusing finger, he was brought to confession and repentance. David's sincere prayer was that God might restore unto him the joy of His salvation. The clouds broke and the long eclipse ended the very moment David cried, "I have sinned against the Lord." For David knew that God was waiting to establish the old relationships, just as the prodigal knew that all would be well the very moment he came to make the great resolve, "I will arise, and go, and say, father, I have sinned." To an awakened conscience sin becomes an

intolerable nightmare. Its spell is broken when God says, I will put away the remembrance of it forever. Then there breaks upon the heart once burdened a new hope, in the Divine compassion as welcome as is the return of the sun's bright rays to the storm-tossed mariner after weary days of darkness and danger. To the impure the face of God is always eclipsed; but the blessing to the pure in heart is that they understand Him, appreciate His character, and feel a warm sense of His sympathy.

"Helpless and foul as the trampled snow,  
Sinner, despair not! He stoopeth low  
To rescue the soul that is lost in its sin,  
And raise it to life and enjoyment again,"

Yes, David was the guilty man; but now he is the blessed man whose transgression is covered. He would go a step farther; he would have a spirit without guile. He desired purity as well as forgiveness. He had been pardoned; now he would be washed. While none but the redeemed themselves can know the exaltation of spirit which is awakened when the great love of the Divine pardon flashes upon the personal consciousness, yet there is a Heavenly beatitude beyond forgiveness. It is the beatitude of virgin purity. This world's ideal life is not his who repented of his sin, but His "who knew no sin."

**The Curse of a Convicting Conscience.** Now that David's restoration is assured, he naturally contrasts his happy estate with the memory of those days when he kept silence, hiding his sin. His wrong-doing was felt, but not acknowledged. This mental condition produced severe prostration of his bodily powers. "My bones waxed old through

my roaring (groaning) all the day long." Not only were the days intolerably lengthened, but the nights were filled with sleeplessness. "Day and night thy hand was heavy upon me." What a misadjustment sin had wrought; instead of being in the Divine hand, feeling a sense of eternal support, he was under the Divine hand, feeling the pressure of eternal wrath. "My moisture is turned into the drought of summer." In David's country frequent and copious rains are the rule in the winter months. Soon after the heat of summer arrives, the grass withers, the flower fades, and the plant is dried up by its roots. The earlier part of David's reign, marked by innocence and integrity, had resembled a field refreshed by generous showers; but when God stirred up his conscience and set his sins in order before his face, his courage failed, and the beauty of his life's setting turned to an arid wilderness. The outward picture is fair, but inwardly the scene is a veritable chamber of horrors. The king sits proudly on his throne, for his rule is secure. The Ammonites are overcome, the Syrians are defeated. Valiant men are willing to die for him, beautiful women sing his praises. Fair Bathsheba becomes his wife and a baby's prattle is heard in the palace. Yet over this fair picture hangs a suspended sword, for already it was written, "The thing that David had done displeased the Lord."

The nature and operation of conscience have not changed since David's time. We all can remember times when we "kept silence" and suffered, while all the time conscience whispered, "Better go and talk it over and make the matter right." God's hand was heavy upon us so long as the wrong was unconfessed and unforgiven. We have lain on our bed when the lights were all out listening to the patter of the rain on the shingles and we could not sleep. We thought so hard that the moisture seemed to ooze from every pore of our body. We had wronged a brother weeks before when we were at play. He had forgotten all about it and was sleeping soundly at our side. What was it that kept us awake and brought misery with our remembrance? It was the power of conscience. And how the load was lifted, and sleep came when we wakened our brother and made a full confession and secured forgiveness. A convicted conscience is often the seeming cause of a painful experience, but the real cause lies deeper in a disordered life. If we take into our stomach poisonous food, how sickening and painful is the effect produced. But a merciful providence sends the pain as a warn-

ing that something is wrong and it leads us to a remedy. How fortunate that the soul is guarded by this tender, reproving monitor.

**Forgiveness Based on Confession.** No sooner had Nathan let go with unerring aim the sharpened shaft of conviction at David's heart than there springs from the king's lips the cry, "I have sinned against the Lord." As in all true repentance there were five elements in David's appeal to God, 1, conviction; 2, confession; 3, sorrow; 4, plea for mercy; 5, purpose of amendment. "I acknowledge my sin unto Thee." If every sinner made public confession in detail of his wrongdoing, little good would result and much harm might follow. All sins, even those against our neighbors and ourselves, are against God, since they violate His law. The confession of the soul, then, in most cases, is to be poured into the ear of God alone. To morally turn ourselves wrong side out for public inspection is not for edification.

Restitution, however, must accompany inward confession if the sin be the appropriation of something that belongs to another. The scripture rule is a four-fold restitution. David's sin was the more flagrant because he was the king. It would furnish a public example. The fall was the more to be deplored because he had been called a man after God's own heart. However others may have condemned David, none have done it so unsparingly as David himself. When he wrote his penitential Psalms, throbbing like his own overflowing heart, he published his guilt as widely as it could be borne by the language of man. "I confessed and Thou forgavest." Confession always precedes forgiveness and is the most eloquent plea for it. When the king shows humbled penitence Nathan asks no more, but immediately declares his pardon. There is no red tape in the government of God. Pardon is instantaneous. No penitent suppliant was ever kept waiting at the gate of Heaven. "And it shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear."

The quality of mercy is not strained;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from Heaven  
Upon the place beneath.—Merchant of Venice.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other persons are involved in the situation in the case of David's sin? 2. What did Nathan declare would be his double punishment? Did both disasters occur? 3. To whom did Christ offer forgiveness at the last moment, and what promise was attached? 4. Name five Bible sinners who became Bible saints.

**Challenge Text.** "I will — to you the — that the — hath —. Joel 2: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christ warned against evil thoughts. A covetous look proved David's undoing. 2. The sinner's first impulse is to flee from God; his safety lies in fleeing to God. 3. Nathan stands for the true friend who shows us our fault and leads us to repentance. 4. Sinful experiences may have a disciplinary and warning value, but "the bird with with a broken pinion never soared as high again."

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE PRAYER OF THE PENITENT

Purge me with

and  
I  
shall  
be  
clean:



me, and I shall be whiter than



Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.



from my sins,  
and blot  
out all mine  
iniquities.  
Create in  
me a



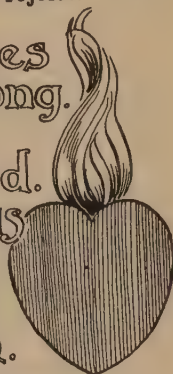
Confesses  
wrong.

Loves  
good.

Eschews  
evil.

Abhors  
sin.

No more  
deceives.



O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy



from  
me.  
Re-  
store  
unto  
me  
the



of thy  
salvation;  
and  
uphold  
me with  
thy  
free  
spirit.  
Then  
will I



transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

PSA. LI: 7-13.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 51:1-17.

**Prayer:** My Father and my God, I have sinned before Heaven and against Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son. But Thou hast never given me up, nor closed the door against my return. I have read the loving letter in which full pardon is freely offered me. Sick of the world and weary of its deceptions, I am coming back. Forgive me, receive me, and restore to me the gladness of the old days. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"Break off the yoke of inbred sin,  
And fully set my spirit free.  
I cannot rest till pure within,  
Till I am wholly lost in Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This Psalm of David, from earliest Christian times, has been called, by way of eminence, the penitential Psalm. It is also known as the Miserere, from its opening words in the Vulgate, *Miserere mei Domine*. See previous lesson for its historical basis.

**Scripture Setting:** Confession and Cure of Sin. The people's sin-offering, Lev. 16:15-19. Solomon's prayer for his people, 1 Kings 8:23-34. Isaiah's confession and forgiveness, Isa. 6:1-10. Job's acknowledgment of sin, Job. 7:11-21. The Redeemer, 1 John 1:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This portion of David's penitential prayer expresses the universal desire of a sin-sick soul for God. 1. For every deadly and poisonous contact God does provide a healing antidote. 2. Lost soul-health, like lost treasure, is most surely found by immediate search to recover it. 3. Man-like it is to fall into sin; fiend-like it is to remain therein; Christ-like it is to rescue from its power. 4. The rejoicing of recovery leads us to publish abroad the good news of the cure.

### THE BEATITUDE OF THE BROKEN HEART.

**Point of Contact.** St. Augustine, in his last illness, asked that one verse be painted on the wall opposite his bed, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." There is a Persian proverb declaring that nothing broken has any value except the heart, which becomes more valuable the more it is broken. By some it is supposed that David, the "warrior king," was lacking in the more tender feelings of humanity. As a matter of fact David himself, especially in his later years, was not often in the field. His wars were carried on by his "mighty men of valor," who bore the brunt of the active military operations. By the glimpses we catch of his personality; when he laments over the death of Jonathan and Saul; in his whole attitude towards Absalom; and in the spirit with which he received Nathan's rebuke, we conclude that David was a man of tender heart.

**Prayer for Purity.** "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean." Purity as well as pardon is desired by all true penitents. David uses three words to describe the contents of his heart, "transgression," "iniquity," and "sin." He also uses three terms to describe his heart's need, "purge," "wash," and "blot out." He had often seen the branch of hyssop dipped in water to be sprinkled upon some tent where a dead body had lain that it might be ceremonially clean according to the ordinances of Moses. Perhaps, too, he had seen the priest sprinkle with a branch of hyssop the blood of a dead bird upon a leper to cure him of his leprosy. His own heart seems like a dead body cor-

rupted with putrefaction, or the spotted flesh that had been attacked by loathsome leprosy. His hope is that the Divine hand with the hyssop branch may purge him of his evil nature. Not ceremonial cleansing, but a pure heart is the burden of his prayer. The executioner of Sir Walter Raleigh asked him if his head lay right upon the block. His answer was, "It matters little, my friend, how my head lies, provided my heart is right."

"Blot out all mine iniquities." However erringly God remembers the sins of the impenitent, He graciously promises to forget the iniquities of all who repent and reform. "Thy sins and iniquities I will remember no more." Ian Maclaren tells of a stern, Puritanic father who, because Flora, his daughter, became lost in the temptations of a big city, blotted her name from the record in the great family Bible. Much more like God was that Scotch mother in her conduct towards her wayward girl, when she had her own pictures placed in the dance-halls of Glasgow with the words underneath, Come home. One night at a dance there was a shriek and a faint. They raised a young woman from the dance floor and she sobbed, Take me home, my mother.

"Create in me a clean heart." Gold is pure, when with crucible and fire it has been separated from all not gold; the diamond is pure when the lapidary finds nothing in it to hinder the refraction and reflection of light; the mirror is pure when it reflects accurately the image before it; the lens is pure when without flaw it passes on the sunbeam as perfect as when it came from the sun; the heart is pure when without distortion it sees the moral perfections of the Divine attributes.



"Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." David remembers the pure white mountain tops of Lebanon that seemed so near to Heaven, made beautiful because God had covered their once-scarred and once-blackened heights with a merciful mantle of snow-flakes. Even the snow of lofty Lebanon might be soiled by the wind-borne dust, but God could wash away the last traces of guilt, making him whiter than snow.

**The Poet of Praise.** "Make me to hear joy and gladness." There was only One who could take David's life with its broken strings, its jangled chords, its fault, and fret and sin, and make it Israel's sweet harp of gladness and joy, capable of such music as the twenty-third Psalm. Hideous sounds on an instrument are called "wolf-notes." Sin had almost spoiled the music, introducing the wolf-notes of jealousy, anger, bitterness, hate, pride, and resentment. God changed his life to a grateful song. He found that his spiritual blessings were as hard to count as the stars in that Syrian sky. They included His loving care, the satisfactions of a Gospel experience, the renewal of his heart, sanctification by the Spirit, the gift of eternal life, and the abiding presence of God. Enough to awaken gladness and joy!

Once Mendelssohn came to see the great Freiburg organ. The old custodian, partly blind, refused the stranger permission to play. After much persuasion he granted him leave to play a few notes. The old keeper could hear, if he could not see. The few notes were enough. He knew the master was at the organ. There is only One who can bring out the highest and holiest within us.

"Great Master, touch us with Thy skilful hands; Let not the music that is in us die."

—Horatius Bonar.

"Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation." Mrs. Browning draws in satire the picture of a solemn dame who "thanked God and sighed." But David in one of his immortal songs (Psa. 41) exclaims, "Clap your hands," "shout unto God," "sing praises." A beautiful bit of rabbinical lore used by Longfellow in Sandalphon tells us that in Heaven there are two kinds of angels,—angels of service and angels of song. The angels of song belong to the higher order. The sweet singer of Israel was certainly one of God's angels of song. He made the Psalms to be the music room of the Bible where the Spirit swept over the keyboard of the human soul. Psalmist, prophet, and apostle unite in declaring that redemption will be the joyful theme of the great angelic hosts.

**Practice of the Presence of God.** "Cast me not away from Thy presence." The permanence and high-mindedness of David's friendships reveal the nobility of his soul. His friendship for Jonathan rested on deep

foundations; they loved the same love; they were in sympathy with the same high ideals of honor and manhood. When Jonathan died David's soul was as a dove bereft of his mate. Long years after when David finds the cripple boy belonging to Jonathan's family, he gives him a permanent place at the royal table. This trait in the warrior king of Israel shows he was capable of spiritual communion. He loathed his sins because they would separate him from God. He knew that permanent friendship and fellowship rested upon similarity of feelings. In the inner sanctuary of his heart he must be clean, like unto God, else he would be cast away from God's presence. So David practiced the presence of God, thought God's thoughts, and made himself by Divine help fit to be a friend of God.

"Uphold me by Thy free spirit." A man is not really cured until his character is changed, until he has substituted peace, love and courage for fear, worry and sin. Religion means a binding together, a power that unites and conserves the elements of our life. David had plenty of friends in his lifetime who played him false. We have already studied two, Ahithophel, his counsellor, and Absalom, his son. David's desire was the spiritual presence of a Friend who was touched with sympathy when he suffered; One who loved him with a love that was deep, tender, strong, everlasting; One who never counsels rashly, but possessed all wisdom for the ordering of his steps. This consciousness that God would never forsake him girded his life with strength. Said an invalid, restored to perfect health, "I've developed a passion for telling everybody of the good news about how I was cured." This is a natural symptom of soul health. The individual and the church with a healthy, positive experience begins at once the two-fold work of evangelizing and indoctrinating,—converting sinners, and teaching one-time transgressors.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What three expressions are used in this lesson showing David's desire for entire cleansing? 2. What three expressions are used to show the Divine impelling? 3. In what two ways would David show his moral transformation? 4. What public but ineffectual attempt did Pilate make to clear himself from the guilt of Christ's death?

**Challenge Text.** "Though your — be as —, they shall be as — as —; though they be — like —, they shall be as —." Isa. 1:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The great trees of California, one hundred feet in circumference, have seeds no larger than a lettuce seed. The seed of sin is small, but grows. 2. Sin is contrary to the Divine nature, and Heaven is permanent similarity of feelings with God. 3. Great souls like David broke through the forms of ceremonial law, and demanded an absolution from sin personal and conscious. 4. The deeper the sense of sin, the more heart-felt the gratitude for pardon. 5. The broken heart is the most precious thank-offering laid on the altar.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# MESSIAH'S REIGN

Give the



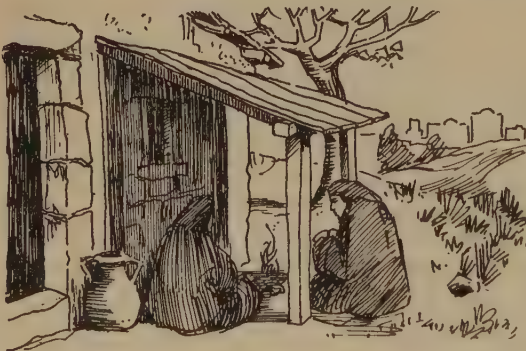
thy judgments, O  
God, and  
thy righteousness  
unto the  
king's  
son.  
He shall



thy people  
with  
righteousness,  
and thy poor  
with  
judgment.  
The



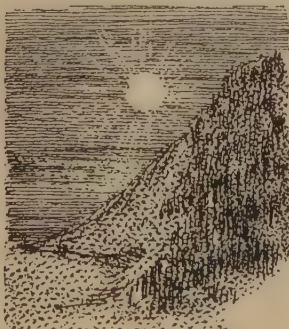
shall bring  
peace to the  
people, and the  
little hills, by  
righteousness.  
He shall  
judge the



of the  
people,  
he  
shall  
save the



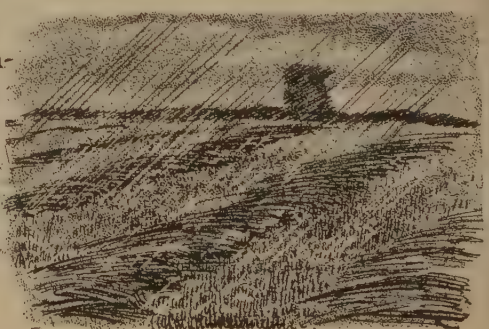
of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor. They shall fear thee as long as the



and



endure,  
through-  
out all  
gener-  
ations.  
He shall  
come  
down  
like



as showers that water the earth.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 72:1-12.

**Prayer:** O Christ, Thou Friend of the poor and needy, Thou Deliverer of the oppressed, hear the cry that goes up from homes of poverty and disease. Do for troubled hearts what Thou didst do for Mary and Martha. Plead for our cities as Thou didst pray with tears for Jerusalem. Cleanse our churches of wrong thoughts and practices as Thou didst cleanse the temple. Put an end to human hate and meanness, and let the millennium begin now in our hearts. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Step by step since time began  
We see the steady gain of man;  
For still the new transcends the old  
In signs and tokens manifold;  
Slaves rise up men; the olive waves  
With roots deep set in battle graves."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This Psalm was composed by David in his old age as a prayer for his son, Solomon, about to ascend the throne. It has a highly wrought figurative style not unlike the second Psalm.

**Scripture Setting:** The Nature of Messiah's Reign. The Messiah promised, Isa. 11:1-10. Solomon's glory excelled, Matt. 6:25-34. The strength of the Messiah, Isa. 63:1-6. The Messiah expected, John 4:19-25. The Messiah found, John 1:35-41.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage pictures Jesus as the Desire of nations. 1. Righteousness exalts a nation by furnishing a sure founda-

tion upon which the whole edifice may safely rest. 2. The world's life has only begun to tap the resources of water, sunlight, electricity and steam; the church has only begun to utilize the diversified powers of the Holy Spirit. 3. Three ways in which Christ lives eternally: in the affectionate remembrance of the redeemed; in the literature, institutions, and social life of succeeding generations; and in the presence of God and of His angels. 4. Three ways by which we make Christ King: the giving of our wealth; the living witness of truth; and the offering of prayer.

### A REIGN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

**Vs. 1, 2 and 3.** That Solomon would "judge the people with righteousness and the poor with judgment" was seen by an incident that occurred in the midst of the festivities of his accession. Two mothers of the poorer class come to demand justice of the new king. The people stand around wondering what the youthful ruler will do. The mother of the living child tells her story with the sorrow and sincerity of truth. Not her son, but a dead babe, had been placed in her bed while she slept. The other mother as strenuously insisted that she was the real mother of the living child. Then the king throws himself upon the unerring instincts of nature. The living child is to be divided—and one-half is to be given to each. The true mother betrays her affection: "O my lord, give her the living *babe* (she uses a peculiar and affectionate word) and in no wise slay it." The king repeats to his swordsmen word for word, the mother's cry. And the living child goes to the arms of the true mother.

Thus inaugurated Solomon's reign began as a golden age of jubilant delight. The royal justice to the poor was like the welcome showers in the thirsty East. "Judah and Israel dwelt safely every man under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon." The king was his own administrator of justice. He sat in the gate and adjudicated impartially the claims of his subjects. All classes prospered until idolatry and a pas-

sion for glory captured Solomon's heart. To build a glorious palace for himself and another for Pharaoh's daughter, he laid upon his people a grievous yoke of taxes.

Beyond Solomon, therefore, we must look for the enduring reign of righteousness, which was ushered in that day Jesus stood in the little synagogue in Nazareth and read, "He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Jesus came to tell us that God is our Father and all men are our brothers. Not the least hopeful sign of our times is a real passion for righteousness. Men are learning to love kindness and to hate meanness. Even the very corruption which stains the pages of our legislation has been brought to light because fearless Christian men in the spirit of Christ have demanded that these evils shall cease. There is a growing demand for righteousness in trade; our cities are being cleansed of corruption. These are the days of splendid temperance victories. Beautiful service towards the waif, the orphan, and the morally depraved, is being carried on by institutions of charity and reform. The cry of the children has been heard, and child labor abolished. These illustrate the increasing hold Christ has upon our civilization. Much remains to be done, but we thank God and take courage.

**Friend of the Poor and Needy.** Verses 5-7. The dynasty of David's son was to end, but the Psalmist here catches the vision of that inaugurated by Jehovah's Son which shall continue "as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations."

The luxury and selfish glory of Solomon's last days probably shortened his reign. Ascending the throne as the friend of the poor and early establishing a reputation as a just judge, he later formed a monopoly by which he became the great merchant prince, and enriched himself while his people suffered. Copying the Egyptians he enslaved the remnant of the Canaanitish race and sent them to the number of one hundred and fifty-three thousand to the quarries and forests of Lebanon. With palaces, summer homes, parks, and elaborate water works and defenses, even the Israelites were kept busy by the royal summons to share in rotation in this heavy labor. There could be but one end to all this extravagance. At sixty-one the king is prematurely old, facing a rising rebellion that grew out of the social injustices. The treasury was empty, the nation in debt, the taxes were multiplied, and the monopoly of trade more and more irksome. The glory of the temple and the royal palaces no longer dazzled the eyes of the people. The reign that began so gloriously ended in revolt and oppression.

When Jesus stood in the temple of Herod and declared, "Behold a greater than Solomon is here," He looked upon a nation that was oppressed and in bondage to Rome. His coming to befriend the poor and to redress all wrongs was like "rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth." And ever since it has been the glory of the greathearts of humanity to befriend the weak. An unrighteous government regards the children of poverty as having no rights. But the Christian nations are compelling justice and civilized methods even among the rude barbarians. The establishment of international tribunals and the growing hatred of war are the triumphs of Christianity over ancient error and point clearly to the day when there shall be "abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth."

**Tributes to the Universal Monarch.** Vs. 8-11 Mr. Hugh Boyd, who conducted an embassy to the king of Candy in Ceylon, describes the extreme reverence with which an Eastern monarch must be approached. "The removal of the curtain was the signal for my companions to make obeisance. They exhibited the most perfect degree of Eastern humiliation. They almost literally 'licked the dust,' prostrating themselves with their faces close to the stone floor, and throwing out their arms and legs, then rising on their knees, they repeated in a very loud voice a certain form of words of the most extravagant meaning; that the head of the king of kings might reach beyond the sun; that he might live a thousand years, etc."

While the rich oriental setting here is undoubtedly a picture of the successful and widening reign of David's heir, yet it has a far deeper prophetic significance. The extension of Christ's dominion is the result, not of military force, but of moral influence; all nations will be won by the righteousness of His sway, more especially by His care for the poor and afflicted. Those who "shall bow before Him" and "shall fall down before Him" are the believers who in the attitude of prayer approach Him to petition for moral perfection.

In old times on May first, it was an annual custom in London for thousands of inhabitants to resort early to the fields to bathe their faces with the dew upon the grass. It was a superstitious custom resting upon the belief that thus they would become beautiful. To bathe one's face every morning in the dew of Heaven by prayer and communion is the one sure way to obtain the inward beauty of a holy life and character. Such is the homage that God requires from king and peasant.

The Psalmist sees an ever widening domain extending "from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth." The foreign nations mentioned (verses 9 and 10) could hardly be included in the limits of Solomon's kingdom. It is a larger Kingdom than earth has known, whose King is to be righteous, universal, beneficent, and perpetual. It is only Christ's spiritual reign, present and prospective, that can meet the lofty thought of this beautifully wrought imagery.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What references in this Psalm would indicate that it is a prayer for Solomon? 2. What indications are there that a future, universal, spiritual, perpetual Kingdom is also included? 3. What references in the N. T. directly mention Solomon; the Messiah? 4. Why did Jesus refuse to be King of His people, the Jews? 5. What will be the extent of His Kingdom in time, in territory, and nature of its subjects?

**Challenge Text.** "We have — the —, which is, being interpreted, the —. John 1: (9)"

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The test of the greatness of Christ's life is the magnitude of its influence. 2. Nearly all the kings and presidents of civilized governments do publicly acknowledge the supreme rule of Christ and their loyalty to Him. 3. Those in authority need our prayers; larger duties call for added grace. 4. The poor, the needy, and the oppressed are being sympathized with, planned for, and cared for as they never were before. Christ is inspiring and moulding all our reforms and benevolences. 5. The remotest nations and those richest in natural resources are being evangelized. India's mineral wealth and Africa's future food supply will minister to the support of the Gospel.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# DELIGHT IN GOD'S HOUSE

How amiable are thy



O Lord of  
hosts! My  
soul longeth,  
yea even  
fainteth  
for the



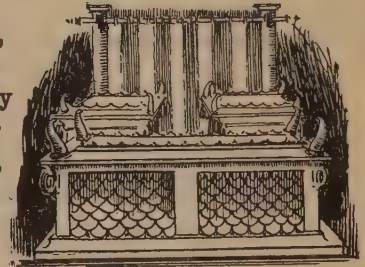
of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. Yea, the



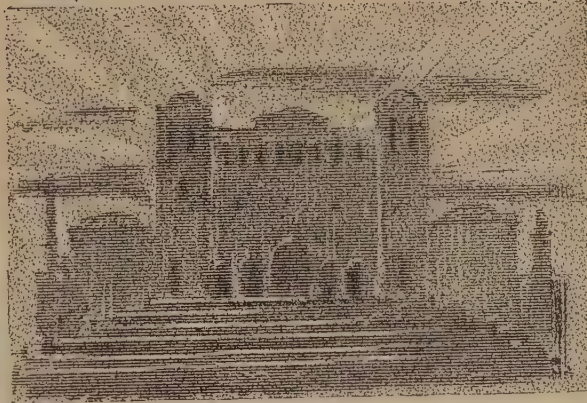
hath  
found  
an  
house,  
and the



for  
herself,  
where  
she may  
lay her  
young,  
even  
thine



O Lord of hosts, my King,  
and my God. Blessed are  
they that dwell in thy



they will be still  
praising thee.  
Blessed is the



whose strength is  
in thee; in whose



are the ways of them.



THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 84:1-12.

**A Boy's Prayer:** Dear Father in Heaven, I am nothing but a poor, weak little fellow; I am tempted every day to do what is wrong; but I want to do what is right. I do want to be a good boy, and grow up to be a good, strong, noble man, and do lots of good in the world. There is ever so much fun in being a boy; but I want to be a boy in the right way. And so, dear Father, won't You help me today, for Jesus' sake? Amen.

Rev. C. H. Parkhurst, D. D.

"Though fate command me to the farthest verge  
Of the green earth \* \* \*  
Yet God is ever present, ever felt,  
In the wide waste as in the city full;  
And where He vital breathes there must be joy."

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The title to the above Psalm indicates it was written by one of the sons of Korah, a Levitical family of singers who accompanied David in his exile. The author, besides being a keeper of the doors, had doubtless been anointed to the priesthood. (Verse 9.)

**Scripture Setting: Progressive Teaching of the Temple.** The temple dedicated, 1 Kings 8:22-30. Jesus in the temple, Luke 2:25-38. The universal spiritual temple, John 4:19-24. The temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. 3:9-17. The passing of the temple, Rev. 21:1-4, 21-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Wherever God is

worshipped, there He dwells. 2. Blessed are they whose hearts are in the way of worship, though their bodies are detained. It was well that David's heart built a temple, though his feet never entered it. 3. Dwelling in God's house means continuous communion with God, rather than constant participation in temple ordinances. 4. The church, the noblest expression of organized, effective Christianity, needs you more inside to improve it than outside to criticize it. 5. It is blessed to dwell in God's house; more blessed is he who dwelling in exile on dreary Patmos makes it the vestibule of Heaven.

THE MOST HALLOWED SPOT ON EARTH.

**Point of Contact.** "Much of interest is given to a Psalm if we will simply use the facts that the Psalm itself gives us. Take, for example, that beautiful lyric, the eighty-fourth Psalm: "How amiable are Thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts." It may not have been written as the modern title indicates, by David during his flight from Absalom; it seems not the lament of one who had been driven from his home in hasty, enforced flight, but, rather, of a permanent exile. But we shall lose half its beauty if we do not realize in imagination the situation of the singer—an "anointed one," and therefore a priest or a king—in lonely exile somewhere, and pining for the familiar and sacred scene in which his days were wont to be. And he envies even the happy birds that can fly away and make their home, where once he was, in the courts of the Lord's house; and his imagination paints the companies of pilgrims journeying up to the annual feasts. How natural and touching his imagery!—as spontaneous as

"Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon,  
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?"

—Prof. C. T. Winchester.

**Our Church Home.** "How amiable are Thy tabernacles." Every verse of this Psalm recalls a picture of the caravan journeys to the national festivals. Every spot of the familiar road, every station at which the writer had rested, lives in his heart. But it was the tabernacles, or tents, which housed the ark in David's time that stood forth the

loveliest picture of all. In the halls of our memory there hangs a picture—we call it Our Church Home. When a thousand miles away we still see through the mind's eye its holy walls, and hear through memory's perfect phonograph the songs, the prayers, the sacred words of long ago. That old church home may have been a temple grand, or it may have been a modest frame, nestling among the foothills, and lifting its slim white spire high over the little village. But there in that old church in childhood a gray-haired man of God laid his hand upon our young head in holy baptism. There we formed the early friendships of blessed memory. There we return on sad days to lay away our precious dead. In that old church mother saw her fair daughter given away by the sacred marriage vow. There it was long years before that she first met father when he led the village choir. It was the warm hearts in that dear old church that sweetened our joys, and took the sting out of all our sorrows. It was there, we gave our young hearts to God and were received into the fellowship of the church; there we first partook of the sacred emblems of Christ's broken body and shed blood, while our hearts beat faster, and our eyes dimmed with tears as we recalled His simple request, "This do in remembrance of Me." No wonder we sing with tenderest feeling:

Beyond my highest joy  
I prize her Heavenly ways,  
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise.



**A Nest for Her Young.** "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest." This exile from his native land contrasts his own sad lot with the joyous swallows who twitter as they flit in and out from the nest under the eaves. An unerring instinct has brought them to the old spot. The family instinct has moved them to build the strong mud walls lined with downy feathers. Presently the eggs are broken and the mother bird broods over her nestlings soon to fly. The picture makes him homesick for the courts of God. Where is there so safe a place for the children as the altar of the church?

A young father left the church for a petty grievance. Moving to the remote West he said he hoped he would never again hear a church bell. For many years that wish was gratified. He soon fell into the coarse vices of the mining camp. His wife sickened and died from overwork. She left little Mary, her namesake and her miniature. A half-breed nurse raised her. At ten she had never entered the day school or Sunday school. The reading of the eighty-fourth Psalm awakened a train of memories in the father's mind. The curse against the church was on his heart like the perpetual snow on the side of the Mount of the Holy Cross. Spring came and the snowy cross on his heart melted. He visited his wife's grave one evening when the great resolve came. He would build a chapel over her resting place. He would be a church worker again. He would redeem the manhood he had all but lost. The swallow found a nest for herself where she might lay her young. The motherless child found a church home. On the walls of the church is written Salvation; her gates are called Praise; her spire points to Heaven.

**God's Little Doorkeeper.** "A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." The language of this whole Psalm is retrospective. One of Korah's sons, now in exile with David, remembers the tabernacle where he ministered as a Levite, remembers the glad days when he and his brothers had charge of the tabernacle singers, remembers even back to his boyhood days when with other boys he served as a doorkeeper in the courses, and kept the gates of the tabernacle. He would rather serve God in that inconspicuous post than to be one of the wicked warriors plotting in their tents against God's anointed. One of those old days of boyhood secure in God's house, was better than a thousand in the dangers of exile.

This scene reminds us of another boy who ministered before the Lord, the obedient son of Hannah. The lad Samuel, girded with a linen ephod, and wearing the coat his mother's hands had made, kept the doors of the temple in Shiloh. He kept open the doors and he kept an open heart, for one night God called him from his bed and revealed to him the sin of Eli's sons who served as priests. From the humble service of a doortender Samuel rose to be the great prophet and statesman who anointed both Saul and David.

In the little village of Nazareth there dwelt a pious mother who took her boy each Saturday to the worship of the synagogue. And as Christ grew up I am sure there were fastened in his mind fond memories of that old Jewish meeting house. Years after He returned a man of thirty and on Saturday He went into the synagogue "as His custom was." The associations of childhood, the pull of memory, the power of habit acted even upon Christ. The mirthful feasts, the public entertainments, the lights and tinsel of the stage, the catchy airs of the ballroom pass away, for there is no substance in them. But the prayers of saintly men, the encouraging words and tender caresses of some white-haired mother in Israel, the stately old hymns such as "Jerusalem, the golden, with milk and honey blest," the heart-searching messages from the faithful pastor now gone to Heaven, the earnest talks by the Sunday-school teacher,—these touched our boyhood brow like the soft palm of an angel, and the sense of that impress cannot die.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What boy ministered to Eli in the services of the tabernacle? 2. What three temples succeeded the tabernacle? 3. Of what did Peter heal the beggar at the beautiful gate of the temple? 4. How old was Jesus when He questioned the doctors in the temple? 5. What happened in the temple when Jesus was crucified?

**Challenge Text.** "I had rather be a — in the — of my —, than to — in the — of —. Psal. 84: (2).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The God who gave the homing instinct to the bird placed the homing instinct in the soul. 2. The temple windows were built larger on the outside on the principle that light from within was to be shed out upon the dark world. 3. Spiritual progress is measured by heart longings, not by present place. Would you rather be a doorkeeper or a vagrant? 4. A good rule. Never enter a place of worship without offering a silent prayer for the worshippers and for those who minister there.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# A PSALM OF DELIVERANCE

I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak



unto his  
people, and  
to his  
saints: but  
let them  
not turn  
again to  
folly.  
Surely his



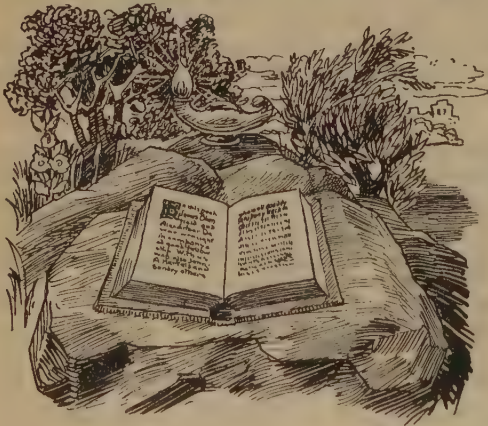
is nigh them that fear him; that glory may dwell in our land.



are met  
together;  
righteous-  
ness and  
peace  
have



each other.



shall  
spring  
out of  
the  
earth;  
and



shall look down  
from heaven.  
Yea, the  
Lord shall  
give that  
which is



and our land shall  
yield her increase.  
Righteousness shall  
go before him; and  
shall set us in the  
way of his steps.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 85:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I listen to hear what You would speak, and ask for strength to do what You would approve. I want to be merciful towards my pets, towards all dumb animals, and towards my playmates. I want to be truthful to my parents, to my teachers, to my young friends, and to Thee. I want my life to be clean and righteous, doing nothing of which I am ashamed. And I want to dwell in peace with my neighbors, my brothers and sisters, and with Thee. For Thy dear sake, Amen.

"Oh, Claudia,

If thou couldst have seen the face of Him!

Never was such a conqueror! Yet no pride

Was in it, \* \* \* naught but love and tenderness,

Such as we Romans scoff at, and His eyes

Bespoke Him royal."

—L. M. Montgomery.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The unknown author pictures the return from a captivity (verse 2) not unlike the Babylonian described by Ezra and Nehemiah. This unknown is a patriot taking a national view. He feels uncertain whether the exiles, despite their great distress and weakness, have learned their bitter lesson (verse 8). Mystically the Psalm teaches the principles of that government which Christ later established.

**Scripture Setting:** True National Grandeur. The return from captivity, Ezra 1:1-11. National injustice rebuked, Amos 5:4-15. The national Deliverer promised, Isa. 55:3-13. The return to right-

eousness, Luke 3:3-17. Temporal and spiritual prosperity, Psa. 144:5-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage teaches the influence of religion on a people's destiny. 1. National reformations consist in individuals getting right with God. 2. Prosperity is God's general gift to a Christian nation; blessedness is His special gift to His saints. 3. Much of national glory is vainglorious; a nation's real glory is the character it produces. 4. All truth that springs from the earth is from the Gospel seed. The ultimate harvest will be the conversion of the heathen. 5. The sifted, Christian seed first planted in America has produced piety, plenty and power.

### THE NATION RESTORED.

**Point of Contact.** "I will hear what God will speak." Standing in the midst of the shattered fragments of a once glorious nation this lone prophetic figure has the courage to pray that there may be a complete restoration. Only a small part of the people as yet had stumbled back from the Babylonian captivity. A few had returned with Zerubbabel; a few more with Ezra and Nehemiah; but many still remained in Babylon, Media, Assyria, and Egypt. This unknown Psalmist goes as a prophet to consult the Lord, and waits an answer from the spirit of prophecy. God's answer is that salvation is nigh; that glory will soon dwell in his land. This meant that worship would be resumed, the temple would be rebuilt, and the Divine shechinah would reappear. But public prosperity would rest upon private piety.

How much this sounds like a recent editorial in the Wall Street Journal: "What America needs more than railway extension, and western irrigation, and a low tariff, and a bigger wheat crop, and a new navy, is a revival of piety, the kind mother and father used to have—piety that counted it good business to stop for daily family prayers before breakfast, right in the middle of the harvest; that quit field work a half hour early Thursday night so as to get the chores done and go to prayer meeting. That's what we need now to clean this country of the filth of graft, and of greed, petty and big, of worship of fine houses and big lands and high office and grand social functions. What is this thing we are worshipping but a vain repetition of what decayed nations fell down and worshipped just before their light went out?"

**The Nation's Double Wedding.** "Mercy and truth are met; righteousness and peace have kissed." Here are four Divine attributes which must be harmonized and incorporated in the life of every Christian nation. They easily lend themselves to a marriage scene. For two are masculine attributes, while the other two are complementary feminine attributes. Truth is a stalwart giant who carries a battle-axe. Strong of will and sure of his cause, he is not only respected but feared. Truth started forth on the war-path bent on making inquisition for sin. The human race feared him as the condemned merchant feared old Shylock demanding the pound of flesh nearest the heart. But Truth met Mercy on the way. She was the Portia with a heart of love. He loved her, for she was what he was not; was strong where he was weak. Mercy had started forth to plead for reconciliation between God and man. Truth and Mercy had their mutual claims, but when they met they blended them in common interest. They met in Jesus Christ. He made them one forever on Calvary's mount. So mankind was once afraid of Righteousness for he carried a shining sword and was the avenger of broken law. But Peace was a beautiful maiden sent from the throne of God to publish tidings of reconciliation. When Righteousness first looked upon Peace he embraced her for he knew she was intended to be his. Christ, our great

High Priest, united them forever. The Gospel of reconciliation was proclaimed and the demands of a righteous law were met in His person and sacrifice. How the wedding bells of Heaven must have rung when God saw these four attributes harmonized in the salvation of men, Mercy, Truth, Peace, and Justice dwelling in perfect concord.

**Heaven's Answer to Earth's Call.** "Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from Heaven." Scripture says that "deep calleth unto deep." The deepest in the heart of God answers to the deepest in the heart of man. "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." Thus spoke the wise man. But it is a wiser truth to say that what is in the heart of all good men finds a sure response from the heart of God. What great truths have sprung out of the earth; a hatred of human slavery despite its economical value; a horror for war even though its annals are gilded with glory; a hostility to alcohol though its license is merged with our taxes. God has never been without His witnesses on earth who contended for these reforms. Righteousness has looked down from Heaven and smiled on all these undertakings. Whenever truth is woven into our contracts, transactions, and promises, a righteous God pours upon us His blessing. There is a direct relation between moral rectitude and temporal prosperity.

**Righteousness the Forerunner.** "Righteousness shall go before Him; and shall set us in the way of His steps." By the preaching of the law men are prepared to receive the grace of the Gospel. It was exactly this to which Paul referred when he said, "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." The pure and holy law of God must be proclaimed, and sinners must be made to feel that this broken law cries aloud for vengeance, before they will feel their need of a crucified Saviour. The message of John the Baptizer was one of stern and uncompromising righteousness. The crooked must be made straight. They must bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. Even now the axe

lieth at the root of the tree. The multitude cried, What then must we do? How he was setting men in the way of Christ's coming steps! But he would not accept their plaudits. "There cometh One that is mightier than I."

Reading the Bible will not give us a new heart. Nothing short of a personal faith in Jesus can work the miracle of conversion. But the righteous precepts of God may put us in the way of His steps. The sinner must put himself where God passes. Blind Bartimaeus was probably deaf as well as blind. When they urged him to be still he seemed not to have heard but cried the louder. When the Master called for him all seemed to have heard but himself. But with his shortcomings he pulled himself to the side of the street where he felt sure Jesus would pass. Whoever faithfully reads the Bible will sooner or later see Jesus pass and be healed. Zaccheus had his limitations which he felt only too well, but the height of the sycamore tree helped the shortness of his stature and secured the attention of Jesus. If we begin this very day to live the noblest, purest, most useful life of which we are capable we will be already walking in the way of His steps, and surprised as were the disciples on their journey to Emmaus we will find Jesus walking and communing with us.

"The social Architects who build the state,  
Serving the Dream at citadel and gate,  
Will hail Him coming through the labor hum;  
And glad, quick cries will go from man to man,  
'Lo, He has come, our Christ, the Artisan;  
The King who loved the lilies, He has come."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. From what calamity had Israel just been spared? Whom did God use to deliver them? 2. What four cardinal virtues of Christ's kingdom are mentioned? 3. Mention some national evils against which Christ set His face. 4. What are the material and spiritual blessings promised as the result of a national awakening? 5. Name some countries shaken by national revivals in recent years.

**Challenge Text.** "Happy is that — that is in — a case; yea, — is that —, whose God is the —. Psa. 144:1.".

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Man's duty as well as privilege is to listen to God. America should heed God's Word "lest we forget." 2. Many nations more modern than Israel have foundered on the rocks of idolatry and apostasy. 3. Justice says, Strike the guilty; Love cries, Spare the man; Christ reconciles the two. 4. Peace arranged without justice cannot endure; mercy shown, inconsistent with truth, is equally unstable. 5. The Gospel of Jesus is the silken thread uniting the parts of the mantle torn by sin.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



## SECURITY OF THE GODLY

Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation;  
There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy



For he  
shall  
give  
his



charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall



lest  
thou



Thou shalt



the



shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.

PSA. XCI: 9-16.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 91:1-16.

**An Old Family Prayer:** "Blessed Lord, take us into Thy protection this night, and preserve us from disease, from sudden death, from the violence of fire, from the edge of the sword, from the designs of wicked men, and from the influence of malicious spirits. For Jesus' sake, Amen."

"Put any burden upon me, only sustain me.  
Send me anywhere, only go with me.  
Sever any tie but the one that binds me  
To Thy service and to Thy heart."

—Miss Brigham.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This Psalm, undoubtedly David's, is full of martial imagery. Its spirit closely follows the 27th already studied. The pestilence mentioned in 2 Sam. 24 is the most probable occasion for it. The Targum treats it as a dialogue between David, Solomon and Jehovah.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Sure Defenses. 1. The pestilence stayed, 2 Sam. 24:10-17. 2. The saint's defense, Psal. 52:1-9. 3. Deliverance promised, Isa. 43:1-7. 4. Ministering angels, Matt. 4:1-11. 5. Unharmed by viper's bite, Acts 28:1-6. The seven assaults, Job 5:17-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage sets forth the faithful love of the Keeper and the loving faith of the kept. 1. The path of duty, however forbidding, is the path of safety. 2. The truly honorable honor God's name, His day, His house, His word. 3. That house is safe protected by insurance from so strong a firm as Faith, Prayer and Obedience. The Divine protection involves body, household, property, reputation and soul. 5. God gives us two eyes, two ears, two hands, two feet, but only one soul. Its loss, then, is irrecoverable.

### THE SAFETY OF HIS SAINTS.

**Point of Contact.** "There shall no evil befall thee." Every schoolboy learns the story of Achilles. His mother dipped him as a child in the river Styx to make him proof against wounds. But holding him by the heel she left one small spot on his body that was vulnerable. Disguised as a girl he was reared with the king's daughters. A peddler with a sword and shield among his wares came one day. Just then an alarm was sounded, and the girls all fled, but Achilles seized the arms, proving himself a warrior. After many heroic adventures he advanced against the Scaean gate, when an arrow aimed by Paris struck his vulnerable heel and he fell, lamented by all Greece.

This ninety-first Psalm is called in the Talmud "a Song of Accidents" on the supposition that it possessed a protective power, like a charm or talisman, if sung in times of danger. It has been named "the Soldier's Psalm of Life" because it offers safety within the fortifications, on the battlefield, and amid devastating epidemics. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." (Verse 7.) This has been a favorite Psalm for soldiers to memorize.

Captain Hedley Vicars paid this tribute in a letter to a friend: "The little book of Psalms you gave me, I take with me whenever I go out for a walk. I have just learned by heart Psalm ninety-first, and it has filled me with confidence in Jesus." Here is safety against the arrows that fly in daylight, or the terrors of night attacks like those of Gideon; protection against the slanderous tongue as well as wasting disease; insurance against the perils of this life, and provision for an eternity of blessedness. There is absolutely no vulnerable heel, a target for hostile darts, since the child of God, bathed in His providential care, is immune to every carnal weapon.

**The Protected Home.** "Neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." The teaching here is that God shall send His angels to guard the Christian home. In the Greek story of the Garden of the Hesperides there were four sisters sent to guard it, Brightness, Modesty, Love, and Service. Think what the modern home would be if these beautiful virtues were on guard. It would be as sweet and safe as the house in Bethany kept by the sisters Mary and Martha where Jesus was the guest. A general providence is over every home, but a special providence guards the Christian home. At midnight an angel visited every house in Egypt. From the first born of Pharaoh to the first born of the captive in the dungeon not one escaped save in the houses where he saw the blood upon the lintel and the door posts. The blood upon the door made that house safe from the destroyer. How graphically did the blood-mark foretell the love and sacrifice of Him who came long after to save our homes and bring every member of the family into affectionate relations with God.

**The Guard of Angels.** "He shall give His angels charge over thee." Angels are the agents of God's providence to the body and soul of man. Particularly were they the attendants of Christ in His incarnation, temptation, and resurrection. When Christ was exhausted by his fasting Satan comes to tempt Him to presumption by this very verse. Think of Satan with a Bible under his arm and a verse upon his lips! But angels come and minister to His worn body and weary mind. They came to Elijah in the hour of his discouragement and defeat. They are represented by Christ as attending



the footsteps of little children. They are represented in Heb. 1:14 as "ministering spirits sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation." The angels of God have an especial charge to accompany, defend, and preserve the Christian.

**The Protected Warrior.** "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder and \* \* \* the dragon." In the narrow defiles of Palestine the traveler often had no alternative left, but must destroy the obstacle in his way or in turn be destroyed. The Christian warrior at times must do more than defend himself; he must aggressively attack his spiritual foes. Some of our foes are as open as the lion who roars in the presence of his foe; some are the sly and insidious defamers that crawl in the grass; some are like the dragon, or sea monster which have no reality in fact, but are the phantom fears of the mind, the dark troubles that worry us but which we never overtake.

It is the asp rather than the adder which is mentioned in verse 13. It is a small but most venomous serpent found in Egypt and Libya for whose poison there is no known remedy. Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, chose to die this way, because death results in from three to eight hours without pain. The writer could hardly use stronger language to show that when the believer moves forward in the path of duty and in the line of truth he will be Divinely panoplied and fortified; poison will be harmless, the fire will not burn, and natural barriers will be brushed aside.

**The Shield of Honor.** "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." The force of this verse is seen in 1 Sam. 2:30, "Them that honor me I will honor." The man that honors God will not only be placed in an advantageous position out of the reach of his enemy, but he will be honored and ennobled thereby.

In the old chapel of West Point Academy the walls are ornamented with white marble shields set high in the masonry. On every one is the name of some great American general of the Revolution. Because they had set their love upon their country and helped to deliver it, their country has set them on high. There is one sad exception. For one shield bears the words "Major General," and the date of the unnamed general's birth, but not his death. What does it mean? It means this one won a place, but not an honorable place. The nation would not cut Arnold's name there nor the date of his death. He denied his country; his country has denied him.

**A Citadel of C's.** "I will answer, be with him, deliver, honor, satisfy with long life,

and show him salvation." These are six great memorial stones that might be named: communion, companionship, conquest, character, continuance, and conversion. It reminds us of the great retreat pictured in Psal. 18:2, where Jehovah is called Rock, Fortress, Deliverer, God, Strength, Buckler, Horn, and High Tower. He affords us communion. Our desires, prayers, aspirations are not unheard nor unheeded. While we hush God listens. He affords companionship. He went with Joseph into the pit, with Job to the ash heap, with David to the altar of penitence, with Daniel amid the lions, with Paul to the Roman prison. He provides for conquest. Deliverance from sin is the greatest deliverance. A famous painting of St. George is greatly enhanced by the fact that his foot is firmly planted on the dragon. So the glory of the Gospel is only enriched by the presence of evil, provided you have your foot on its neck. He stamps with character. The baser metal stamped with the king's likeness passes as coin of the realm. Character is the finished product of life, the rough ore redeemed by the refining processes of love and sacrifice. He promises continuance. Long life was the special promise of the Old Testament dispensation. (Deut. 32:46, 47.) He leads to conversion. In the offer of salvation it is more than probable that the Psalmist saw the coming of Jesus as the consummation of the Fatherly affection. So the Psalm most fittingly closes with the promise of a life that shall be happy and long and a death happy and serene that leads to endless life.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What four separate acts of acknowledgment are mentioned as the cause and condition of the protection promised? 2. To which one of the commandments is linked the promise of long life? 3. What home was protected from a general destruction by a scarlet cord? 4. Where was Paul when miraculously preserved from the bite of a viper? 5. When in David's life did he attack and destroy a lion?

**Challenge Text.** "He that — in the — — of the — — shall — under the — of the —." Psal. 91:1.

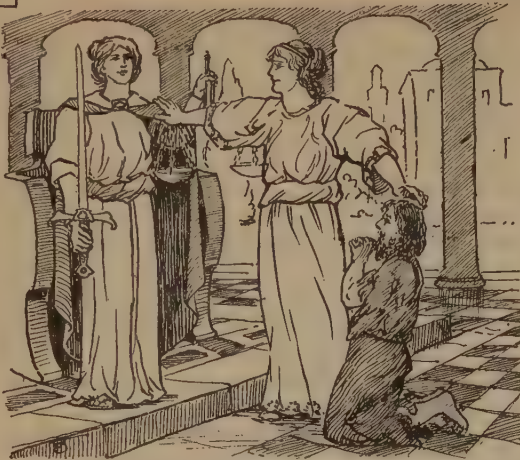
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God takes away the terrors of night, fear of fire, dread of robbers, disturbing dreams, and gives us instead "songs in the night." 2. Troubles may sweep across the sky of the believer, but there is a cyclone cellar, "the secret place," and a Presence near, "I will be with you." 3. To expect direction and guidance by guardian angels we must walk only where God has appointed them to fly. 4. There are stones as well as storms in life; the Almighty provides sandals as well as overshadowing wings. 5. How like an angel's visit, unseen and unrealized, are some of the gracious but mysterious providences. God was in the place and we know it not.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# A SONG OF PRAISE

The Lord is



and



slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. He will not always chide: neither will he keep his anger for ever.

He hath not dealt  
with us after our  
sins; nor rewarded  
us according to  
our iniquities.  
For as the



so great is  
his mercy  
toward them  
that  
fear him.  
As far as the

is from the



so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 103:8-18.

**Prayer:** O God, Thou who art like a father, I would take time to count Thy many mercies. I thank Thee for giving me life; for sparing my life to this hour; for the promise of eternal life through Jesus, Thy Son. All of these benefits are of Thy mercy, not of my deserving. I am weak and full of faults, but Thou art slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. Let me live to serve Thee, and praise Thee everlastingly. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"The good man has a lowly mind; and to his God, Feeling the sense of his own littleness, Is as a child in meek simplicity. What is the pomp of learning, the parade Of letters and of tongues? Even as the mists Of the grey morn before the rising sun, That pass away and perish."

—H. K. White.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The Psalm is probably David's, and most closely fits the experiences mentioned in 2 Sam. 12:15-20.

**Scripture Setting:** **Merciful Benefits for the Needy.** The sanctuary for trouble, 2 Sam. 12:15-20. Forsaking God but not forsaken, Neh. 9:7-17. Human frailty and Divine security contrasted, Psalms 90:1-10. Strength of God for sons of men, Isa. 40:21-31. Dimensions of Divine love, Eph. 3:8-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage praises

the Divine mercy that meets man's extremes. 1. God deals with many changing generations, all the generations deal with one changeless God. 2. To review the past thankfully is to advance hopefully. What God has done, He will do. 3. God's love can be compared with the father's in direction, but not in extent. God's love begins where the father's must end. 4. The cardinal directions of the cross are the height, depth, length and breadth of love.

### MEASURELESS MAGNITUDE OF MERCY.

**Point of Contact.** Someone has called the rainbow "God's sunshine seen through nature's tears." Some of our most beautiful hopes and most glorious glimpses of Divine mercy come to us through the salty spray of human tears. Here is a Psalm of inimitable sweetness and excellence. We can best account for it as a rare rainbow of hope that sprung up in David's soul after the death of his baby boy. David had fasted and prayed during the child's sickness. All night long had he lain on the ground and watched by the side of the little sufferer. As he watched the babe's increasing weakness how the father heart was touched with pity for his helplessness! After seven days the servants whisper, and David knows the child is dead. Then he leaves the palace and takes himself to the house of God to worship. Was it not a strange time to write a Psalm of praise? I think it was the very time to stir the gift of song within him. Never had he realized before how much he loved his child. And it reminded him how much God loved His weak and soul-sick child. "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth." In prosperity David forgot to count his blessings, but after losing so much he could "forget not all His benefits" that remained. Just as we can see the prismatic colors in the rainbow after the storm, so David could see in his affliction the variegated threads of mercy he had never seen before.

That the mercies of God are magnified by bereavement is seen in the experience of others beside David. It was a life habit with John Angell James to read the 103rd Psalm at the family altar every Saturday night of his life. But on the Saturday evening of the week in which Mrs. James died he

called his motherless children around him, hesitated for a moment with the open Bible in his hand, and then quietly said, "Children, I have read these verses all my life, but now I see new meaning in the words, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name.'"

**Three Tenses of Divine Mercy.** 1. The present tense, or sense of conscious possession. "The Lord is merciful and gracious." Some songs celebrate a golden age long past, some a Heavenly state to be revealed, but this song celebrates the present joys of salvation. We have needed God in the past, we will need Him in the future, but it is certain we need Him now. He is "a very present help in time of trouble."

2. The past tense, or the proof of experience. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins." Religious experience is worth all it costs. God's past dealings with us reveal His faithfulness and encourage us to believe in Him, or as Paul puts it, "Experience worketh hope." In God's unchangeableness we have a right to reason that because He has helped us hitherto He will continue as our Helper.

3. The future tense, or the prospect of trials removed. "He will not always chide." In the kindergarten corrective methods are employed because punishment is necessary. But it is in the hope that we will put away childish things. As we learn that fire will burn, that disobedience brings punishment, so we must learn that sin brings a harvest of misery. When we have attained unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, we will have matured into ripeness for Heaven, where sin, and sorrow, and sighing are done away.

**Two Dimensions of Divine Mercy.** 1. The infinite reach of mercy. "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy." I think that the stars that gem the night serve a higher purpose than giving physical light. They are flying trapezes from the roof of God's gymnasium on which human minds can cling to swing themselves through the universe. I will not attempt to say how high the heaven is above the earth. It measures millions of miles to some of our nearer stars, but the more remote the new stars discovered, the higher grows our sense of Divine wisdom and love. They are God's signal lamps hung on high. "In every star Thy glory shines." The infinite reach of Divine mercy can also be measured by considering the heights from which Christ came, and the depths of the humility and shame to which He plunged to redeem a race. "He endured the cross, despising the shame." No man is so far down in the scale of respectability but that He who died between malefactors has power to lift him up.

2. The infinite latitude of forgiveness. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." God's mercy has been likened to a circle because it begins everywhere, and ends nowhere. On every sphere there are north and south poles, so that distance in either of these directions is measureable, being in the case of the earth about 12,000 miles from pole to pole. But a man may continue to travel either east or west indefinitely. The force of this illustration, then, is to emphasize the illimitable distance to which God has removed the iniquities of His people. It may also represent the latitude of forgiving love. When Jesus was asked how many times a disciple should forgive his brother, His answer was, "Until seventy, times seven." This multiplication of the perfect number meant infinity. If we imitate the forgiveness of God we never reach the last time.

"For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind."

When Alexander camped before a city he set up a light. So long as it burned his enemies might have quarter, but after it was put out no mercy need be expected. The mercy and patience of God to sinners extends on year after year, generation after generation.

**Infinite Mercy Measured by Finite Fatherhood.**

"Like as a father pitieth, so the Lord pitieth." The justice of the eternal King is tempered by the mercy of the eternal Father. Ancient history tells us of a kingdom in which certain crimes were punished by burning out the criminal's eyes. It so happened that the only son of the king was found guilty of such a crime, and it became the father's duty to pronounce the stern sentence on his son. In doing so he fell back upon the well-known principle of substitution. Two good eyes should be given to uphold the majesty of law, but one should be his son's, the other should be his own. The king was disfigured, but the son was left his sight. So by the principle of substitution the Divine King suffered in the stead of the sinner. Only He bore all the penalty upon the tree. Isaiah declares, "He was marred more than the sons of men." The marvelous pity of God is enough to break the heart of stone.

The human soul can depend upon God "like as a father." When He calls we know it is Father's voice; when we would fall it is Father's arms that are underneath us.

Two men were talking by the gate when two lads returning from school drew near. One of the men suggested an experiment. He lifted one of the boys, his own son, to the top of a post some six feet from the ground, and stepping back two paces, held out his arms and asked the lad to leap. Without fear and without harm he jumped into his father's arms. The second boy was lifted upon the post, and although he had the advantage of the other's example, he could not be persuaded to make the trial. The boys were equally courageous, but one had the added confidence of knowing he was leaping into his own father's arms. What a sense of security in calamity, in temptation, to know He stands beneath us "like as a father." "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." It was a great source of human comfort to Christ to know that His human mother, Mary, was beneath His cross so full of tender pity. But what a sense of Divine comfort to know also that His Divine Father stood there ready to uphold Him. Death to Him was no "leap into the dark" as He confidently whispered, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What two characters in the Old Testament may be said to wear the crown for patience? 2. What elements in this lesson teach the need of humility? 3. What merciful act did David show towards one of Saul's relatives? 4. What do you consider the greatest picture ever written on fatherly kindness? 5. What parable of Christ's most strongly shows the mercy man should show to man?

**Challenge Text.** "Thou art a God ready to —, — and —, slow to —, and of great —." Neh. 9: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Each kingdom in nature feeds upon a kingdom unlike itself. Man requires of God that which he cannot himself supply. 2. Mercy reached its high water mark in this world when Jesus prayed, "Father, forgive them." 3. The spiritual benefits of Divine mercy are conditioned upon the fear of God and the remembrance of His commandments. 4. God does not regulate His mercy by our merit; one transcends the other as the heavens the earth.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

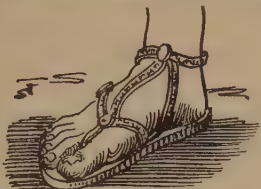


I will lift up mine eyes unto the

from  
whence  
cometh  
my help.  
My help  
cometh  
from  
the Lord,  
which made



He will  
not suffer  
thy



to be moved: he  
that keepeth thee  
will not slumber.

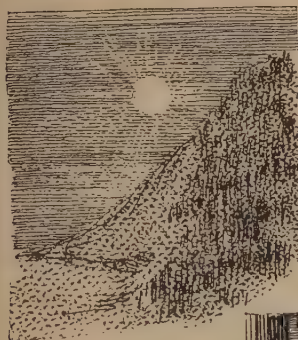
Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor



The Lord is  
thy keeper:  
the Lord  
is thy



upon thy right hand. The



shall  
not  
smite  
thee  
by day,  
nor the



by night.  
The Lord  
shall  
preserve  
thee  
from all



he shall preserve  
thy soul.  
The Lord shall  
preserve thy



and  
thy



from this  
time forth,  
and even for  
evermore.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 121 AND 122.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Thou art my Help and my Keeper. In the watches of the night while I slumber Thine eyelids know no sleep; when the sun with fiery heat would beat upon my head Thou art my shade upon my right hand; the soul committed to Thee shall know no evil; when I go forth in the morning, as when I return to my home at the close of the day, I am in Thy care. In all life's pilgrimages overshadow me, and keep all those who travel with me, until at last we reach the city on the heights, the New Jerusalem, and our tired feet stand within Thy gates. In Jesus' name, Amen.

"Sing on, ye joyful pilgrims,  
Nor think the moments long;  
My faith is Heavenward rising  
With every tuneful song.  
Lo! on the Mount of blessing,  
The glorious Mount I stand,  
And looking over Jordan,  
I see the promised land!"

—Carrie M. Wilson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The author and time of these two Psalms are uncertain. They belong to the fifteen Psalms of Ascent, so called, either because sung by the caravans of Jews in their annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem to celebrate the three national feasts, or possibly because one Psalm was chanted on each of the fifteen marble steps leading up from the court of the women to that of the men.

**Scripture Setting:** **The Sacred City, the Seat of Religion.** Founding of the city of David, 2 Sam. 5:1-12. The city on the heights, Isa. 49:8-18. The city restored, Zech. 8:3-12. Mount of Divine blessings, the New Jerusalem, and our tired feet stand 10-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** These passages represent life as a pilgrimage to the City of God. 1. The religious impulse is personal in origin, but social in operation. Not for my sake, but "for my brethren and companions' sakes." 2. Every time we invite another our religious joys are multiplied. 3. We journey forward by families, communities, tribes and nationalities, but we stand before God at last as individuals. 4. It is our duty to pray that the onward march of church and country be towards the City of God. 5. Every time we go to church we add to the testimony of Israel.

### TRAVELING TOWARDS THE CITY OF GOD.

**Point of Contact.** "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills." How the high heathen fortress of Jebus was transformed into "the city of David," "the lair of the lion of Judah" is an interesting story of battle. David, the young king, wished for a rocky height centrally located and easily fortified where he could build his capital. He found that Jebus, still held by the original inhabitants, was an inaccessible location, perched high above the surrounding country, and guarded by deep ravines. He wanted it, and promised the highest office, chieftain of the army, to the soldier who dared to scale the precipice. Joab clambered up the cliff, dashed the defenders down, and was proclaimed captain of the host. Beyond any other important city that ever existed Jerusalem was to be built by David as a mountain city.

"Whither the tribes of the Lord go up." What must have been the impression made upon the boy Jesus, "the Son of David," as climbing the circling road from Jericho and Bethany He approached Jerusalem from the east! I like to think of Him in that vast caravan of Galilaean pilgrims on their way to the feast. It was late in April and the road was studded with the blue and purple and scarlet of innumerable flowers. They traveled gaily along on the backs of mules, horses, asses, and camels. The boys sometimes walked and played by their parents'

sides, getting a lift when tired, on horse or mule. They paused sometimes to refresh themselves with dates and melons, or to gather up from the streams fresh water in their leather bottles. They traveled by families and communities, and the road was enlivened by mirth and music. When the way grew tedious the sound of drums and timbrels lent them cheer. After three or four days of such travel they enter the cool, deep defiles of the mountains, and in anticipation of the coming view of the temple with its gilded roof and marble colonnades, they begin to sing the ancient songs of the pilgrims, the songs of ascent.

**The Keeper of the City.** "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Jews believed that in a special sense Jehovah presided over the destinies of Jerusalem. This is seen in the opening of another pilgrim song, Psa. 127, "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." If the pilgrim bands were anywhere in the vicinity of the holy city they eagerly pushed forward in the hope that they could "stand within the gates" before sunset, the hour when the gates were closed. The sacred ark, "the testimony of Israel," was kept in the holy of holies and was believed to make the city inviolate from attack or pestilence. The heathen had their local gods in various shrines and their man-made idols, but the Jew was convinced that



Jehovah kept Jerusalem by day and by night.

We owe much to the Jew for what he has taught us of religious truth, but we have a larger thought of God than this local and national view. In our "going out" and our "coming in," in the blinding heat of the day, as well as in the darkness when wild beasts prowl, on the land and on the sea, in things temporal as truly as in things spiritual, "the Lord is thy keeper."

**The Compact Character of the City.** "As a city that is compacted together." The deep ravines bordering the table land on which the original Jerusalem was built are not more than half a mile apart. When David chose this spot it occupied neutral ground between the two chief tribes, Judah and Benjamin. So that the location of the city physically had very much to do with the unification of the tribes. "There are set thrones of judgment." The internal government was greatly unified by establishing at Jerusalem a judicial court. Each tribe was represented by a counsellor. The king also had a council of wise men, the most famous of whom was Ahithophel. "Whither the tribes go up." The effect of these annual pilgrimages on the educational and social life of Israel can hardly be estimated. It meant a constant interchange of ideas and sympathies. It meant a bright spot in memory to recall the enthusiasm of the vast processions impelled by a common purpose, moving towards the center of national worship.

"The tribes of the Lord." Religion, as the very meaning of the word suggests, binds and solidifies. The temple worship became the life of the people in epitome. Around them were peoples who believed in many gods, but as these pilgrims by holy vows bound themselves to Jehovah, the one true God, they unconsciously bound themselves to each other. Israel is unique among nations in having a capital within such narrow compass that exerted so wide an influence to bind together a whole people politically, socially and religiously.

The ancient Jerusalem in several particulars may well stand as the symbol of the New Jerusalem which John saw let down out of Heaven. As there were the deep ravines forming natural barriers to the city of David, so in Christ's parable we are told that after death there was between the faithless Dives and the poor, but faithful beggar "a great gulf fixed: so that they that would pass from hence to you cannot." As Jerusalem, the seat of

religion, unified the nation, so the New Jerusalem by the principle of holiness shall unify those that are gathered out of every nation and tribe and tongue. "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." The pure in heart shall see God. The footsore pilgrims of Israel and Judah looked eagerly forward to the rest of the sanctuary as they climbed the steep ascent. As pilgrims here we climb the heights of life with the gladdening thought that "there remaineth a rest for the people of God."

**The Companionships of the City.** "For my brethren and companions' sakes I will say, Peace be within thee." The pilgrim Psalmist praises the city on the heights for its social joys, its renewed companionships, its communion of saints. The religious joy is contagious and socialistic. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

There is no place in the Lord's prayer for a man to pray for himself alone. Every time a Jew went into the temple and really prayed he gained a nation-wide view of life. The pity was he did not get a broader view. For we are God-like only when we get a view of the world-field. Israel's neighbors had little local gods, gods of tribes and towns. Israel had a conception of God no larger than the bounds of Palestine. But Christ came to give us this new definition of neighbor. He is the man that needs us most. He came to tell us that God gave His Son because He loved the world. It is our privilege to invite all mankind to journey with us toward the city of God, "old men, and babes, and loving friends, and youths and maidens gay." "Rest comes at length, though life be long and dreary;

The day must dawn, and darksome night be past;

All journeys end in welcome to the weary,  
And Heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many cities of refuge were established, and for what purpose? 2. State which are the Psalms of ascent and why so-named. 3. What Roman general conquered Jerusalem after the time of Christ? 4. To celebrate what feast did Jesus join the pilgrim band from Nazareth? 5. What were the names of the twelve tribes? 6. What song did the children sing during Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem?

**Challenge Text.** "Great is the —, and greatly to be — in the — of our —, in the mountain of His —." Psa. 48:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. We will be judged not by our starting point, but the direction and the company in which we travel. 2. The walls that guard our modern city are patriotism, education, civic pride, and righteousness. 3. Heaven is glad when father, mother and children fill the family pew. 4. The reunions of Heaven afford a joyful thought, but there is the joy of communion and companionship all along the journey thither. 5. Every Sabbath rightly observed is a holy mount of privilege where tired pilgrims feast on spiritual songs and Scripture promises.

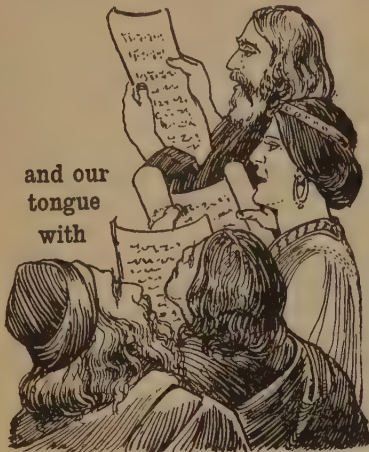
REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# A PSALM OF DELIVERANCE

When the Lord turned again the captivity  
of Zion, we were like them that dream.  
Then was our mouth filled with

and our  
tongue  
with



O Lord, as the streams in  
the south. They that



He that



then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great  
things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us;  
whereof we are glad. Turn again our



shall



in joy.

and weepeth, bearing precious  
seed, shall doubtless come again  
with rejoicing,





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 126:1-6.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for coming to earth to publish the glad news of deliverance. Thou hast done great things for us; whereof we are glad. May our hearts be filled with singing and with gratitude. Help us to scatter the precious seed of the Gospel in the morning as well as in the evening of life. If we sow in tears, may we reap in joy. And bring us at last, our sheaves in our hand, to the blessedness of Thy harvest home. Amen.

"Tho' sown in tears thro' weary years,  
The seed will surely live.  
Tho' great the cost, it is not lost,  
For God will fruitage give.  
The harvest-home of God will come,  
And after toil and care,  
With joy untold your sheaves of gold,  
Will all be garnered there."

—Jessie H. Brown.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** A Psalm composed by Haggai and Zechariah to celebrate the decree issued by Cyrus permitting the Jewish exiles to return and rebuild their city and temple.

**Scripture Setting:** Glad Release of Captives. The decree of Cyrus, Ezra 1:1-11. Israel torn and healed, Hosea 6:1-11. The exiles return, Isa. 66:18-24. Jerusalem rebuilt, Jer. 31:1-9. National prosperity restored, Joel 3:1-8, 17-20. The decree of Christ, Luke 4:14-22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage suggests the homecoming song of the reapers. 1. The rude

forces of poverty, misfortune and necessity drive us from our mount of security, but develop ambition, experience and confidence. 2. Divine goodness draws the whole round circle of our going forth and our return. 3. The commonplace blessings of the present would look golden through the atmosphere of distance and separation. 4. The good seed develops and multiplies amid hard conditions. 5. The song of the harvest-home is the consciousness we have added to the world's real wealth. 6. The song of the angels published the edict that man was free.

### GOSPEL SEED AND SHEAVES OF GOLD.

**Point of Contact.** In our last lesson we left the chosen people of God rejoicing in the security of their capital city Jerusalem. In this lesson we find they have been carried into Babylon and held in exile there for more than fifty years. Now new soil may be as beneficial to the life of a people as it is to the life of a plant. Divine wisdom has provided the seeds of various plants with wonderful formations by which, independent of man, they are transported by the wind from localities where they have run out to new localities where their former vigor returns. You have seen the seed of certain grasses traveling across the country like a ball blown by the wind. After a little thought I think you can see how the Divine wisdom suffered His chosen people to be carried far away from their own little country by the winds of fierce persecution that it might strengthen their own life and plant among heathen people the true worship.

**The Storm-Scattered Seed.** "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion." It is possible to trace a Divine philosophy in Judean history as well as in the growth and spread of Christianity. God saves and multiplies the good seed not by hoarding it, but by sowing it broadcast over the earth. To plant His church everywhere He makes use of a variety of means. Through widening commerce, by the exploration of new continents, in the interests of scientific investigation, He has scattered His seed, the children of the Kingdom. It was persecution that scattered the seed of the early church. When the first disciples were in-

clined to remain too long in Jerusalem, forgetting they were commissioned to preach the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth, a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem, "and they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word." In missionary fields the greatest triumphs have followed the bitterest persecutions. "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

How dark was that midnight when Nebuchadnezzar's army made a breach in the walls of Jerusalem and Zedekiah the king saw that all was lost. Within a month both the temple and the palace were destroyed by fire, the sacred vessels were carried away to adorn the temples of Babylon, and the king was on his way to have his eyes burned out. But all was not lost. Without a temple and without their stated sacrifices, they turned for comfort to the more spiritual elements of the Mosaic institutions. There still remained common memories, common hopes, and a common faith. They diffused wherever they went a knowledge of the true God. They prepared their own nation and other nations for the dispensation of the Gospel.

**The Seed in Heathen Soil.** "Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them." The liberty which followed the edict of Cyrus was so unexpected, so extraordinary and miraculous, that the heathen peoples all about were led to ponder upon the power of this great Jehovah. They contrasted their own man-made idols with the God to whom the captives of Judea prayed.

Perhaps the greatest impact on the heathen mind, however, was what the Babylonians learned of the great things the Lord had done for the Jews in keeping their faith

steady in persecution. If the purity of their domestic life and the enthusiasm of their religious life so deeply impressed Cyrus, how the great mass of heathen hearts must have been touched by a contact that lasted for more than fifty years.

In the great movement of modern missions we depend not so much on miracles to move the heathen mind as upon the unselfish love that gleams in the missionary's heart. Fifty years ago a young man, slight and alone, went out from very near the spot where this is being written to face three hundred millions in India. Now he has returned from that heathen soil, weary and spent, but not until he saw 153,000 in his church and 43,000 youth in his church schools. These results of the Gospel sower are largely the effect of Christian living on heathen hearts.

"O let us find the ancient way,  
Our wondering foes to move,  
And force the heathen world to say,  
See how these Christians love!"

—Chas. Wesley.

**The Spirit-Sifted Seed.** "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed." The sower saves from the previous year's supply the best wheat for the seed. This involves the sifting process. Now the captivity was God sifting the Hebrew nation. Israel had fallen into apostasy and Judah into idolatry. During the captivity those who were of weakened faith lost their national identity, either through intermarriage or becoming permanently attached to the political destinies of Persia and Babylon. Those who did return to rebuild the city and the temple were deeply patriotic and devout. Here was the blood that was to produce the leaders, the teachers, the prophets, the priests, and the kings of God's own peculiar people. The experience was bitter, but it was needful. They returned a chastened but a holy people. Says one historian, "The captivity ended in the colonization of Palestine with a fresh and more thoroughly cultured population, who volunteered with pious zeal to lay anew the foundations of the Hebrew polity." It was indeed "precious seed" because so little, and upon it so much depended. Judah was now like a farmer who had passed through a long famine. He had saved but a little seed over against the springtime sowing. With a sorrowful heart he goes forth carrying his all, his precious seed, and consigns it to the furrows, watering it with his tears and imploring the bless-

ing of God. And because he feels so deep a dependence upon God he is safe. The handful of returning Israelites shall see a joyful reaping.

**The Song Amid the Sheaves.** "He shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." There is something indescribably joyous about a harvest home. Only he who makes the early sacrifices and stays by the standing grain can expect to ride in at last upon the golden sheaves shouting the harvest home.

William Wilberforce gave his voice and impassioned personality for thirty years in advocating the freedom of Great Britain's slaves. His health broke, his eyesight failed, but he did not cease. But in old age to him was verified the promise, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." In 1830, on the morning of the first of August, the slaves of the West Indian colonies came into the possession of their freedom.

Thousands upon thousands of them never went to bed the night before, but assembled in their places of worship, engaging in devotions and spending the last hours of the night in singing praises to God. They had stationed some upon the hills, from which they might obtain the first glimpse of the day of their redemption. By a signal they were to proclaim to their fellows below that the light was breaking on the hills. That they might shout for joy, for they were no longer goods and chattels, but men, men with souls that God created to live for ever. When the aged Wilberforce heard of this remarkable manifestation he lay back upon his bed and said, "I am satisfied."

What was done for the physical freedom of man by Moses in Egypt, by Cyrus in Persia, by Wilberforce in England, and by Lincoln in America, Christ did for the spiritual freedom of all. Much of His sowing was done in tears. As He wept over the unrepentant city, Jerusalem seemed a flinty soil. But Isaiah, who saw the coming of Cyrus and hailed it with delight, saw also the coming of Christ and His great deliverance. "He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." (Isa. 53:10, 11.)

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What important works did the decree of Cyrus encourage? 2. What remaining Psalm deals with this same period? 3. What causes led to the captivity? 4. What prophet foretold the return of the people and the vessels of gold? 5. In what respects is Cyrus a forerunner of Christ?

**Challenge Text.** "He hath sent me to — the Gospel to the —; He hath sent me to — the —, to preach deliverance to the —. Luke 4:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. For all that God has done we should render acknowledgment by taking the cup of salvation to others. 2. The Lord turned the captivity, though He prompted Cyrus to give the commission to return. 3. We are to pray so long as there are any left in captivity. 4. Not until the chaff was sifted away could Christ use Peter. 5. The Pilgrim fathers were sifted seed. They sowed in hardships, we reap in prosperity.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE CAPTIVES IN BABYLON

By  
the  
rivers  
of  
Babylon,  
there we



yea,  
we



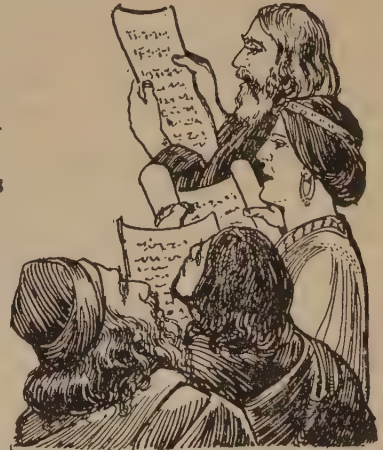
when  
we  
remem-  
bered  
Zion.  
We



in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away



required  
of us a  
song: and  
they that  
wasted us  
required  
of us  
mirth,  
saying,



us one of  
the songs of  
Zion. How  
shall we sing  
the Lord's  
song in a  
strange land?  
If I forget  
thee, O



let my right hand  
forget her cunning.  
If I do not  
remember thee, let my  
tongue cleave to the  
roof of my mouth; if  
I prefer not Jerusalem  
above my chief joy.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PSALMS 137:1-6.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I thank Thee for the freedom I enjoy, for the good land of my parentage, for the blessed friendships of Thy church. I thank Thee for Thy wondrous Word, for the joyful songs of the Psalmist, for the vision of the prophet, for the loving zeal of the disciples, and above all for the golden truth of the Master. Not as a stranger and an exile, but as a child in my Father's house, I sing the songs of the sanctuary; may I never forget them, but sing them forever and ever. Amen.

"Shake off the dust that blinds thy sight,  
And hides the promise from thine eyes;  
Arise and struggle into light,  
The great Deliverer calls, Arise!  
"Shake off the bands of sad despair;  
Zion, assert thy liberty;  
Look up, thy broken heart prepare,  
And God shall set the captive free."

### THE LESSON IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The author is unknown. It was composed at the close of the Babylonian captivity, probably by a Levite of the first company of returned captives.

**Scripture Setting:** The Affliction of Zion. Judea transplanted, Ezek. 17:3-7, 12-14, 22-24. Punishment of captivity, Jer. 32:27-38. Letter to the captives, Jer. 29:1-14. Zion in sorrow, Lam. 1:1-12. The Avenger of Edom, Isa. 63:1-9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage gives a

pathetic picture of the Psalmist's harp unstrung. 1. The Christian on earth is in a strange land. 2. Our holiest thoughts naturally associate with sacred places. 3. The heart cannot sing in sorrow, yet the song of another may heal it. 4. All things have an eternal fitness; the song and the sigh have their place. 5. The Psalms voice the whole wide gamut of life, from strains of pathetic sadness to exultant notes of deliverance.

### THE SILENT HARP ON THE WEeping WILLOWS.

**Point of Contact.** We now take up our last lesson in the Psalms and the one assigned for our study is one of the very last that was written for the psalter. We have thought of the whole book of Psalms as the music room of the Bible. We are loathe to leave it, for here we have heard wondrous notes as the Psalmist with his cunning right hand has swept over the strings. But now he is in exile in Babylon. The song dies in his soul. He would pray that his good right hand might be paralyzed if he should forget the dear country and its temple he had left behind. There is no inspiration to sing or to play.

**The Home Unappreciated.** "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down." Four walls do not make a home. An exile, however housed, is homeless. These Jewish exiles in the latter part of the captivity, we may suppose, were treated kindly. During the reign of Evilmerodach it is said that king Jehoiachin took precedence over all the subject kings at the table of the Babylonian monarch; that the unfortunate king of Judah was allowed to change his prison garments for robes that looked very much like the royal ones he had once worn in Jerusalem. After he reached manhood he married the beautiful Susannah and lived in a sumptuous house with fair gardens. Some of the choicest spirits of the nation were among these captives. The land was a rich and beautiful land. Babylon had her hanging gardens that were world famous. And Babylonia had her great rivers, the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Chebar, and the Ulai. Ezekiel had his own home near Baby-

lon where he dwelt with his wife and guided the counsels of the small Jewish community on the banks of the Chebar. But his heart was not in the land of exile, but "in the land of his nativity." Across the rich garden of that fertile region, across the vast Euphrates, across the intervening desert, his spirit and the spirit of all his countrymen still yearned towards Jerusalem, still lived in the temple courts where once he had ministered. By the rivers of Babylon they sat down in dejection, not because they had no home, but because these patriots saw beyond the horizon the goodly Jerusalem they had left behind.

**The Heart Afflicted.** "We wept when we remembered Zion." As Ezekiel with others wandered through the vast halls of Assyrian palaces it brought to mind the one-time splendor of Jerusalem in sad contrast with its present desolation. "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people!" History and poetry alike are full of descriptions of the holy city and they agree that it presented a picture of dazzling splendor. Its massive walls, its iron gates, its protecting towers challenged the world. "Walk about Zion, go round about her, tell the towers thereof; mark well her bulwarks." Of all the cities of Palestine Jerusalem alone was a city of palaces. The Psalmist could describe it only in exalted language, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the world earth is Mount Zion." It is small comfort now for the exiles to remember that it has become a city of ruins. They could never forget that day when the temple, the palace and the houses of the nobles were deliberate-



ly set on fire. The framework of the city twisted in the writhing agony of the flame and smoke. The walls and gates seemed to lament and cry as they sank in ashes. Even the two beautiful pillars of the temple that had passed uninjured through many former devastations with their delicate ornamentation were broken in pieces and the parts carried away as souvenirs by the conquerors. No wonder Jeremiah cries, "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow that hath been done unto me?" The holy city was gone. All that was left was an undying love in the hearts of the exiles.

**The Harp Unstrung.** "We hanged our harps upon the willows." The weeping willows were very plentiful in Babylonia. Perhaps it was on a Sabbath day that a little group of the exiles made their way to the "riverside, where prayer was wont to be made." It is suggested that they sing one of the songs of Zion. The harps are taken up and strung and perhaps one of David's joyful songs announced. But as the little company is reminded of other Sabbath days when in glad company they went up the temple steps there is no heart left within them. With one consent the harps are unstrung and hung on the willow bushes as the worshipers give freedom to the grief they can no longer control.

What was it that unstrung the Hebrew harp and left the worshipers weeping beneath the willows? Their sad condition was due to disobedience. Religion does not encourage sorrow, but is in the world to heal our sorrows. Sorrow comes to nation and individual when the restraints of religion are broken. When was it that David played upon his harp the soothing strains that cured Saul of his insanity? It was when his heart was pure and his faith strong. When was it he fasted and sorrowed and hung away his harp? It was when he had done wrong and God was punishing his soul? The harp was made to be sounded and the soul was made to sing.

There is a fable that Orpheus played so sweetly on his lyre that the stones began to move in harmony, and coming together were formed into the ancient city of Thebes. But in the ruins of Herculaneum was found a fragment that has interpreted this fable. Orpheus was said to be a musician employed by the laborers, playing to them during their toil, making their work seem so light that the city was built as by the magic of music. Now religion is such a musician, supported by the workmen themselves, going with them to their tasks, singing in their hearts, supplying courage and inspiration, helping to build the modern city.

**4. The Hand Unhurt.** "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." It would appear that the Assyrians had heard of the religious songs of the Hebrews, and they wished to make use of their captives by compelling them to sing their native songs as a pastime at one of their heathen feasts. It was not only unreasonable to ask a captive people to be mirthful in their captivity, but it was insulting to ask that holy ordinances should be prostituted to idolatrous practices. Patriotism and religion alike blazed up in opposition. If they did not remember their country and their God above all else, then let the right hand with which they struck the strings of the harp be withered away. Such beautiful and noble language shows that they were slaves only to circumstances, but that their souls were free. The right hand is the symbol of the freeman's strength. With it he votes in the public assembly, and with it he casts his ballot in matters of government. It is the member most honorable and most profitable. But God's true freeman would rather sacrifice its strength than surrender patriotism or religion. To have played upon the harp under those circumstances would have been to dishonor his skillful right hand, making him a destroyer of his country, his people, and his religion. But the right hand that would not destroy was soon busy in building. The hand was busy, not with the harp, but with the hammer. The temple was rebuilt by heroism and sacrifice.

After the eruption of Mount Pelee there was found on the margin of the lava flood a human hand. It belonged to a woman of noble birth. She had escaped but returned to save an orphan girl. She pushed the girl beyond the fiery stream to safety but perished herself. The girl lived to tell that story of heroism. The woman of wealth lost all but her hand that was reached forth to save.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Whose coming has prophecy seen typified in the coming of Cyrus? In what respects are these two conquerors alike? 2. What reasons could the exiles give for not singing in Babylon? 3. What queen refused to be made a spectacle at a banquet? 4. What is the complete number of the Psalms? How many have we studied? 5. State in what ways you think these lessons have benefited you.

**Challenge Text.** "Afterwards shall the — of — return, and seek the Lord their —, and — their King; and shall fear the — and His goodness in the latter days." Hos. 3:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Slavery of the body is exile; slavery of the mind is ignorance; slavery of the soul is sin. 2. There are harps in Heaven, but no weeping willows. 3. What great souls have been tested by exile: Abraham, Moses, Daniel, John. 4. The charm of the Psalms is a religious charm, their highest beauty the beauty of holiness.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON

The fear of the Lord is the  
beginning of knowledge:  
but fools despise  
wisdom and



My son, hear the  
instruction of thy



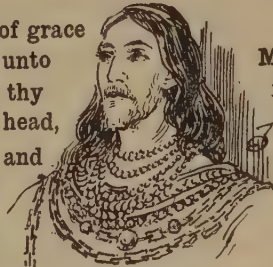
and forsake not the law of thy



For they shall be an



of grace  
unto  
thy  
head,  
and



My son,  
if sin-  
ners



thee, consent  
thou not. If  
they say, Come  
with us, let us

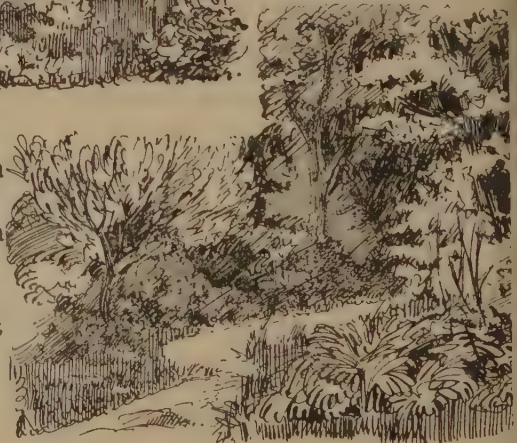


for blood, let us lurk  
privily for the inno-  
cent without cause:

\* \* \* My son,



not thou  
in the  
way with  
them;  
refrain  
thy foot  
from  
their



For their feet run to evil, and make haste to shed blood.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PROVERBS 1:1-19.

**Prayer:** Strong Son of God, help me to love righteousness and despise iniquity. Help me to keep my body clean from the drugs and drinks that deaden and the sins that blacken; help me to keep my mind clean from the foul stories, the worse than idle gossip, and all false standards of morality; help me to keep my soul free from green jealousy that poisons, from red anger that inflames, and from black doubts that damn. Help me to love honor more than life, to love wisdom more than words, and to love to save the world more than to save myself. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The first 24 chapters of Proverbs were written by Solomon about 1000 B. C. The first nine chapters are eulogies on true wisdom. His remaining chapters are more strictly proverbs, terse and forceful.

**Scripture Setting: Heads With Honor Crowned.** Crown of wisdom, 1 Kings 3:5-14. Crown of knowledge, Prov. 14:8-18. Crown of praise, 1 Kings, 10:1-10. Crown of righteousness, 2 Tim. 4:1-8. Christ's crown of glory, Heb. 2:1-9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The value of Proverbs may be gauged from these several valuations: 1

"My conscience is my crown;  
Contented thought my rest;  
My heart is happy in itself;  
My bliss is in my breast.

I feel no care of coin;  
Well doing is my wealth;  
My mind to me an empire is;  
While grace affordeth health."

Aristotle, "Remnants, short and correct, saved from the wreck of human philosophy." 2. Agri-  
cola, "Short sentences into which the ancients  
have compressed life." 3. Bacon, "Edged tools of  
speech which cut the knots of business affairs."  
4. Luther, "A book of good works, a handbook of  
devotion to be compared daily with one's life."  
5. Coleridge, "The best statesman's manual; its  
political economy would eradicate extravagance,  
debasement and ruin." 6. Gray, "Embraces pri-  
vate morality and the great objects of political  
importance."

## THE PREACHER'S PROVERBS A CROWN OF PEARLS.

**Point of Contact.** "The proverbs of Solo-  
mon, son of David, king of Israel." We now  
turn from king David and the Psalms to  
king Solomon and the Proverbs. Because  
Solomon chose wisdom rather than great  
riches or fame it seems that his wisdom was  
given a golden setting and brought to him  
far-reaching fame. His influence is thus de-  
scribed by one writer: "Thy soul covered  
the whole earth, and filled it with dark para-  
bles. The countries marveled at thee for  
thy interpretations and songs and proverbs  
and parables." (Ecclus. 47:14-17.) Frequent-  
ly these dark sayings took the form of the  
Socratic dialogue: Solomon putting difficult  
questions to the kings and chieftains of  
neighboring nations, they in turn framing  
questions for him to answer. He asks in  
Prov. 6:16, What seven things are an abomi-  
nation unto the Lord? And Agur in Prov.  
30:24 asks, What four things are little but  
exceeding wise? The historians of Tyre re-  
cord that this interchange of riddles went  
on constantly between Hiram and Solomon,  
each promising to pay a money forfeit for  
every question of the other he could not an-  
swer. Solomon got the better of Hiram un-  
til Hiram found a boy of Tyre, the younger  
son of Abdemon, who not only solved all  
of Solomon's riddles, but sent that wise man  
others which he could not answer. Finally  
a queen from a distant country, mentioned  
both in the Old Testament and in the New,  
came in person to put her riddles to him.  
With a long train of camels she brought

gold, precious stones and balsam. But like  
Hiram, she was worsted in the conflict of  
wits. She went home profoundly impressed  
with the magnificence of his court, but more  
deeply impressed with his remarkable  
wisdom.

**The Purpose of the Book.** "To give sub-  
tlety to the simple, to the young man knowl-  
edge and discretion." In all Solomon spoke  
3,000 proverbs of which only a portion are  
preserved in the Book of Proverbs. The  
book is not on a level with the Prophets  
or the Psalms. It has more of a worldly,  
prudential look. It is the philosophy of  
practical life. It lays special emphasis on  
industry, prudence, intelligence and a good  
education. This book of practical ethics was  
largely Solomon's contribution to the grow-  
ing young men of the kingdom to help them  
to knowledge and discretion.

**The Principles in Interpreting the Book.**  
"To understand a proverb and the inter-  
pretation; the words of the wise and their  
dark sayings." The meaning of a proverb  
cannot be seized usually at the first reading.  
"More is meant than meets the eye." Hence  
they are called "dark sayings." A proverb  
has the advantage of condensation, a short  
saying standing for a whole discourse. Every  
proverb, then, is a brief allegory. Nathan  
was the friend and teacher of Solomon, and  
it is likely that he taught him the parable  
and proverb style. If you compare Nathan's  
parable of the ewe lamb with Solomon's pa-  
rable of the poor man and the great king

(Eccles. 9:13-16) you will be struck by their strong resemblance.

The parable's condensed statement was afterward developed in its most perfect style by Christ in the stories of the prodigal son and the good shepherd. When He first gave His parable of the sower they understood Him not, but later He gave them His interpretation. His story first aroused their interest and made them inquire. A prophecy declared that Christ should preach in parables and He used many, such as, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Lincoln was a great lover and student of the Bible, and by adopting its language and style became most effective in public speech. Like Christ "the common people heard him gladly" because he was the nation's story teller. His greatest speech embodying his slavery views is entitled "A House Divided Against Itself." It is the unfolding and explanation of Christ's proverb. Two principles will help interpret the proverbs. First, remember that the proverbs are only general rules, but may have occasional exceptions. Ex. Prov. 10:27, "The fear of the Lord prolongeth days." The days of God-fearing Abel who was murdered is an exception, while Cain the murderer, whose days were prolonged, is another exception. Second, the significance of a proverb is best seen when studied in the light of a particular case in Scripture. Ex. Prov. 1:10, "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Read the result of Balaam's yielding in Numbers 22.

**The Primary Principle of the Book.** "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." The approach to Divine things in Proverbs is from a different angle than in any other Scripture. Virtue and vice, holiness and sin, in the Psalms, for example, are represented either as pleasing or displeasing to God. But in Proverbs "goodness" is "wisdom," while "wickedness" is "folly." It holds up vice before the light of reason, prudence and common sense and shows it is full of bitter disappointment and dissatisfaction. It exposes the bad man as not only wicked, but a miserable, contemptible fool. There are many men who are not particularly ashamed of being knaves, but mightily stirred if they are shown to be fools. For all such the book of Proverbs has a powerful ethical and religious appeal. In the practical school of ethics religious reverence is the beginning of knowledge. A tender conscience touched by the spirit of God is the first moving impulse towards honor, rectitude and moral character. He whose mind is influenced by the fear and love of God will learn more in a month than others in a year. Though many of the rules of life in Proverbs seem to be based on mere considerations of prudence, yet religious motives are either implied or distinctly urged.

**Proverbial Principles as Pearls in a Crown.** "They shall be an ornament of grace to thy head." Solomon here intimates that the

surest way to eminence and distinction in civil matters is to follow true wisdom by obeying parents and reverencing God. A crown of diamonds and pearls on the head and a chain of gold about the neck are the distinguishing ornaments of supreme honor and glory. The pearls of noble principles which we shall wear as a crown to our characters are clustered there from many sources. Some good principles we get from good company. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Some principles we get from "the instruction of a father." Some others from "the law of a mother." A father teaches us how to get our bread honestly, but usually it is a mother who gives us the good advice and the consistent example of godly living.

In the southland before the Civil War a bright-eyed boy grew up in a Christian home in the closest confidence of his mother. When only seven years old he brought from school a book which pictured the United States Senate chamber, with the Vice-President of the nation presiding over the body of senators. Looking up into his mother's eyes as he showed her the picture he asked, "Mother, if I am always a good boy, mind what my mother tells me is right, and love God, will I ever get to sit in that great chair?" The mother paused, then said: "My son, I see no reason, if you are good and brave, why you should not reap the highest honors of your country."

Not very long ago a senator from a southern state was asked to preside over the Senate just as his term was about to expire. He took the occasion to review his public life, how he rose after many struggles to be a general in the Confederate army, and afterward occupied posts of honor in his country's service. But to preside over the Senate was the crowning glory of his life. Then he referred to his boyish question and the answer his mother gave in faith, and every eye was wet. "Gentlemen," said the old general, "that faith my mother had for me has never been forgotten. I have tried to always do what that mother taught me was right, and because of it I sit today in the great chair where more than fifty years ago my mother said I would sit." "My son, forsake not the law of thy mother."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What books of the Old Testament are supposed to have been written by Solomon? 2. What two references are made to Solomon in the New Testament? 3. How many proverbs did Solomon write? 4. Why is Proverbs particularly a book for young men? 5. To what three persons in this lesson does the young man owe obedience?

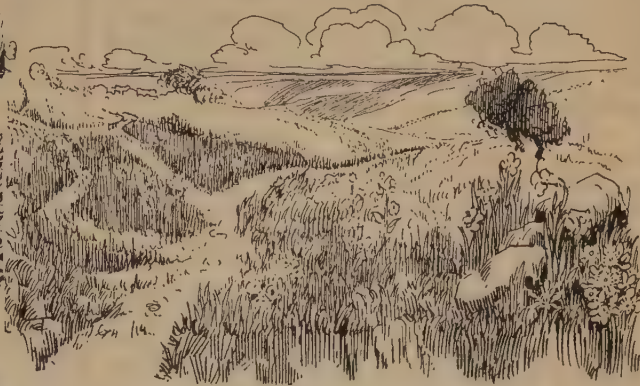
**Practical Thoughts.** There is a proverb as a remedy for every complaint: 1. For the restless man, "Running up and down the boat brings you no sooner to land." 2. For the careless man, "Measure your cloth ten times, for you can only cut it once." 3. For the impractical man, "Pray to God, but row towards shore." 4. For the man who judges by appearance, "A black cow may give white milk." 5. For the trouble maker, "Speak the truth, but come away quickly."

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# REWARDS OF OBEDIENCE

in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not  
unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways  
acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy

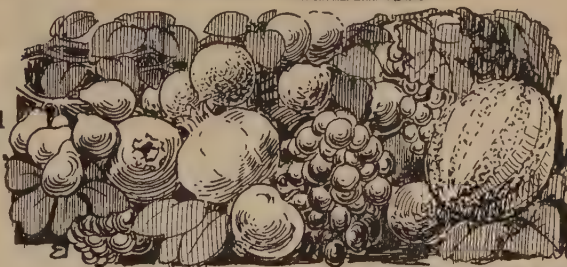


Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the Lord,  
and depart from



It shall  
be  
health  
to thy  
navel,  
and

marrow to thy bones. Honour the Lord  
with thy substance, and with the first.



of all thine  
increase:  
So shall thy



with  
plenty,  
and thy



with  
new  
wine.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PROVERBS 3:1-10.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I would pray as did king Solomon, "I am but a little child—I know not how to go out or to come in. Give thy servant an understanding heart." In all my ways may I acknowledge Thee; in all my paths do Thou direct me. I would plant the vine of obedience that I may gather the grapes of contentedness. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Oh not in strange portentous way  
Christ's miracles were wrought of old;  
The common thing, the common clay,  
He touched and tinctured, and straightway  
It grew to glory manifold."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This chapter is undoubtedly Solomon's, written about 1000 B. C. It shows his favorite arrangement of grouping ten verses in a paragraph (1-10, 11-20). The repetition, "My son," is the language of the tutor instructing his pupil.

**Scripture Setting:** Fruits of Devotion. Golden fruit, Prov. 8:10-19. Grapes of Eschol, Num. 13:17-27. Sacrifice of obedience, 1 Sam. 15:13-23. The Divine Gardener, Isa. 55:7-13. The garden of God, Gal. 5:22-26.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage points out the wisdom of the obedient life. 1. There is no moral law but may be followed as a condition to physical health. 2. The highest point of wisdom is to be wise against our own sophistry. 3. The failure: when God looks for good and finds only goods; his epitaph: "Born a man, died a grocer." 4. Let us learn Scripture by heart; let it rule the heart. 5. No two lives can tread the same beaten track. Christ is the Divine Director.

### FOUR FRUITS IN THE CHRISTIAN'S CORNUCOPIA.

**Point of Contact:** "He shall direct." In a London shop window a young florist has placed a strange sign. It reads, "Ugly Corners Made Beautiful." He is an enthusiastic specialist trained in flower culture and orchard surgery. He takes charge of your neglected garden or waste side hill. He piles the loose stones to form a rockery, plants between them stately ferns, scatters seeds of gay and fragrant flowers, straightens the bent fruit trees, cleans their trunks of decay, fills the spaces with cement, sprays the leaves, and makes the ugly corner a nook of beauty.

Isaiah prophesied of another Gardener who would make the solitary place blossom like the rose, and uproot the briars to plant the myrtle tree. This Young Man came to an old olive garden outside Jerusalem's walls and He transformed it into Gethsemane, the rose garden of God. He found near by a horrible hill of execution, called "the place of a skull," and He transformed it into Calvary, the Mount of Redemption. One Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, finding Him in the garden, "supposed Him to be the gardener." Truly He is the Gardener, making beautiful all the ugly corners of life.

Our present lesson pictures the Christian's prosperity as barns bulging with harvests and presses overflowing with new wine. We may view it as Christ's cornucopia filled with four kinds of fruit.

**Longer and Deeper Life.** "Length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." Solomon tells us in Eccles. 2:4, 5 and 6, "I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits: I made me

pools of water to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees." He planted these trees that he might enjoy their fruits in old age, for as we mentioned in our last lesson God had said, "If thou wilt keep my commandments, as thy father David, I will lengthen thy days." The laws of religion are in strict accord with the laws of hygiene and longevity, for the same God who inspired the Bible gave man his marvellous body. The Christian life is a life of addition. In the promise, "All these things shall be added unto you," is included length of days. The wicked do not half live out their time. Says Solomon, "Neither shall the wicked prolong his days, which are as a shadow." You seldom see an old, gray-headed man in the penitentiary, for sin kills them off before their time. It is a very usual sight to see gray-headed men at church, and to find them active in religious work. "They shall bring forth fruit in old age."

Religion not only prolongs life, but enriches it. David estimated that worship enhanced the value of a day a thousand fold, declaring that one day spent in God's courts was worth a thousand godless days. The worth of a life is not to be measured by the calendar alone, for as one has said, "We live in deeds, not words, in thoughts, not breaths, in feelings, not in figures on a dial. He lives most who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best." Every time we do a noble act we plant a tree that shall yield us the fruit of delight in old age. We need to plant early and late and to live long if we would enjoy the best of life. The picture of content is the old man dwelling in peace under his own vine and fig tree. The choicest



fruit of all is the satisfaction of a life well lived. The peace that God adds to the aged saint is like the blush and bloom He adds to the cheek of the full-ripe peach or the sweet flavor of the mellow pomegranate.

**Human and Divine Favor.** "So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man." A dear old grandmother had a fond secret. On her mantel was a bottle with a small neck containing a large, beautiful apple. Her keen-minded grandson could not guess her secret till one June he saw a tiny apple growing within a similar bottle. Then grandma's secret was out. A life beautified with human and Divine favor must be early trained under the protection of a Christian home. That Boy of twelve who went back to the Nazareth home and was subject to His parents ripened through eighteen silent years till the time came for Him to show Himself to Israel. All we know is that there was a steady, symmetrical growth. "Jesus increased in wisdom, and in stature, and in favor with God and man."

A pure, strong life enjoys both the favor of God and of good men. When Esther, the queen, stood forth arrayed in her royal garments, the Persian king bade her advance and make known her request, for it would be granted to the half of the kingdom. Such favor was pleasing, indeed, but deep in her heart was the consciousness of the Divine favor, because she had listened to the helpless cry of the Jews and risked her own life to save theirs. If the precepts of God are bound about the neck and written upon the heart the life which results will be pleasing to all good men, and what the best men favor God approves.

**Public and Private Guidance.** "He shall direct thy paths." A party of young people left a Pennsylvania city to spend the day on the Pocono mountains in late autumn. Only two had been there before, a husband and wife, but the company felt secure under their leadership. They delayed the return too long and were unable to establish directions or to find the return path. After a half hour of bewilderment they were thoroughly alarmed and some of the young ladies became hysterical. It was the time for little Ehrmin, the three-year-old boy, to speak, "Father, why don't you ask Jesus to show you the path?" They all knelt on the frowning mountain in the gathering darkness while in simple faith the child offered his simple prayer. Very soon one of the party stumbled upon the lost path. They reached the station at last. The mother has cherished in her heart that first impromptu prayer of her boy. The acknowledgment of Christ in God will solve for all of us life's riddles, and Jesus will show us the path.

All the conspicuous failures in history are men who tried to choose their own path. The successful characters, like Solomon, prayed for a discerning spirit. I venture to suggest that the forbidden apples eaten by Adam and Eve were the fruit

of self-sufficiency and conceit. God afterwards directed their paths, but He directed them both out of the garden of paradise. To the young man who takes this verse as his life text and abandons himself to the mind of God I can conceive of no permanent possession, no lasting satisfaction that shall not be his.

**Temporal and Spiritual Prosperity.** "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." It is well to remember that the great temporal prosperity of Solomon's reign flowed down a golden stream as the fulfillment of a Divine promise. On the summit of Mount Gibeon, with a vast concourse of dignitaries, the young king offered his royal sacrifices. A thousand victims were consumed. He makes his choice, so well-pleasing to God, "Give Thy servant an understanding heart."

That Solomon honored the Lord with his substance is seen by the great work he did as founder of the temple, bringing his royal gifts with a lavish hand. Nothing could be too good to dedicate to religious offices. The great vessels of brass cast by Hiram in the clay pits of the Jordan valley were so numerous that Solomon, with imperial magnificence, would not weigh them—"their weight was never found out." The first-fruits and the lambs without blemish belonged to the temple and religion. And as a result of putting God first we read that "Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his own vine and under his own fig-tree." Here is the great lesson of Christian stewardship beginning to take form. Except we be obedient to God in the realm of the temporal and seen, how shall we learn to be obedient in the realm of the spiritual and unseen? The writer knows a plain old farmer living on the hills who for a good many years has practiced tithing, and has sent annually five hundred dollars for foreign missions. His peach crops never fail, and best of all his soul is steadily ripening in the favor and sunshine of Divine love.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who was the first to offer fruits as sacrifice? Who was the first tither? What king was told that obedience was better than sacrifice? 2. What seven blessings are named in this lesson as the fruit of obedience? 3. What was Solomon's choice; his great monument; his chief sin; his contribution to the Scriptures? 4. What qualities of mind and heart are the fruits of a Christian life?

**Challenge Text.** "In all thy — acknowledge —, and He shall — thy —." Prov. 3: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. This lesson only samples the fruits in God's garden, only a cluster the messenger brings from the vineyards of Eschol. 2. The greater the growth from Divine rectitude towards human understanding the greater the danger to life. 3. The Garden of Eden describes the serpent of sin, human disobedience, the Divine curse, the flaming sword. 4. The City of God describes the tree of life, the serpent cast out, the curse removed, the dazzling crown. 5. Solomon gave us wise precepts, but a greater than Solomon is here.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

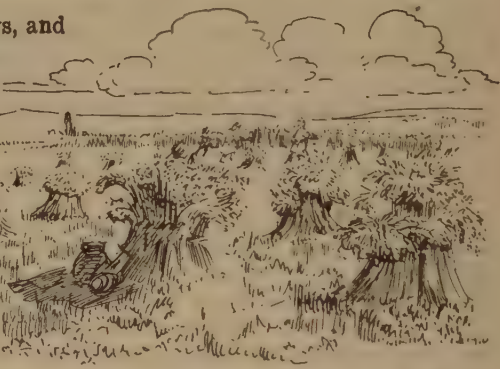
Go to the



thou



consider her ways, and  
be wise: Which  
having no guide,  
overseer,  
or ruler,  
Provideth  
her meat in  
the summer,  
and gather-  
eth her food  
in the



How long wilt thou



O sluggard?  
when wilt thou  
arise out of thy  
sleep? Yet a  
little sleep, a  
little slumber,  
a little



So shall thy



come as  
one that  
travelleth,  
and thy  
want  
as an





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PROVERBS 6:6-11.

**Prayer:** Teach my heart to pray, O Christ, and teach my hands to work. Let each day's task honestly performed be as a daily prayer that rises to Thee. May my life be steadier and my labor better because I remember Thee at the Nazareth work-bench. May my noblest thoughts find constant expression in doing good. May I love Thee more by serving my fellow-men more. May I never eat idle bread. Give me work, and keep me busy till the great whistle blows for quitting, then send me Home with eternal reward. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** In this chapter, written about 1000 B. C., king Solomon reveals his fondness for observing nature, his own delight in study and labor, and his oft-stated conviction of a connection between laziness and immorality.

**Scripture Setting: Observations on Industry.** Creation's many teachers, Prov. 30:24-31. The field of the slothful, Prov. 24:30-34. Labor and bread, 2 Thess. 3:6-16. Idleness and hunger, Prov. 19:14-24. Pattern of good works, Titus 2:6-14.

### THE TWO

**Point of Contact.** "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise." Does it not appear strange to see king Solomon down on his knees over an anthill studying entomology? How much better that was than taking a nap on the grass, for by studying he gained royal wisdom. His interest in ants was only to make better men in his kingdom. With a little ant he shames a big lazy man. In our present lesson he pictures two workmen, one industrious, the other lazy, or two ways, one leading up to fool's hill, the other leading to the summit of success. We see these two ways best when we see these two kind of men working in the same field, and possibly for a few days doing the same kind of work and getting the same pay. Verses 6, 7, and 8 picture the worker; verses 9, 10, and 11 the shirker.

"Let us be content in work  
To do the thing we can, and not presume  
To fret because it's little."

—Mrs. Browning.

### An Independent and Intelligent Worker.

"Having no overseer, or ruler." Solomon's patience, no doubt, was often tried by the irresponsibility of Palestinian workmen in his building enterprises. A recent excavator says, "In employing workmen in this country (Syria) nothing annoyed me more than the necessity to hire an overseer. The workmen will not work at all unless kept to it. The overseer himself is a perfect specimen of laziness." Solomon's lesson here is that every ant is a responsible working unit. Each individual gathers its food, cares for its young, bears its burden to build the

"Two workers in one field

Toiled on from day to day;  
Both had the same hard labor,  
Both had the same small pay.  
One worked with many a groan,  
One whistled all the day."

### ITS RELATIONS.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage contrasts the worker and the shirker. 1. Labor is desirable for its own sake apart from its substantial results. 2. The hour of idleness is the hour of temptation. 3. There are four legs to the good workman's table: industry, knowledge, prudence, perseverance. 4. Idleness is the dead sea where virtue is drowned, the self-made sepulcher of living man. 5. No man can truly say, "I do not need to work."

### WORKMEN.

mound, and in all its tireless labor is its own director. The work of life in all respects is an individual one. The idea that great leaders can stamp down upon the masses religion and civilization is a wrong one.

Said a university president to the graduating class before him, "Would you abolish poverty and advance civilization? Then educate individuals one by one to be more virtuous, more intelligent, more skillful, more industrious." The real worker waits not to be told or driven; he sees what is to be done, finds out how to do it, goes ahead and completes it. The donkey, the emblem of industrial stupidity, does not escape the work by loafing, but only gets the whacks additional. The young man who would rather see his own hands move than to watch the hands on the clock will not always be a hired hand. Watch him, for he is traveling towards the summit of success as steadily as the little ant climbs to the top of the anthill.

### A Pattern of Foresightedness and Frugality.

"Provideth her meat in the summer." This is the homely philosophy of "making hay while the sun shines." Solomon states it as a rule for practical life in these words, "To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the sun." There are three seasons for the ant to labor, spring, summer, and autumn, and she improves them all. She does not store for winter, like the squirrel, for in winter, when she cannot work, she wisely sleeps. But when the food is plentiful she stores it. There are three seasons to life, the study and preparation of youth, the serious pursuits of middle life, and the reflections, adjustments, and preparations that belong to old age. In death "the night cometh when no man can work." The man who kills time is killing the germ from which springs eternity. If we sow not in springtime and gather not

in the summer, cheerless will be the outlook when autumn comes. The lessons we learn today, and the information and training we can acquire, we will need tomorrow, be sure of that.

A young man is called before the directors of a great corporation. The men around that table represent great fortunes and every one of them is old enough to be his father. But the young man has the floor, and the older men are intently listening. They listen because he knows. The day of your opportunity will as surely come. The question is, Will you be ready to meet it? It is a mistake to think we can make up lessons missed, days wasted, tasks ignored. For every day has its one lesson, its one task.

"Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing,  
Onward through life he goes.  
Each morning sees some task begun,  
Each evening sees its close."

**The Nature of the Sluggard's Sleep.** "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard?" I venture to say he will stumble on, walking in his sleep, and never get awake till he meets with a Divine awakening. We have considered the ant that works; now let us consider the hook-worm which is supposed to be responsible for laziness and shiftlessness. We have here a graphic description of the sluggard, an ironical imitation of his own lazy language as he yawns and stretches over his work, "Let me put off the job a bit, let me rest a little, let me fold my arms and take a snooze." He never quite gets to sleep, and sadder still he never quite wakes up. He is so slow about starting every job that he never quite gets through it. He is like the camel who lies down at night under his burden, bearing it in his sleep. Do not think he has no burdens. It is the work and worry of his life to escape labor, but the world is always finding a job to suit his gait.

A boy that was painfully slow and lazy was apprenticed to a naturalist. It took him two hours to throw seed to the canaries. "What will I do now?" he asked. The naturalist studied his collection as he reflected on the boy's speed, and finally said, "I think you may take the tortoise out for a run." A place is made in the world for the lazy and the sluggish boy. He must work even if he goes to the reformatory, but he becomes a mere hewer of wood and drawer of water.

**The Slow Coming of Poverty.** "So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth." It is slowly, step by step, that the traveller approaches, but the sluggard however much warned is never ready for the emergency. He never begins a bank account, so there is nothing when the rainy day comes. He had no money to waste on life-insurance, so he dies to leave his children the wards of charity. He had a fair capital with which to

start, but he has allowed it to dwindle away.

Solomon pictures each man's inheritance as an arable field and an enclosed garden. The slothful man instead of working it merely works at it. He simply puts in his time there. His neglect is soon manifest. Gradually it deteriorates. Little by little the thorns and the brambles appear; picket by picket the fence falls down; slowly but surely the weeds gain in the garden and choke out the good seed; the vines unpruned grow to wood and produce no clusters; breaks appear in the stone wall and the cattle roam at will. Poverty has at last reached his house, if it has been long in coming. His farm, run down and impoverished, no longer produces a revenue.

"Oh poverty is a wretched thing;  
'Tis full of grief and pain.  
It makes the heart of the little child  
With weary sighs complain."

**The Rapid Approach of Want.** "Thy want shall come as an armed man." The slothful owner has failed to improve his chance and so loses it. He has been sleeping too many years. Now comes the rude awakening. His family is with him in bed. A horseman comes riding up and knocks at his door. It is a constable armed with a writ of ejection. He has always held that there was time enough, but now there is no time. He and his family must hurriedly dress and move out into the night. Others suffer and are shamed by one man's neglect.

There is some honest poverty, but much poverty is dishonorable and hardly short of criminal, the frayed out badge of worthlessness and wantonness. Such families are frequently startled by some critical hour of want and suffering. But the hour of their emergency is the natural and inevitable culmination of many unobserved and wasted hours preceding.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What two characters and two results are here contrasted? 2. What other little workers beside ants does Solomon commend? 3. How do the Scriptures represent the man who provides not for his own household? 4. Who is the first person mentioned in Scripture? The first work mentioned? 5. What trade did Jesus learn? What reference did He make to His work and His Father's? What is the greatest work of life?

**Challenge Text:** "My — worketh —, and I—.  
John 5: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The rust of inaction destroys sooner than the wear and friction of industry. 2. Love, labor, and religion make a happy family. 3. Idleness, vice, and poverty are familiar bed-fellows. 4. No penal institution is a true reformatory where men spend the working hours in idleness. 5. A genius for hard work is the best native genius of all. 6. Idleness is one of the seven deadly sins, the devil's softest cushion.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE EXCELLENT WOMAN

Who can find a virtuous



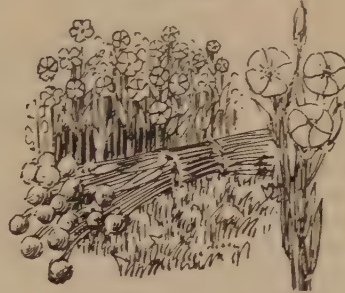
for her  
price is far  
above  
rubies.  
The heart  
of her



doth safely  
trust in her,  
so that he  
shall have no  
need of spoil.  
She will do  
him good and  
not evil all the  
days of her life.  
She seeketh



and



and  
worketh  
willingly  
with her  
hands.  
She is  
like the  
merchants'



she  
bringeth  
her food  
from afar.  
She



also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her



and a portion  
to her





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PROVERBS 31:10-31.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the example we have of Thy loving labor for the sisters in the Nazareth home, and Thy loving thought and care even upon the cross for the mother Mary. We thank Thee for Thy teachings which have so exalted woman. Wilt Thou guard our homes from every evil, and keep from our hearts every unholy thought. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"A dream of noble woman,  
Diviner, but still human;  
Solving the riddle old,  
Shaping the Age of Gold."

—Whittier.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This Eastern poem is the ideal picture of a fine woman which an honored and wise mother gave to her son, Lemuel, a Chaldee chief. This woman, whose picture she doubtless draws unconsciously from herself and her own practical character, is such as he may fitly seek for his wife and queen.

**Scriptural Setting:** The Uncrowned Queen. King's daughters. Psalms 45:8-17. Kindness of Shunemite woman, 2 Kings 4:8-17. Vashti's noble refusal. Esther 1:10-19. Her people's saviour,

Esther 4:7-17. Good works of Dorcas, Acts 9:36-43. Sphere of the wife, Eph. 5:22-33.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson is a noble description of a queen in the realm of character. 1. The true standard of a nation is the moral condition of its women. 2. A good name and a noble spirit are womanly charms that never fade. 3. A woman's power for evil is seen in Jezebel; a woman's power for good is seen in Mary. 4. Christ lifted from woman the veil of ignorance, bondage and obscurity. 5. A woman's home is her throne, children her jewels, virtue her armed body guard.

### A QUARTET OF QUEENLY QUALITIES.

**Point of Contact.** "Who can find a virtuous woman?" Our lesson is a carefully wrought acrostic poem, each of the twenty-two verses beginning with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. This first verse begins with **aleph** and the last one begins with **tau**. The unknown mother who wrote it chose this form that she might easily teach it to her son and that it might be easily remembered. This son was a prince or a child who would inherit some unusual power. His mother, so anxious that he should form a happy and honorable marriage relation, may have composed this very soon after she had taught him his alphabet. Thus forewarned and forearmed he grew to young manhood. It must have exercised great influence on him in choosing his young lady friends to have early memorized these lines by his mother. She must have been a woman of strong sense and noble virtues herself to have drawn so fine and lifelike a portrait of the kind of woman she hoped her son would marry. Since the young prince was to choose a life companion and not a holiday partner, she greatly desired he might fall in love with a virtuous girl.

**A Is for Affection: a True Wife.** "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her." Sooner than the young can imagine, the romance of courtship ripens into the more serious business of homemaking. A pure, deep affection is the very **alpha** or beginning of a happy and permanent marriage. Many a pretty girl is like the flower called the imperial crown, which is greatly admired for its showy appearance and unusual form, but has a very displeasing fra-

grance. But the imperial crown on the brow of the bride that is truly beautiful is affectionate faithfulness. The ideal bride is not the one who withers at the touch of fever or misfortune, like the flower, but lasts and endures on a bed of sickness, in old age, even unto death. "She doeth him good all the days of her life." The poem represents such a wife as a true helpmeet to her husband. "He shall have no lack of gain." She takes such wise care of his earnings that he reaps prosperity and she furnishes such inspirations and incentives that he achieves honor. "Her husband is known in the gates when he sitteth among the elders of the land."

A Puritan minister has left a very quaint sermon on "A True Wife" from a text in Prov. 18:22, "He that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." How much like Solomon's are these proverbs: "A good wife should be like three things which three things she should not be like. She should be like a snail to keep within her house; but she should not be like a snail to keep all she has upon her back. She should be like an echo to answer when she is called; but she should not be like an echo always to have the last word. She should be like a town clock, always keeping time with regularity; but she should not be like the town clock, speaking so loud as to be heard all over the town." How beautiful was that tribute Pliny paid his wife, "She loved that which was immortal in me." By her silent influence she ruled the life of Pliny, and through Pliny ruled the Roman state.

**B Is for Business: a Good Homekeeper.** "She looketh well to the ways of her household." This ideal woman was very domestic and economical. "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands." Horace Bushnell used to say that in the age of homespun, women were given by the Al-



mighty to help their husbands get a living, but that now they only help to spend one. Frugal industry is here represented as being nourished by the wife. The ancient women used to dye a royal purple in their homes, but the secret process has become a lost art. So I fear has it happened to the careful prudence and thrift that belonged to the wife of the age of homespun. The careful watching of the corners, the little economies of wisdom are not marks of meanness; they represent rather a husband and wife striving together in consolidated love to make sure a reward and competency in old age. Instead of the bread of idleness this efficient business manager of the household provides an ample loaf; instead of skimmed clothing against the winter's cold, she provides scarlet wool for all her household. She has enough of all things always for her family, but never enough to waste. There are mothers who in their battles with necessity always win out each year a little advantage and advance of thrift, yet keep their families within the bounds of comfort. This wise economy may be a homely virtue treated by the careless with humor or scorn, but it has been a great schooling for future success. The book of Proverbs treats with scorn the incapable housekeeper. "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion."

**C Is for Child Culture: a Faithful Mother.** "Her children rise up and call her blessed." This ideal woman is a moral manager as well as an ideal household manager. Her conduct toward her children, like that toward her clothing and her food, is beyond reproach. It is her constant care that her children shall keep good company and contract good habits. She is the embodiment of the apostolic ideal, "not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Perhaps modern times have known no nobler type of faithful motherhood than that of Susannah Wesley presiding over the rectory at Epworth, Lincolnshire. Everything was so systematized in her large family that there was time for every duty whether it was instructing the younger boys in religious matters or writing a motherly letter to her "Jack," a college lad at Oxford. She has no ornate monument, but in Westminster Abbey are the tombs of her illustrious sons John and Charles, and the hand of Susannah Wesley now rings ten thousand church bells throughout the land. Of her, Adam Clark, the great commentator, writing on this very Scripture, says, "I have met at least the equal of this Jewish matron. Her Christianity gave to her virtues and excellences a heightening, which the Jewish matron could not possess."

**D Is for Devotion: a Good Christian.** "A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be

praised." It is undoubtedly true that the noblest type of a religious woman ever produced in America was the Puritan woman. This thirty-first chapter of Proverbs and the Apocalypse were the sources of her ideals. She stood for strong convictions on Scripture truth; she had an intense sense of the authority of righteousness; she had a clear-voiced conscience of the purest type; she had a profound sense of the Divine overrule; she represented a womanhood Christ-inspired to the fingertips. In the Apocalypse she found two striking symbols of woman—the one type powerful for good, the other powerful for evil. There is the woman upon the scarlet colored beast full of the names of blasphemy—the woman seducer; and there is the woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars—the leader of good, the mother of light. The ideal woman of John's vision he calls the bride of Christ. It is better to be the bride of Christ than to be one of the 400. We need such a woman today to rule America from the throne room of the home; such a woman can make the watchwords of the twentieth century. This description of a woman now living recently appeared: "She is a woman of winning personality, broad culture, exceptional executive ability, great proficiency as a household economist, of high social standing, inspiring in her pupils' love and reverence." So that God hath not left the world without witnesses of queenly qualities today.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What girl watched over her infant brother and afterwards became one of the leaders of her people? 2. What young woman, great-grandmother of David, found her husband in the harvest field? 3. What two statements in the lesson suggest womanly industry? What two womanly kindnesses? 4. What does she do for her husband, her children, her maids, the poor? 5. What woman wished Christ to be released from Pilate? What women were last at the cross? What women were first at the tomb?

**Challenge Text.** "A virtuous — is a — to her —." Prov. 12: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Religion adorns the mind and heart. The King's daughters are all glorious within. Some wives are like a goodly merchant ship, some are like a deadly man-of-war. 3. A devoted wife is too busy for mischief, too noble for jealousy, too virtuous for scandal. 4. Four secular virtues mark the good housewife, early rising, cleanliness, industry, and economy. 5. Four reasons why the good wife may laugh at coming days: her stores and supplies prepared, confidence in her husband's regard, hope in her growing children, a heart committed to the Lord. 6. My lady beautiful is my lady bountiful: a sympathizing heart for the sorrowing, discriminating eyes to know the deserving, hands beautiful with benevolence.

REV. THOMAS B. ROBERTS.



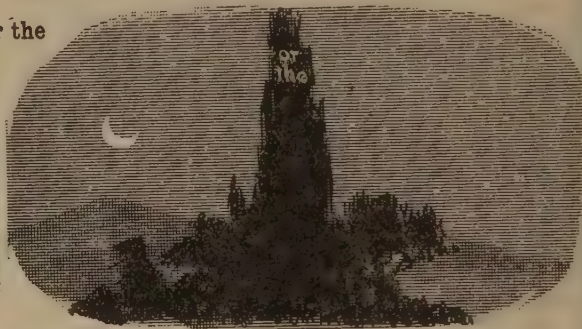
Remember now  
thy Creator in  
the days of thy



while the evil days come  
not, nor the years draw  
nigh, when thou shalt say,  
I have no pleasure in  
them; While the



or the



be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: In the day when the



shall  
tremble,  
and the  
strong  
men  
shall



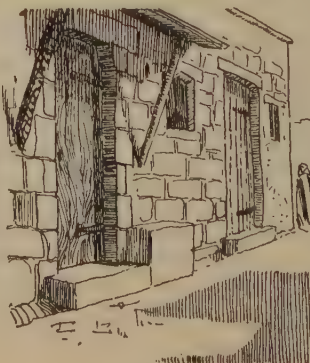
them-  
selves,  
and the



cease because they are few, and



be  
dark-  
ened,  
And the



shall  
be  
shut  
in the





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ECCLESIASTES 12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the maker of the worlds. Thou hast also created us for Thy glory. When sin and Satan had wrought ruin in the soul temple Thou didst come again to repair it; and thou didst give even Thyself, to insure a true foundation and a holy life and character. Help us by Thy grace to build the best not only for time but for eternity. For Christ's sake, Amen.

Souls are built as temples are—  
Based on truth's eternal law,  
Sure and steadfast, without flaw,  
Through the sunshine, through the snows,  
Up and on the building goes;  
Every fair thing finds its place,  
Every hard thing lends a grace,  
Every hand may make or mar.

—Susan Coolidge.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 980. Place, Jerusalem. **Person,** Solomon telling of life's greatest duties.

**Scripture Setting: Building the Life Temple.** Beginning of wisdom, Prov. 9:1-12. Contrasted builders, Psa. 1. The one thing needful, Phil. 3:1-11. A working faith, Jas. 1:19-27. Redeeming the time, Eph. 5:15-21. Busy to the end, 2 Pet. 1:12-21. A building from God, 2 Cor. 5:1-10. Take heed how you build, 1 Cor. 3:9-23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is a list of convincing reasons why we should remember God; and we should remember that we can do this fully, only as we accept and love the Lord Jesus Christ. 1. Remember God, because He made us, and made us

for His glory. 2. Because of the coming days of weakness and old age, when we shall specially need God. 3. Because the opportunity may not be continued to us, and death may suddenly end all. 4. Because we can get the best even out of this life only by having God in us and with us. 5. Because in no other way can we attain to true wisdom and blessedness. 6. Because abundant means and calls are present to direct us in the right way. 7. Because we shall be brought into judgment for the way we choose and live. All these reasons urge the duty with special emphasis upon the young.

"Youth is the time to serve the Lord,  
The time to insure the great reward."

### A WORD PICTURE OF LIFE.

**A Message to Youth.** Not all pictures are painted with a brush on canvas. He who knows how to use words can handle them with as magic an effect as the painter does his colors. We call such a word-picture an allegory, and nowhere do we find such a beautiful and complete allegory of life as this given by the ancient Preacher.

The opening words of the Preacher's warning are stately and solemn. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." The very first word of warning is the word which begins the fourth commandment. Admirable as it is to obey father and mother, the Preacher lays a higher command upon the young. He would have them remember their Creator; accept Him as Saviour; obey Him as Lord and King. He would have them use their youthful strength to His honor and glory; exalt Him with eager young brain and let untiring hands and feet perform His errands. Rendering reverence and obedience to the Creator of all makes youth worth while.

How wise the Preacher who so long ago declared that the best years are the years of youth, thus anticipating by two thousand years the recent scientific investigations which prove that the maximum of physical strength is attained between the age of seventeen and twenty-three, so that office, factory and workshop demand young men

and women; and some of the great railroad companies even refuse to take a new man in their service who is over twenty-three years of age. Should a young man withhold the best period of his life from God and offer his Creator only the years of waning power and strength?

One of the most pathetic scenes in a great man's life was when after his retirement from the highest office in the land, Andrew Jackson made a public confession of Christ and joined the church in his old age. After he had taken the sacred vows, he stood before the altar and with trembling voice and tearful eyes, publicly voiced his regret that, though an old man in years, he was but a babe in Christ. Then he warned the young men to remember their Creator in the day of their youth, instead of wasting the best years of life in seeking earthly honor, and bringing to God the years of infirmity and weakness.

**A Picture Parable of Life.** Under the figure of a decaying, storm-swept house, youth is introduced to old age, and because it portrays a godless old age, the picture is dark and dreary. Just as some paintings are symbolical and need interpretation, so we shall understand this word-picture better, when we learn that "sun and light" stand for prosperity and blessing; "darkness" for calamity and distress. The "clouds returning," suggest the oft-recurring trials of life. The "keepers of the house" are the hands and arms which are as so many guards to the body-palace of which the head is as the watch tower. The "strong men" are the feet and legs—the supporting pillars of the body-building. The "grinders" are the teeth; those that "look

out of the windows" are the eyes; the "doors" are the two lips, while the "daughters of music" are the vocal cords broken and unstrung. The "keepers of the house" become the palsied arm and trembling hand of old age, and the strong men of the body bend under the weight of years. The "grinders"—ah! they will one day cease because they are few; and those windows of the soul—the bright eyes of youth—will give place to the darkened vision of old age.

**The Picture Grows.** As the strong body of youth passes with swift decadence into the feeble, tottering tenement of old age, a transformation is seen in the master of the house. Instead of the undisturbed slumber of youth, he rises early—"at the voice of the bird." Confidence and daring are succeeded by extreme caution. Great enterprises and exciting adventures no longer appeal to him; he is "afraid of that which is high," even avoiding hills and stairs. Courage has fled; "fears shall be in the way" of the mind not stayed on the Creator.

"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness," but the Preacher uses the figure of the "almond tree" blooming before other trees; to indicate the whitening locks of one whom sin has made prematurely old. One who has spent all his forces in evil pursuits so that even so light a thing as a "grasshopper shall be a burden"—cannot serve his Creator with energy and enthusiasm. Indeed he does not long to do so, since "desire shall fail" and the soul no more longs for God. The mourning over his departure will be as heartless as that of hired mourners. Such is the old age of the godless. Who would choose a life whose end promises so little?

**Other Pictures.** Is the word picture repulsive? The Preacher draws two more illustrations. He invokes sudden death in life's prime, using the figure of the ancient lamp, which consisted of a golden bowl or receptacle for oil, suspended from the roof of the house or tent by a silver cord. The whitish spinal cord, oftentimes called the "thread of life" is the silver cord, and the "golden bowl," a simile for the skull, which contains the brain. How often the cord of life is snapped; or something gives way in the brain, and soul and body are separated as suddenly as "ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken." Again the picture is of a deep well or cistern where the water is drawn by means of a windlass to which is attached a rope and bucket—a

good image of the movements of the heart and organs of respiration. The bucket or pitcher is dashed to pieces, the wheel is broken and no water can be drawn. So the most active and useful life must end when heart or lungs cease to perform their function. How insecure a thing is life! Who can afford to wait some future time in which to remember God?

### A Question Answered by the Questioner.

There was a time when the Preacher himself had asked, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" Were man and beast alike and did death end all? Now he answers his own question. "Dust shall return to dust," but—and the words ring down through the centuries with bugle blast—"The spirit shall return unto God who gave it." The soul never dies. It is the living spirit of man, breathed into him by his Creator; released from its earthly habitation by death it returns to the great Giver of life.

When in his eighties, John Quincy Adams was accosted by a friend. "Well, how is Mr. Adams?" The statesman replied, "John Quincy Adams is very well, sir, but the house he is living in is fast decaying. The underpinning is shaky, the windows are clouded, and the roof not so strong as it once was, and, the fact is, John Quincy Adams is preparing to move into a new habitation."

**Weighed in the Balance.** The Preacher was a man who had touched life at every point. He was the wisest man of all ages. He knew both men and books, and out of his vast experience he had learned the emptiness of a life lived without God. "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity." The dying Alexander, longing for more worlds to conquer; the slain Cæsar with "none so poor as to do him honor"; the caged Napoleon on the lonely little Island of St. Helena; the pleasure seeking Leopold, dying in slow torture; the richest man in the world unable to eat a working man's dinner—all attest the truth of the Preacher's verdict. The attainment of one's heart's desire is powerless to grant satisfaction to the one who strives only for earthly good. Nothing in the world is lasting. Youth soon gives place to old age. The pleasures of earth dull; its riches have wings; its honors fade; its friendships do not last. Its rewards are uncertain. Death is the only certainty. The one who serves the world may soon lose all his gain.

The great and ambitious Cardinal Wolsey who forgot his Creator in the effort to win the patronage of King Henry VIII was sentenced to death by the



fickle king he had served. He may have thought of these words of the Preacher as he sadly declared, "Had I served my God half as well as I have served my king, I would have met with a different reward."

**Book Learning Versus True Wisdom.** Though printing was not invented until the middle of the fifteenth century of the Christian era, we must not imagine that the people of ancient times were without a literature. Written documents are as old as civilization itself, and there are hieroglyphics or sign writings now extant which were made more than two thousand years before Christ. Though these ancient rolls or volumes bore little resemblance to our modern books and contained much less matter, they were often catalogued and collected in some place for the general use of the public. There were collections of books in the temples; in the royal palaces and even in the tombs of kings, so that the Preacher declared that "Of making many books there is no end." All dealt with religion or history.

The preacher was a learned man and conversant with this literature and his warning to those who, in the conceit of their own intellect, would solve the problems of life by a study of these man-made writings, might well be handed down to the present day when so many groundless assaults are made upon religion. Books without end have been written to disprove the word of God, until their "study is a weariness of the flesh," while the Bible is still the Book whose "words of truth" warn the living, and comfort the dying, and lead us to the one Shepherd.

**The Test of Life.** The Preacher has painted an unpleasant picture. He has drawn a dark and gloomy cavern where danger ever lurks and disappointment broods. Such is life without the loving care and guidance of God. Youth will never reach the goal of happiness which he has set out to attain if he enters upon that path of impiety, skepticism, and neglect of God's

laws and ordinances. The Preacher has set a danger sign before the road that leads to ungodliness, and now he points to the road of true happiness and success. How different the picture! It is in the open. God's sky is overhead, the stars sing His praise, while one sees the glorious dawn of another day. God is very near. Life is a daily walk with the Creator of all good. Present happiness points to greater future joy, and old age is no longer dark and dreary. It is the glorious sunset of life, as of Moses, with natural strength unabated, or the psalmist who was able to "Walk through the valley of the shadow of death," without fear, comforted and strengthened by the God whose goodness and mercy had never failed.

The great truth which shall guide each one who obeys it to the happiness which youth desires to reach is summed up in the Preacher's final exhortation, "Fear God and keep His commandments." God knows each individual soul. Not only has He lifted man above the beast, but he distinguishes between good men and bad, and holds each personally accountable for his actions. Men judge by reputation, but God's test is character. "For God shall bring every work into judgment and every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." No act of life is beneath the notice of the great Judge, no motive of life so hidden as to be unseen by Him. Truly we should remember our Creator in youth, since to our Creator we shall have to give an account of our thoughts, words and deeds, and from His just sentence there can be no appeal.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who wrote the book of Ecclesiastes? 2. What other books did he write? 3. How do we best show that we remember God? 4. Which one of the ten commandments begins with the word "Remember?"

**Challenge Text.** "I love them that — me, and those that seek me — shall — me." Prov. 8:—(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The whole life is needed in order to serve God fully. 2. If we do not begin to love God in youth, we have no reason to believe that we shall begin at all. 3. Youth is made for pleasures and joys, but they should not be allowed to keep one from the true joy of life. 5. Youth is the time for choices, and certainly the best things should not be neglected nor forgotten. 6. There comes a time when the power of choice is gone.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



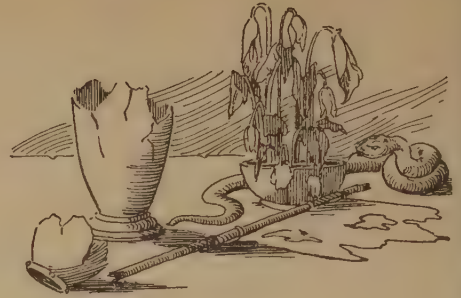




FOURTH DIVISION  
THE PROPHETICAL BOOKS



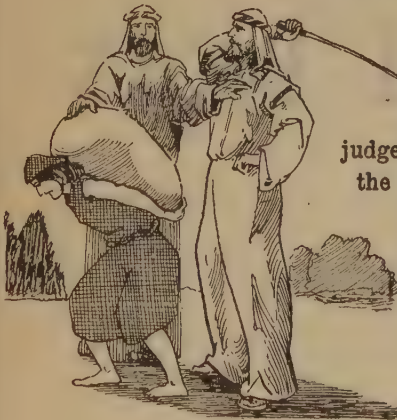
you,  
make you  
clean; put  
away the



of your doings  
from before  
mine eyes;  
cease to do  
evil; Learn to  
do well; seek



relieve  
the



judge  
the



plead  
for  
the



Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord:

though  
your sins  
be as  
scarlet,  
they  
shall  
be as  
white as



though  
they  
be red  
like  
crimson,  
they  
shall  
be as



If ye be  
willing  
and  
obedient,  
ye shall  
eat the  
good of  
the land:

But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.



**THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISA. 1: 1-20.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the great salvation, by which the black stains of sin may be taken from the soul and life. May we hear Thy gracious call, "Come let us reason together," and may we be conscious of the wondrous change by which we are made "as white as snow." Help us that we may more and more cease from sin and live unto Thee. May we glorify Thee in our bodies and spirits which are Thine. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Look up, my soul, not down;  
God's face will smile, not frown.  
Look out, my heart, not in;  
To doubt Christ were a sin.  
Look forward, not behind,  
O troubled mind.  
Trust God whate'er betide,  
Faith, hope and love thy guide,  
And Heaven thy sure reward.  
Till then praise thou the Lord."

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, about B. C. 758. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Isaiah warning the wicked nation.

**Scripture Setting:** God and the Sinner. Calamity for sin, Isa. 59:1-16. Sin condemned, Rom. 2:1-13. Deliverance possible, Isa. 54:1-17. Judgments for sin, Isa. 5:13-30. Redemption provided, Isa. 53. Life by the Spirit, Ezek. 37:1-10. The way of escape, Isa. 55:7-13. Why will ye die, Ezek. 33:7-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson we find God's treatment of sin and the sinner. 1. As to the sin itself, He turns on the searchlight

and shows it to be (1) unnatural, by a striking illustration from the animal world; (2) rebellious and lawless; (3) stupid and foolish; (4) ungrateful; (5) self-propagating and cumulative; and (6) a grievous burden to one's self and others. 2. As to the sinner, (1) God judges and punishes him by inward moral weakness, by outward physical troubles, by national public calamities; (2) he reasons and pleads with him to turn from his sin and accept blessing and favor; (3) he promises full redemption by Christ and purification by the Holy Spirit; (4) he calls him to all kinds of service for his fellowmen.

**GETTING RID OF SIN.**

"Quit Your Meanness." "What a bright light that was! There it is again and again! Oh, it is that new searchlight which was placed on the court house lately." This new light made everything stand out plain and clear, and made one shrink and almost tremble whenever it swept down on him. God has been turning His great searchlight on the Jewish nation in this chapter. He has shown up the sins of the nation, and also has shown them the very nature of sin itself. By this searchlight sin is seen to be unnatural, lawless, rebellious, stupid and foolish, ungrateful, burdensome, and growing rank and horrid like a bed of weeds. By His searchlight He really says to them to quit their meanness. He shows, too, that He will judge them for the sin and punish them, and also that they themselves will become weaker and weaker because of the sin. There are two great results that follow a life of sin. One is, that it fails of any real success outwardly for sin itself means "a missing of the mark." Another result is that it eats out and destroys all that is best in the heart. So it is a failure also inwardly. That first picture is a symbol of what we all need both outwardly and inwardly, namely, a thorough washing that we may be cleansed from sin.

**God's X-Ray for Man's Sin.** The French government has a new use for the X-ray; it uses it as a detective in the customs department. Every passenger at the customs examination has to pass in front of the X-ray apparatus, and is subjected to a most thorough examination. In a test trial recently 167 persons were examined in forty-five minutes, and on them were found all the jewels and merchandise hidden for the experiment. An expert wrapped gloves in linen and then in tissue

paper and placed them next his skin, in the region of the heart. The X-ray discovered them at once, for the buttons of the gloves had betrayed the secret. Every method of baffling it was tried, but in vain, for not a single hidden article escaped detection.—Literary Digest. Even more thorough and penetrating is God's detection and exposure of sin. "Thou God seest me."

**Begin to Do Right.** God calls on all of us not only to "cease to do evil but to learn to do well." We are to "get right with God," and when we do we show it, and prove it, by doing right to man. Four classes of people are pictured out here as needing help. There are those who are deprived of their just dues for some reason, and we should "seek judgment" for such. There are some who are persecuted and oppressed in some way, and we should "relieve" them. There are the fatherless children who have no strong helper, and we should remember them always and tenderly. There are the widows who are fighting life's battles alone now, and we should both help them and influence others to help them. These classes of needy people are in every community, and they will stand for any other classes. Christ said that "the poor ye have always with you." Some are poor in one way, and some in another, and to all of them we should try to be helpful as we have opportunity and ability.

**Put the Label on Your Life.** The "Pure Food" law provides that every label must describe truthfully the contents of the package. If a can of glucose is labeled "Vermont Maple Syrup" the manufacturer who puts it up and the dealer who sells it are liable to prosecution. In short, food, medicine, drink, what not, the thing must be what it pretends to be. Coffee must be made from the

coffee berry, lemonade from lemons and any compound containing hurtful components, as cocaine, morphine, acetanilid, or alcohol, must be so labeled. We ought to put the right labels on our lives. Then we would show what we really are and others could act intelligently. That wine-drinking young man ought to be labeled. You can think of others, even boys and girls, that ought to be labeled. Label yourself.—Exchange.

**A White Heart and Character.** No one can do real right with the hand unless he is real right in the heart. Some people seem to be good in the life even though not right before God in the heart. But their best acts yet lack an inward heart quality—even before men; and they are altogether unacceptable to God. They may not always know this, but God does know it, and so He has sent that wonderful, wonderful message to sinful men: "Come, now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." This is the "snow" promise of salvation. Everyone should learn this, so as to repeat the whole of it. It is one of the ten greatest verses of the Bible. No matter how black and bad the heart of man be, God has planned a way to make it white. The Bible tells us that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." It is so deceitful that it deceives its owner; so Satan tries to persuade each person that he is an exception to the general rule, and is really quite good. We may much better believe God's statement, for He knows, as no one else does. We are safe, too, in taking His statement, for, at the same time, He shows us how the heart may be made right and new and clean. This we know to be by the blood of Christ in and by which we are redeemed and purified. The saved in Heaven are described as those who "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The "robes" are the hearts and spirits which go to make the character. When you see or think of the snow and the white wool do not fail to think also of this great snow promise of salvation. It is for all everywhere, old and young, however sinful.

**Whosoever Will.** Look at this dollar bill. It says: "United States of America. One silver dollar, payable to the bearer on demand." That is to say that the United States promises to pay "the bearer" a dollar for this piece of paper when he demands it. Who is the bearer? He is the person that has the bill. I am the bearer just now. If you had the bill you would be the bearer. The promise is not made to John Doe or Simon Pure or Tom Taft, but to "whosoever." You can write your name there and it will mean you. So God's promises are not given to special people,

but to all. They are yours and mine, if we claim them. Listen: "God so loved the world that (put your own name in here) should not perish." God loves all His children and wishes to bless them all.—R. P. Anderson.

**Which "If" Describes You?** Do you know that "if" is one of the great words in the language of conduct? It is like a great iron door or gate that often seems to shut itself before us, blocking our way. Really, it stands at the parting of the ways, and seems to send some people off towards Heaven and blessedness and others off in the opposite direction. According to one's spirit and desire he will be led into the way of life or the way of death, as this gateway of "if" opens to him; "if willing and obedient"—life, and "if ye refuse and rebel"—death. The very solemn thing about these two choices is that they are final. One will send you forever along the bright way which leads to the eternal glory; and the other will send you forever along the dark way which ends in eternal misery.

**Have you Started?** The day the prodigal "arose and came to his father" he saved both his material and his spiritual fortunes. His remorse and his good intentions would have availed nothing unless he had actually taken up his homeward journey. The best of purposes alone would have left him still in the land of Sodom. Having brooded over his disgrace and made his plans to escape from it, he screwed his resolution to the sticking point and simply did the thing. He made up his mind to go home—and then he went. If he continued to feed swine he must give up a good father and a good home. If he chose father and home he must leave the swine. Which "if" describes you?—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many "major" or larger prophets are there and who are they? 2. Verse 18 is one of the ten greatest verses in the Bible. Can you mention any of the other nine? 3. "What does God, the Father, do to save the sinner? 4. What does God, the Son, do? 5. What does God, the Holy Spirit, do? 6. What is necessary for the sinner to do?

**Challenge Text.** "If we walk in the —, as He is in the —, we have — one with another, and the — of Jesus Christ, His Son — us from — sin." 1 John 1: (?).

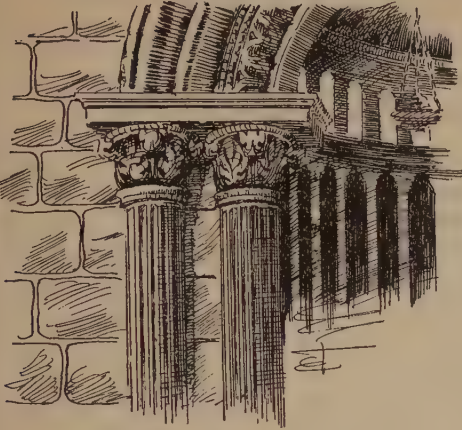
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Worship without obedience is an offense to God, for "to obey is better than sacrifice." 2. A sin is against God and is therefore both ungrateful and foolish, as well as rebellious. 3. The duty of service rests on all men everywhere. 4. Only by the blood of Christ redeeming and the power of the Holy Spirit cleansing and strengthening can we do that which God requires. 5. God graciously condescends to man's sinful state to reason with him. 6. Since Christ has redeemed us by His blood we should consecrate ourselves to His service. 7. The gift of life to the sinner is guaranty of every other needed blessing.

Dr. J. M. COON.

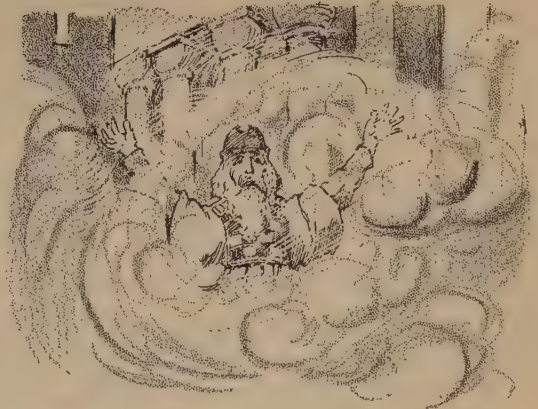


# ISAIAH'S VISION

And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the



moved  
at the  
voice  
of him  
that  
cried,  
and the



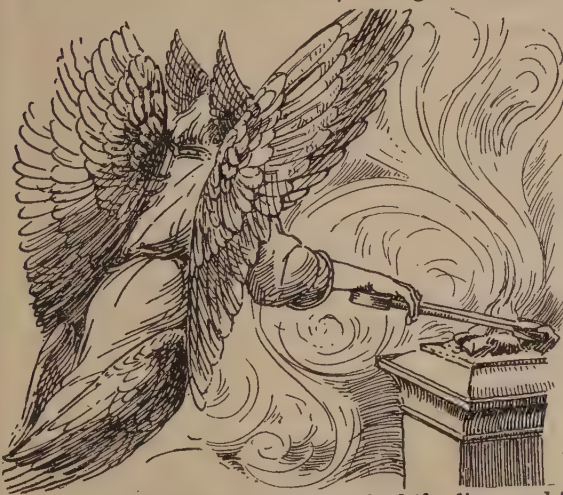
Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a



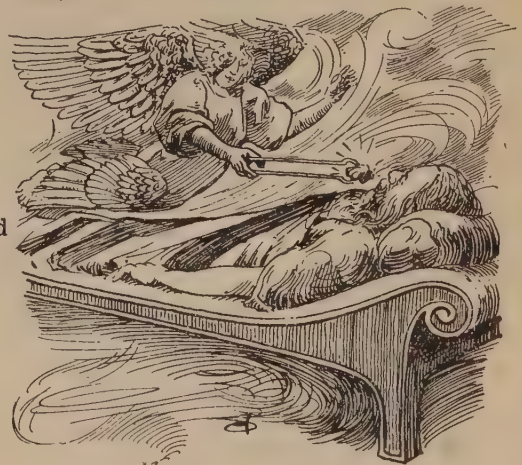
of un-  
clean  
lips:  
for mine  
eyes  
have  
seen the  
King,  
the  
Lord  
of hosts.  
Then  
flew



unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken



And  
he



and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISA. 6:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art a Savior and more. Thou art ever before us as a shining example and holy ideal. Even into the lowly bush of life's experience Thou dost come with Thy glory and Thy power. Open our dull eyes that we may see Thee in Thy alluring and commanding beauty. May we hear Thy voice calling us to greater joy and service. Help us that we may respond, "Here am I, send me." For Christ's sake, Amen.

This little place Thou hast assigned to me,  
Help me, dear Lord, to fill;  
Since thou hast led me here, here would I be  
Obedient to Thy will.  
Seeking no broader field, no nobler task,  
No recognition more  
Than Thine approval; this the boon I ask—  
Thy light to go before.

—Ram's Horn.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 759. Place, Jerusalem. **Persons,** Isaiah and the Heavenly messengers.

**Scripture Setting:** Called and Equipped. The mantle on Elisha, 2 Kings 2:1-11. Power with God, Isa. 62:1-12. David equipped, 1 Sam. 16:1-13. Disciples equipped, Luke 5:1-11. Trained by suffering, 1 Pet. 4:12-19. Like unto Moses, Acts 3:14-26. Wait on the Lord, Psa. 27. Paul called and equipped, Acts 9:5-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Isaiah is the great spiritual forerunner of Jesus Christ as John the Baptist was the physical and temporary forerun-

ner. Next to the Apostle Paul Isaiah is one of the greatest characters in Scripture. It is interesting to note his call and anointment for service. 1. Called by a gracious revelation from Heaven, vs. 1, 2, reminding one of Paul's call. 2. Prepared by a remarkable vision of God's holiness and his own sinfulness, vs. 3-5. 3. Anointed by the purifying word and work, vs. 6, 7. 4. Receives the direct call and commission, vs. 8-10. 5. Is given an intelligent understanding of conditions, vs. 11, 12. 6. Is guided and inspired by the great germinal promise, based in and on God's purpose, vs. 13. This prediction was fulfilled again and again.

## A STORY OF FOUR Vs.

### First V.

**The Vision.** The Albert memorial monument in London is one of the most remarkable monuments in the world. High up on the third platform is a statue of King Albert, sitting in a royal chair, or throne. It was ordered built by Queen Victoria as a loving tribute to the king, her husband. How much grander is this vision of Isaiah. He sees the King of kings, living and powerful, seated on a throne "high and lifted up" and His train of attendants fills the whole temple. Or the "train" may mean His royal robes, resplendent in beauty and declaring His glory and power. For a canopy there are the seraphim angels, each with six wings, and glorious beyond description. This vision came to Isaiah in the year that the king died, king Uzziah, who had ruled in Judah for fifty-two years. Thus we see that God is not dependent on earthly kings in the workings of His providence and grace. Those splendid columns shown in the first picture give us an idea of the great temple in which the vision appeared. But soon the temple fades from view and God alone is seen on His glorious throne.

### Be True to the Vision.

"With chisel in hand, stood a sculptor boy  
With his marble block before him;  
And his face lit up with a smile of joy,  
As an angel dream passed o'er him.  
He carved that dream on the yielding stone  
With many a sharp incision;  
In Heaven's own light the sculptor shone,  
He had caught that angel vision.  
Sculptors of life are we, as we stand  
With our lives all uncarved before us,

Waiting the hour when, at God's command,  
Our life dream passes o'er us.

Let us carve it then on the yielding stone,  
With many a sharp incision;  
Its Heavenly beauty shall be our own,  
Our lives that angel vision."

### Second V.

**The Voice.** There is the voice of one angel to another saying, "Holy, holy, holy." The very posts of the door moved at the sound of this voice, and surely Isaiah must have been deeply impressed. Then the angel speaks directly to Isaiah, and says, "Thine iniquity is taken away and thy sin is purged." Then, greater than all, there is the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" It is not to be wondered at that Isaiah is troubled as he has a true view of himself. The pillars and posts of his own soul are moved in the midst of these holy surroundings. The voice has reached the deepest part of his being, and he is troubled. He sees himself as never before. Over against the holy angels, and the holier God he is conscious of his own sin and unworthiness. This voice sounded through him and revealed his wicked heart and life, and also the wickedness of all others about him. This voice is like the word of God, which is "quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." This sword-voice of the Bible is cutting its way into every heart.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISA. 9:1-7.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art wonderful in Thy nature and character; wonderful also in Thy gracious revelation of Thyself to sinful and needy man. Into this world of unrest Thou dost come and say, "Peace, be still," even as Thou didst quiet the turbulent sea. Speak peace to us, we pray, and enable us to be the heralds of Thy won-

derful peace to all others. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Unheard, because our ears are dull,  
Unseen, because our eyes are dim,  
He walks on earth—the wonderful—  
And all great deeds are done for Him."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, probably B. C. 734. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Isaiah portraying the character of Christ.

**Scripture Setting:** Jesus the Messiah. Claims to be the Messiah, John 8:46-59. King of kings, Rev. 19:11-21. With the Father, 1 John 2:1-8. Superior to angels, Heb. 1:1-14. Worthy of homage, Philip 2:1-11. Praise to the Messiah, Psa. 118:19-29. The perfect pattern, Heb. 12:1-11. An inspiring leader, Rev. 1:10-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here we have a picture of the world Saviour in His origin, char-

acter, work and influence. 1. Jesus Christ is a God-given Messiah, lifting Him above all human saviours, vs. 1. 2. Jesus Christ is a sadly needed Messiah, vs. 1, 2. 3. Jesus Christ is a wonderful Messiah, in the marvelous transformations of His grace, v. 3. 4. Jesus Christ is a strong and conquering Messiah, v. 4. 5. Jesus Christ is a peace-loving and peace-making Messiah, v. 5. 6. Jesus Christ is a God-Messiah; not merely Divine but Himself very God. 7. Jesus Christ is an achieving and enduring Messiah, v. 7.

### A PICTURE OF CHRIST THE SAVIOUR.

**Jesus Christ a Human Saviour.** Does that first picture make you think of another baby, that one of our stories was about? He, also, became a great deliverer and saved his people. He himself was saved in a remarkable way when he was three months old. Yes, it was Moses; and he was intended to represent Christ who was to come. This is a prophecy of the way he would come—"unto us a child is born." In order to be a real Saviour, full of sympathy and a knowledge of human nature and needs, it was necessary for Him to be just like us in every way. So he was born into the world of a human mother, as other babies are born. His true father was the Holy Spirit, but Joseph was called His father because he took care of Him. His mother's name was Mary. Every Christmas time we study about the wonderful Christ child who was God's Son in His glorious Heavenly home and who freely left it all and came down, down to earth to save us from our sins. At His birth the angel said that His name should be Jesus, "for He shall save His people from their sins." In Paul's letter to the Philippians, second chapter, verses 6-8, we are shown how many steps of humiliation Christ took in order to begin His work of salvation. He was equal with God in Heaven, and always had been. Then He stepped down by throwing off His robes of glory and power; He stepped down by making Himself a servant; He stepped down by taking on human nature, like us in all points except sin; He stepped down by giving up His life for us; He stepped down by submitting to the worst form of death, even the death of the cross and by being classed with the wicked.

**A Sympathetic Saviour.** Some time ago I met with a picture representing two women in great sorrow. Standing behind the chairs on which they were sitting there appeared the figure of Christ stretching out his hand over them. They could not see him, because their eyes were dim, but he was none the less present with them. He was near in all his effulgent brightness, with all his sympathetic consolation, and with all his helpful power.

What we need is the power to see—to see chariots and horses on the mountains; to see God all about us; to see the strong right arm of the Almighty stretched out to help us; to see that the darkest clouds and most threatening surroundings are under the all-controlling power of the Everlasting Father.—Exchange.

**Jesus Christ a God Saviour.** It is better to say God Saviour, rather than merely a Divine Saviour. Even saved people are Divine for they are the sons of God, and have His Divine nature. Christ is more than Divine. He is God for "in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," referring to His taking our nature upon Himself. In speaking of Christ it is better to use the word Deity, instead of Divinity; then all will know that we mean His Godhead. Many people, who deny His Deity, are yet willing to admit His Divinity. A man once said to another, "If you will show me a passage of Scripture which says that Christ is God, I will believe it." His friend quoted that verse in 1 John, "This is the true God and eternal life," referring to Christ who had just been named. If that would not satisfy anyone, this list here of five great names would surely do it. And if he should still be unbelieving it would be true of him as was said of another, "He will not believe though one rose from the dead." Yes, Jesus Christ, the Saviour is "Wonderful, Counsel-

lor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

"Wounded in the House of His Friends." The most dangerous blasphemers of our day are those so-called Christians who, in the name of religion, and with an open Bible, deny that Jesus is the Son of God. They are the ecclesiastical descendants of the scribes, who called Jesus a blasphemer, because He forgave sins. If He was not God, the scribes were right in calling Him a blasphemer. But how much more flagrant is this heresy in our day, after all the light and testimony that history has thrown upon the Divine character of Christ.

**Jesus Christ a Conquering Saviour.** We may know that He is because He is God, and the mighty God. He is able to overcome all enemies, even Satan and his hosts. Every one of these other names suggests the qualities of the conqueror. He is "Wonderful" in many ways, and not least in the extent and glory of His Kingdom. He is "Counsellor" and having all wisdom. His plans are made to outwit and destroy His enemies. He is the "Everlasting Father," and therefore Creator and controller of all persons and things. He is the "Prince of Peace," and so must have overcome all things that opposed Him in order to establish His reign of peace. The angel message of "peace on earth good-will to men" is being more and more fulfilled. The glorious time when "nations shall learn war no more" is drawing nearer and nearer, and all because Jesus Christ is a conquering Saviour. But best of all, Jesus Christ conquers sin in the world and in man. He saves "to the uttermost all who come unto Him." He makes man pure and clean by His blood and makes him strong and beautiful by putting His Holy Spirit within him. We are apt to describe a great person by several names and titles, which show what he is and what he does. The Bible is the record of what Jesus Christ is and of what He does. In it there are five hundred and twenty-five names and titles to describe Him. Each of these names sets forth one or more trait of character or kind of work. Each one shows Christ in some new light. The whole Bible is as it were the setting for the display of this priceless jewel of Heaven, this "pearl of great price," this diamond character, this "sunburst of God's love and mercy."

**The Cross the Secret and Sign of His Power.** In and by and on the cross He was a King. Even His enemies affirmed His kingship in the inscriptions placed on that cross. With regal power on the cross He dismissed His life, no one being able to take it from Him; and with Divine potency He took it again to Himself and rose from the grave, King over death and hades. Christ is almighty

to deliver us from sin, from its pollution and its consequences. Who is He that marches forth, glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? The resistless Conqueror answers: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."  
—R. S. MacArthur.

**Jesus Christ an Eternal Saviour.** As He never had any beginning so He will never have any end. He is forever and forever, and His saving work, His Kingdom of righteousness, is forever and forever." Of the increase of His government there shall be no end \* \* \* from henceforth even forever." All of the great promises that were made to Abraham, to David, and to the kingdom of Israel were made because of the Christ who was to come; and they are all fulfilled only in and by Christ. He and His kingdom are eternal also, because established upon principles that are eternal—justice, righteousness, love and holiness. As nature seems to be exhaustless in the number and extent of her powers, and in the myriad applications to human need and comfort; so Christ is absolutely exhaustless and enduring in all His work as a Saviour. The crown and climax of assurance are given in that closing word of the Scripture lesson, "The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

"Because He First Loved Us." Mamma, I am tired of loving my dolly." "Why, my child?" "Oh, because she never loves me back." "And is that why you love me?" "That is one reason, mamma, but not the first one, or the best." "What is the first and best reason, then, my darling?" "Why, mamma, it's because you loved me when I was too little to love you back. That's why I love you so much now." The little girl, you see, was giving the thought that the Bible has about the Lord Jesus Christ, "We love him, because he first loved us."—Sel.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. There are four great names of Christ in the lesson. What other names does He have? 2. Mention six great facts about Christ. 3. Quote some of Christ's great sayings.

**Challenge Text.** Wherefore God, also hath highly — Him, and given Him a — which is above — name. Philip. 2: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Jesus Christ is the commanding character in all history. 2. Redemption is a covenant between God the Father and God the Son. Man gets the benefit of it by accepting it. 3. God's "nevertheless" of grace and opportunity comes to every man again and again. 4. It is the greatest folly and sin to refuse allegiance to God and his Messiah-King. 5. Everyone must bow to Christ as Saviour or submit to him as Lord. 6. There is no salvation except through acceptance of Jesus the Messiah. 7. The Christ Kingdom differs from world kingdoms, as to its origin, spirit, method of government, elements of power, universality. 8. World empire is realized only by Jesus Christ and by the spiritual energy of love and sacrifice.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

And righteousness  
shall be the



of his loins, and faithfulness  
the girdle of his reins. The



also  
shall  
dwell  
with  
the



and the



and  
the



and  
a



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISA. 11:1-10.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art a right and glorious King, and Thy Kingdom shall extend over all the earth. Speed the day when Thou shalt come into full power in all lands. Grant unto Thy people to "be willing in the day of Thy power" that they may go forth conquering and to conquer. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"I may not stay to see the day  
When the great Saviour shall bear sway,  
And earth shall glitter in the ray  
That cometh from above;  
But come it fast or come it slow,  
'Twill come at last, I surely know,  
And Heaven and earth shall feel the glow,  
And men shall call it Love."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 720 to 711 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Isaiah foretelling the glory of Christ's Kingdom.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ and His Kingdom. The King of glory, Psa. 24. The King of peace, Zech. 9:9-17. The righteous King, Jer. 23:1-8. A mighty Kingdom, Psa. 45:1-7. A universal Kingdom, Dan. 7:9-14. The King of life, Col. 3:1-11. A returning King, Acts 1:1-11. A world-wide Kingdom, Isa. 61:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The inspired prophet gives a picture of Christ and His Kingdom. 1. As to the King: (1) He is to be of the line of

David, according to the purpose of God; (2) He is to be a spiritual King, as the representative of God; (3) He is to be a wise King, surpassing all the wisdom of man; (4) He is to be a just King, punishing the wicked and rewarding the righteous. 2. As to the Kingdom itself: (1) It shall be a Kingdom of peace; (2) It shall be a Kingdom of new natures and new conditions; (3) It shall be a Kingdom in coöperation with God; (4) It shall be a world-wide Kingdom; (5) It shall be the Kingdom of the true "golden age," ushering in the millenium.

### THE GREATEST KINGDOM IN THE WORLD.

**A Kingdom With the Greatest King.** Great preparations were made for the coronation of, George V, King of England. He is doubtless the greatest earthly king today, and rules over a larger extent of territory than any other. But the King of this Kingdom we are thinking of is a greater, far greater King, than king George, or all earthly monarchs combined. It is King Jesus, the Son of God, who came to earth for the express purpose of founding a Kingdom, as He said to Pilate at one time. In that first picture of a girdle we see the kind of a King Christ is: namely a righteous King and a faithful King. These qualities are spoken of as "girdles," which means that they bind together and control all else, as a girdle does the flowing robes. The first verses of this chapter describe this Christ King as of the line of David: spiritual, wise, and infinitely just and tender. Jesus Christ comes in the power of God, and according to the purpose of God, and fulfills all the glorious prophecies of God; and all because He is God Himself, "King of kings and Lord of lords."

**The Wonderful Christ King.** We celebrate His birthday throughout the world; we date our letters from the year of His birth; we offer in Congress and Parliaments prayers in His name. The history of His life is printed in four hundred languages. Kings and emperors, presidents and judges, statesmen and scholars, peasants and slaves, declare this to be the greatest and best of all books. Thousands of magnificent buildings have been erected to Him—abbeys, cathedrals and churches. Our greatest colleges were dedicated to this poor boy who never went to college, never left His own little country, and died when He was only thirty-three years old. From His life and death painters, poets, orators and musicians have gained their highest inspiration. His loyal subjects are num-

bered by millions and increasing at the rate of almost a million a year.—Selected.

**A Kingdom That Changes the Inner Nature.** Here are named some of the animals having the very strongest animal instincts. They are blood-thirsty, ravenous and with desperate cunning to kill and destroy. Men by nature have some such instincts; and someone has said that every kind of animal may find its likeness among men. So when we are told that these fierce natures of animals will be changed it means then all that is wrong and wicked and vicious in man can be corrected. Look at this wonderful picture of the power in and from this Kingdom of Christ. There is something very remarkable about it. The wolf is changed in the nature like the lamb it has sought to seize from the sheepfold; the leopard lies down with the kid it has hunted among the mountains and precipices; the lion lives peaceably with the calf or ox it has been accustomed to carry off bodily; the bear feeds with the cow it used to hug to death and eat. The asp and the cockatrice, one of the smallest and one of the largest of venomous serpents, become so harmless that the very child may play with them. This is all a striking picture of the power of the Christ King and His Kingdom of transforming force. By this power men who swear and drink, who are selfish, sinful and vicious, are made good, gentle, kind and holy.

**Voice and Power of the Blood.** How often have we listened to the "noises of the sea" as we placed the sea shell to our ears! A recent writer tells us that this is but the sound of the blood as it circulates through our veins and is echoed in the empty shell. The sound of the blood! What



is all this singing of praise that we hear in our churches and at our home altars? What these glad tidings proclaimed from our pulpits from Sabbath to Sabbath? What these evening and morning prayers, these dying confessions of God's dear ones as they wait the endless dawn? They are the voices of the blood that followed the Roman spear and flowed from the pierced brow and the wounded hands and feet. Oh, the sound of the Saviour's blood! It has given the keynote to the world's sweetest music and has changed human animals into saints, bringing blessing to the world. It has changed the sigh of the sin-cursed soul to an eternal song of praise.—Exchange.

**A Kingdom That Wins by Love and Gentleness.** Look at that large picture of the little child leading those animals. Not only are their ferocious natures changed, but they are led by a child. This means that they are controlled and used by the child forces. These forces are specially love and gentleness. One may not think there is much force in love and gentleness. It is true they do not win by force, but nevertheless they are the most winning forces. I like also to see a picture of the Babe of Bethlehem in that little child. Anyhow we know that the Christ child told us about these great forces of love and gentleness, and also showed us how to use them. So now, more and more every year, a man who is saved and has become as a little child in his nature is leading and controlling the human wolves, leopards, bears and lions. This new power in and from Christ changes their very natures and makes them helpers and workers for the Kingdom of Christ. Christ is changing and conquering the world, not by a war of destruction but in a movement of rebuilding through love and kindness in righteousness.

**A Spiritual Kingdom.** Christ is our King by virtue of legitimate conquest. But how different is the line of action of our Heavenly King in His conquest of our soul from the course pursued by earthly generals in subduing temporal kingdoms! Alexander the Great established an empire by wading through the blood of his fellow men. By the sword he conquered, and by the sword he kept his subjects in bondage. Our Divine Ruler obtained the victory over the kingdom of our hearts, not by the material sword, but by "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God;" not by enslaving our bodies, but by rescuing our souls from the bondage of sin; not by shedding the blood of others, but by the shedding of His own blood.—Exchange.

**A Kingdom That Is World-wide.** A world-wide empire has been the dream of man in all ages. No one has ever been able to realize the dream, even in the low plane of earthly and selfish ambition. But Jesus Christ, the God-man, had this dream of a world-wide Kingdom and He came from

Heaven to establish it. We have seen that it was a Kingdom of blessing and peace, and was to be founded on love. No mere man ever even thought of those things. Christ has not only thought of them, but has purposed to secure them. Those last two pictures show two ways in which Christ will accomplish this world empire. One is by so binding and controlling the evil, that it cannot do any harm anywhere. The other is by the giving of the Gospel to the world, and covering the whole earth with the blessings of the Gospel, "as the waters cover the sea." This triumph of Christ's kingdom is absolutely certain, for God says that it "shall be." We see that it is already accomplished in the purpose of God, and that is a good assurance that it will be accomplished in the hearts and lives of men everywhere. It is necessary for us to do two things. One is to consecrate ourselves wholly to this King and Kingdom and let Christ rule in our being, which is itself a little Kingdom. The other is to consecrate all our powers, time, toil, prayers, money, to the extension of Christ's Kingdom in all the earth. Then speedily shall the kingdoms of this world "become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."

**Enduring Because Right.** Only such a kingdom can endure. Nothing is really settled till it is settled right. The powers of evil seem very strong, but every one is doomed to fall before Christ. The forces of intemperance shall be destroyed; organized oppression shall be broken; heathenism shall fall; infidelity be overthrown; slavery cease. The prince of darkness in darkest England, darkest Africa, and darkest America shall be torn from his throne, and the light shall scatter the darkness, and the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings shall change winter into spring, and night into day.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who is the rightful owner of the world? 2. Who is in possession now? 3. What are the ways in which He is winning the world? 4. When and to whom did Christ say, "That He was a King"?

**Challenge Text.** "Yet have I set my — upon my holy — of Zion." Ps. 2: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. It is our privilege and duty to pray for the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit. 2. Love to man is the great solvent of many problems. 3. The true Christian worker adapts his efforts to the case in hand. 4. If we should breathe more of the oxygen of Heaven and God we could have a higher life and do better work. 5. We should treat the animal world with more kindness and consideration. 6. Our present conduct should be keyed to the ideal consummation as here pictured. 7. Since the earth is the Lord's He will give it to us as soon as we claim it by missionary consecration. 8. The story of Christ never grows old, and charms all classes and conditions.

DR. J. M. COON.

# THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save

you  
Then  
the  
eyes  
of the



shall be  
opened,  
and the  
ears of  
the



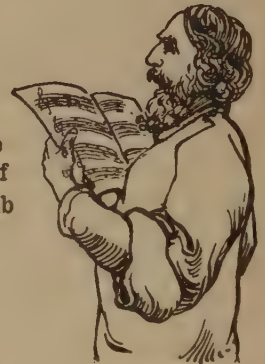
shall be  
unstopped.  
Then  
shall the



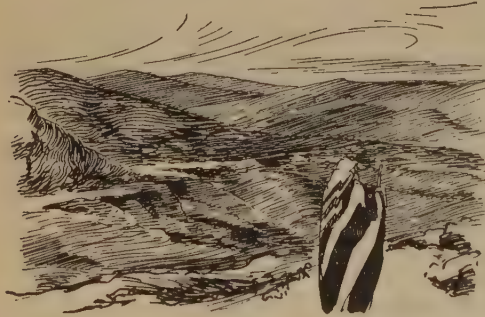
leap  
as  
an



and the  
tongue of  
the dumb



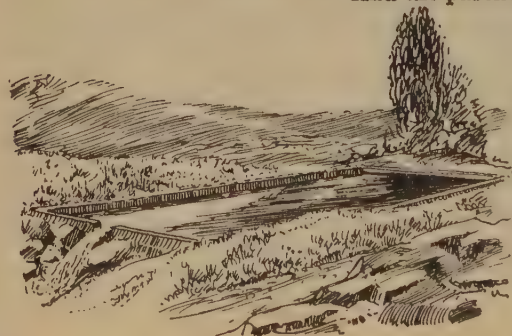
for in the



shall  
waters  
break  
out, and



And the parched ground shall become a



and the  
thirsty  
land





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISA. 35: 1-10.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast spoken great words to man; words that tell of varied and wonderful mercies. May we hear and believe and receive. The peace and joy which Thou dost give we will seek to urge upon others. May we be blessed that we may bless others. Glorify Thyself by enlarging and extending Thy Kingdom unto all the earth. For Christ's sake, Amen.

Climb the Mount of Blessing, whence, if thou  
Look higher, then, perchance, thou mayest—beyond  
A hundred ever-rising mountain lines,  
And past the range of Night and Shadow—see  
The high-heaven dawn of more than mortal day  
Strike on the Mount of Vision.—Tennyson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time, about 713 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Isaiah pleading with the people.

**Scripture Setting:** Gospel Blessings. Full Forgiveness, Jer. 31:31-34. Eternal life, John 11:21-27. Salvation to all, Titus 2:1-14. Sustaining grace, Isa. 43:1-13. Christ's abiding presence, Matt. 28:11-20. The Holy Spirit, Joel, 2:21-29. The many promises, 1 Pet. 1:4-13. The motive power, 2 Cor. 5:14-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** The whole chapter is

a beautiful picture, of the privileges and blessings of the Gospel. 1. The Gospel transforms the most cheerless conditions and surroundings, vs. 1, 2. 2. It encourages and strengthens and inspires, vs. 3, 4. 3. It awakens, girds and energizes all the powers, vs. 5, 6. 4. It refreshes, purifies, and blesses, vs. 6, 7. 5. It provides many guiding, helpful, and protecting providences, vs. 8, 9. 6. It supplies abundant and abiding joys, v. 10. All are assured and secured in the love, purpose and power of God.

### THE BLESSINGS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

**Blessings of the Body.** "That is the best investment I ever made." The speaker probably had in mind mere money values. He may have invested in a mine, or in the manufacture of some invention. And we know that sometimes a comparatively small outlay will bring in very large returns. Or, he may have referred to an education for himself or another, or to some experience or sacrifice by which he was stirred and spurred to a life work. All of these are good and right in themselves, and they may be very good investments. But when we begin the Christian life by a personal, heart acceptance of Jesus Christ as a Savior, we have made the very best investment that anyone could possibly make; and best in every way, both for this life and for that which is to come.

The first five pictures seem to set forth the blessings of the body. They may point also to inner blessings. But, it is asked, does the Christian life give one eyes and ears and feet and tongue? Yes, indeed, in the sense that the Christian sees and hears much that the unsaved person cannot know or understand. The man who is physically blind or deaf is unable to enjoy the physical beauties of this life. Just so the man who is spiritually blind or deaf is shut away from the spiritual beauties of this earthly life. The same is true of the feet and tongue of the Christian. Every physical power is quickened and enlarged by the new heart and new life.

**Fanny Crosby's Investment.** Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer, was once speaking in one of the missions in New York City. Suddenly she stopped and said, "I wonder if there is not some wandering boy in this audience this evening who would have the courage to step out and come and stand by my side so that I might put my arms around him and kiss him for his mother?"

There was a hush upon the audience; then a boy from a rear seat started and came to the platform, and, with her arms about him and her lips against his cheek, for his mother's sake, Fanny Crosby said, "Oh, my friends, let us rescue the perishing." From this meeting she went to her home and, sitting in her room, wrote "Rescue the Perishing," a hymn which has been sung around the world.

Some years ago she spoke in St. Louis at a great meeting and related the incident. Before she had finished a man sprang to his feet and said, "Miss Crosby, listen to me. I am a prosperous merchant in this city, a husband and a father, a Christian, and an officer in the church. I was the boy around whom you threw your arms." This was the result of seeing the worth of a soul in a young boy. It was a good investment, which resulted in the birth of that immortal hymn, and of that immortal soul.—Exchange.

**Blessings of the Soul.** The pictures of the waterbrook and streams, and pool and springs seem to tell of the inner life and power. The benefits of this kind in the Christian life are even more marked than the physical blessings. Then, too, they are of a higher grade. Some people even though they are not Christians, seem to have physical and bodily blessings quite equal to those who are Christians. But when it comes to blessings of the inner life the difference is seen at once. Such blessings cannot be manufactured so readily. What are some of the blessings which are suggested by the water in various forms? The water breaking out is like that joy which only a Christian can have. The "streams in the desert" are the patience and contentment in time of trial. The "pool" and "springs" are the real pleasures the Christian has, over against the sinful pleasures of the worldly; pleasures which only deceive and disappoint. The figure is that of the mirage, as it is called, which really means a false pool that represents only an imaginary pleasure. The

Christian pleasures are satisfactory and life-giving and like wells of water, bringing refreshing to the Christian and others.

**Pandita Ramabai's Wells.** Those who have visited Pandita Ramabai's settlement at Mukti will remember the large wells, with their abundant supply of water. The Mukti Prayer Bell tells of the naming of these sources of life after the names of the fruits of the Spirit—Priti (Love), Anand (Joy), Shanti (Peace), Dhir (Long-suffering), Upakar (Goodness), Vishvas (Faith), Kripa (Mercy), Upalati (Springing Up), Sanjeevani (Reviving), Asha (Hope). As each well was dug, the 55th chapter of Isaiah was read and prayer offered.

The spot is already marked for another well, which is to be called Jacob's well. It is to be on the roadside, where any passer-by may have a drink of water and hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. "Please pray," says the Prayer Bell, "that the wayfarers may hear, believe, and be saved."—Bombay Guardian.

**Blessings of Providence.** Providence is a big word, but one which every one should learn to speak early. It is full of the wisdom, goodness and care of God. Every one is daily receiving the blessings of Providence. A great preacher announced once as the subject of his sermon, "Every man's life a plan of God." That meant that God was thinking of him and ordering all his life. Surely then the Christian is in God's good hands constantly, and is guarded and guided by Him. That picture of the "dragons" is a terrible looking one, and suggests one of the evils the Christian is protected against. Then a "highway" is cast up for the Christian to walk on; a "holy way" on which no bad and unclean persons shall go. It will be made plain to him also, just as if some one was beside him saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." "No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast." This may refer to Satan, who "goes about as a roaring lion;" and his demons, which might rend and tear those they possessed. There will be the company of only the "redeemed," each helping and comforting the others. Altogether it is a beautiful picture of the love and care of God by his constant Providence.

**How Providence Saved Livingstone.** When Livingstone went to Africa, there was a Scotch woman named Mrs. MacRobert, quite advanced in life, who had saved up thirty pounds, which she gave to the great missionary, saying: "When you go to Africa, I want you to spare yourself exposure and needless toil by hiring some competent body-servant who will go with you wherever you go, and share your sacrifices and exposures." With that money he hired his faithful servant known as Sebalwe. When the lion had thrown Livingstone down and crushed the bones of his left arm, and was about

to destroy him, this man, seeing his critical condition, drew off the attention of the lion to himself, thinking that he would save his master at the cost of his own life. The lion sprang at him, but just at that moment the guns of other companions brought him down, and Livingstone's life was prolonged for thirty years.—Exchange.

**Blessings of Eternal Joys.** The word which often describes this earthly life is pain, or at least unrest and uncertainty. This is particularly true of those who are not Christians, and to some extent is true even of Christians. But the prevailing keynote of the Christian life is joy. It is a joy which is inward in the heart, and outward on the lips. It is a joy which is eternal, and brings blessings on their heads. It is a joy which is complete for "sorrow and sighing shall flee away." In that tree of nine kinds of fruit, grown and ripened by the Holy Spirit, joy is second in the list. See Gal. 5:22, 23.

Love is named first, and all will agree that love should be first. Joy is next, and really is itself full of the spirit and flavor and beauty of love. In the ten "blesseds" of Christ's sermon on the mount, joy is the ground note of each, and at the last it swells into a loud song and chorus, "Rejoice and be exceeding glad." In joy we find much of "the Christian secret of a happy life."

**Joy In and Through Gethsemane.** We are apt to think of Gethsemane only as a garden of sorrow, which we enter with emotions of deepest and saddest sympathy. But Gethsemane has its bright side, a side of glory and joy. Under those olive trees, within sight of those sleeping disciples, there stood one of angelic brightness and beauty by the Master, bringing comfort and strength to His victorious spirit. The garden that echoed lately with the cry of agony was illuminated with a Heavenly radiance and glory.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many "Blesseds" are in Christ's sermon on the Mount? How many can you recite? 2. What benefits has the Gospel brought to your home or town? 3. What blind man did Christ heal? What deaf man? What lame man?

**Challenge Text.** "But my God shall — all your need, according to His riches in — by Christ Jesus." Philip. 4:(f).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. They who work in and by the Gospel have the very power of God. 2. To be conscious of one's weakness is the first condition of strength. 3. The Church should always take special care of all unfortunates. 4. The most unlikely conditions are often made to minister to spiritual good. 5. Some people are so wise as to make themselves fools in spiritual matters. 6. God's "shalls" are the sure guaranty of all the believers' blessings.

DR. J. M. COON.

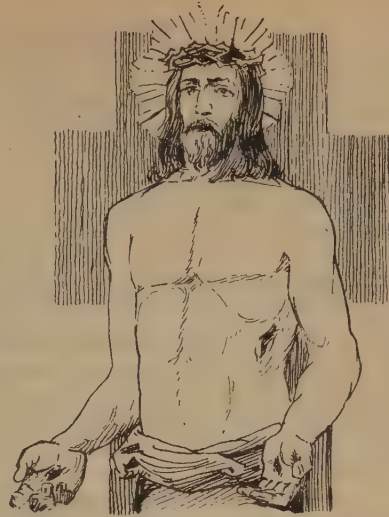


# THE SUFFERING SAVIOUR

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our



yet we  
did  
esteem  
him  
stricken,  
smitten  
of God,  
and  
afflicted.  
But  
he was



for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:  
the



of our peace was upon  
him; and with his



we are healed.  
All we like



have gone astray; we  
have turned every one to  
his own way; and the  
Lord hath laid on him  
the iniquity of us all. He  
was oppressed, and he was



yet he  
opened  
not his  
mouth:  
he is  
brought  
as a



to the slaughter,  
503

ISA. LIII: 4-7.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISAIAH 52:13—53:12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the lowly One and therefore the enthroned One. Thy Gethsemane and Calvary have made Thee mighty to save. Thou art worshiped on earth, and glorified in Heaven, because Thou didst suffer and die. May the time speed to us swiftly when Thou shalt "be satisfied." Make us to be more consecrated in service, even to the vicarious spirit, in sacrifice for others. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Thus wer't Thou made all mine;  
Lord make me wholly Thine,  
Grant grace and strength Divine  
To me.

"In thought and word and deed,  
Thy will to do; Oh, lead  
My soul, even though it bleed,  
To Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 712 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Isaiah describing Jesus Christ in prophecy.

**Scripture Setting:** The Suffering Saviour. A glorious Saviour, Rev. 5. A despised Saviour, Psa. 22. A necessary Saviour, Heb. 2:1-15. A vicarious Saviour, Heb. 10:5-22. A life-giving Saviour, Col. 3:1-11. A victorious Saviour, Rev. 19:6-21. A purchasing Saviour, 1 Pet. 1:12-25. A Saviour for all, Isa. 49:1-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here is the fullest picture of the Christ in His sacrificial work. The prophet depicts Him as (1) A glorious Saviour, 52:13-15; (2) A rejected and misunderstood Saviour, 53:1-3; (3) A sorrowing Saviour, vs. 3, 4; (4) A sin-bearing, vicarious Saviour, vs. 4-6; (5) A suffering Saviour, vs. 7-8; (6) A dying Saviour, vs. 8, 9; (7) An interceding and victorious Saviour, vs. 10-12; (8) A transforming and comforting Saviour.

### THE MAN WHO DIED FOR ME.

**A Sorrowing Saviour.** A man was seen in deep grief before a grave in a Southern cemetery. "Was it a relative of yours?" he was asked by a sympathetic person who witnessed his great sorrow. "No, no; he saved my life." Then he told the story of his being drafted into the army in a Northern state. He was distressed because he had to leave wife and family, and in not the best circumstances. The neighbor came to him and said, "I am a single man, and I will go to war for you." He even urged it, and finally the father consented for the sake of his family. His friend went, suffered much in many ways, and at last died in prison and was buried in a strange land. This grateful father came South whenever he could, and placed an evergreen wreath on the grave of the man who died for him.

Those first four pictures eloquently tell the story of Christ's sacrifices and sufferings because he came to take our place, and die for us. Did Christ ever smile? To look at the first picture, one would think not. He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," because our sins were upon Him. But I think this ought to be said that Christ had a smile in His heart for everyone. To those who know Him as their Saviour, "He is altogether lovely," and "the chiefest among ten thousand." To the penitent sinner there is no more beautiful face in all the world, than the face of the sorrowing Saviour. Look at those three other pictures—"wounded," "bruised," and "stripes," and remember that He bore it all, for you.

**Sorrowing, But Saving.** My study of the life of Jesus has showed me that wherever He appeared sorrow disappeared, and I am sure that He wishes in the same way to drive sorrow out of my life. In a harsh world of pain one of the works of God is to "wipe away all tears from our eyes."

Christ saves us from sorrow by giving us the right point of view. We weep because we do not understand. Have I erred? Why weep? Weeping will not help the mistake. Let me rather try to rectify my error; or, if that be impossible, do the thing again, and do it right. Has death taken from us a loved one? Christ points to the Father's house above and says, "Rejoice; he has gone to the Father." Have we suffered loss? What matter, if we have treasure in Heaven?—R. P. Anderson.

**A Sin-Bearing Saviour.** Why must this God-man suffer so much? There are two great reasons; one is because He loved so much, and the other is because man sinned so much. That word "so" is a great little word. We see its full meaning in John 3:16, "God so loved," etc. But it has equally great meaning in the expressions, "Christ so suffered," and "man so sinned." All three of these expressions belong together and each one helps to explain the others. Nothing but the death of Christ could atone for, or take away, the sin of man.

Now look at that picture of the sheep, and we get another thought or two as to man's sin. The sheep without a shepherd is the very picture of helplessness; ignorant of what to do, and an easy prey to the wild animal. Sin makes man like that, for all sin is a "missing of the mark," a failing to find safety and help. But perhaps you are thinking that sheep in general, in the flock, might be helpless and in peril; and that you as an individual sheep will be able to escape. The next clause is for anyone who may fancy he is not included. It reads, "We have turned everyone to his own way." Even if many others lead you into evil, yet you are individually responsible, for you have chosen to go with them, or to let them entice you. In all this sin-bearing work of the Saviour, how



much of patient, tender and persistent love is required in order to rescue a wayward, frightened, helpless sheep.

**Charge Me With It.** A young man had gotten into evil ways, lost his position, lost the confidence of those who knew him. Finally, in a distant city during a tent meeting, he was led to Christ by a business man. He must now take a new start, but how can he in a business way? This business man was a practical Christian, and talked over with the young man his future. The young man had the business skill to hold a position, but he said he was owing a number of small sums back in the town where he formerly worked and that no one would believe in his conversion unless he could settle these. His benefactor had him get statements of his debts and gave him money to pay them all, and so gave him a new chance. Thus Christ cancels all the past sins of the soul, and gives a new nature and the Holy Spirit.—Exchange.

**Saviour Dying for Man.** This gospel prophet, who is sometimes called the fifth evangelist, gives the fullest picture of Christ dying for, and in the place of sinful man. Though written seven hundred years before Christ, yet he gives us the most striking and clear account of Christ's death. Surely God gave him the revelation, and just as surely it was necessary for it to be given and for man to know it. The reason Christ had to die in order to be a sin-bearer is because sin called for the death of the sinner. If he is saved then someone else must die. Jesus Christ comes to be that person.

Sin is not only "a missing the mark," but it is "transgression," which means opposition to God; and it is "iniquity," which means the upsetting of all man's powers; and it is "wickedness," which means weakness and utter helplessness. We do not wonder then, that Christ had to die for the sinner. Do not fail to note how willingly Christ gave His life, as shown in the "lamb" picture, and the "sheep before her shearers." Though Christ knew that He must die if He saved the sinner, yet His heart love was so great that He did not turn back, or waver at any time; but He "steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," which meant His unjust trial, condemnation and crucifixion. He endured it all patiently and willingly. "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not." That "judgment" picture looks very real, with the Pilate face in it, so many hundred years before Pilate was born. The whole prophecy is wonderful, and can apply only to Christ.

### He Died For Me.

Under an Eastern sky,  
Amid a rabble cry,  
A man went forth to die,  
For me.

Thorns crowned His blessed head  
Blood stained His weary tread,  
Cross laden He was led,  
For me.

Pierced were His hands and feet,  
Three hours o'er Him beat  
Fierce rays of noontide heat,  
For me.

His path lay through Gethsemane and Calvary,  
and He knew that He must take it alone.—Ex.

**A Conquering Saviour.** As we look at the last pictures, and read of Christ's burial, we may think it does not look much like victory. But look deeper, and we will see that the thought of conquest and victory necessarily follows from the remarkable fulfillments of prophecy. The Scripture says, "He made His grave with the wicked," which means that His enemies intended to have Him buried with the wicked, and really did crucify Him with them. This latter prophecy is literally fulfilled. The prophecy "and with the rich" is also fulfilled; but in order to its fulfillment their purpose to bury Him with the wicked had to be defeated. This was done through Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. So it came to pass, in a way which one would scarcely believe possible. We conclude, therefore, that all will be as foretold in the Bible, which pictures Christ as a conquering Saviour. In the closing verses of this very chapter it is said that "He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied;" also this triumph is because of His sacrifice and His intercession. Christ has earned the right to victory and conquest, and He will receive it in fullest degree. Now, do not forget that all this suffering and sin-bearing was for you, you. In nine verses it is stated that it is "for us," and four times in verse five alone. Instead of "for us" or "our" or "we," read "for me," "my" and "I" and then you get the true vision of the suffering Saviour. Will you put a wreath of love and choice and sacrificing service on the cross of Him who died for you?

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What seven kinds of suffering did Christ endure. 2. This is one of the ten greatest chapters in the Bible. Can you name any of the other nine? 3. By what marks can we tell the true Christ? 4. To whom is Christ beautiful? 5. The Saviour is called the Lord Jesus Christ. Give the meaning of each of those names.

**Challenge Text.** "Thus it is — and thus it behooved Christ to — and to rise from the — on the third day." Luke 24:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christ is foretold in the Old Testament, and revealed in the New. 2. Christ the God-man dying in the place of sinful man is the central truth of the Gospel. 3. Christ is the only Saviour, for there is no other Son of God to die for man.

DR. J. M. COON.

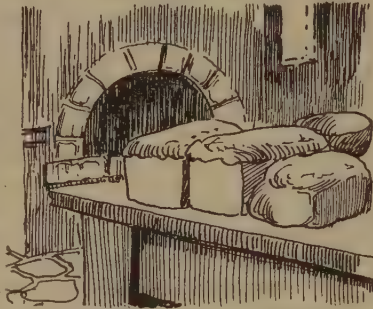




every one that  
thirsteth, come  
ye to the waters,  
and he that hath  
no money; come  
ye, buy, and eat;  
yea, come, buy



without money  
and without  
price. Wherefore  
do ye spend  
money for that  
which is not



and  
your



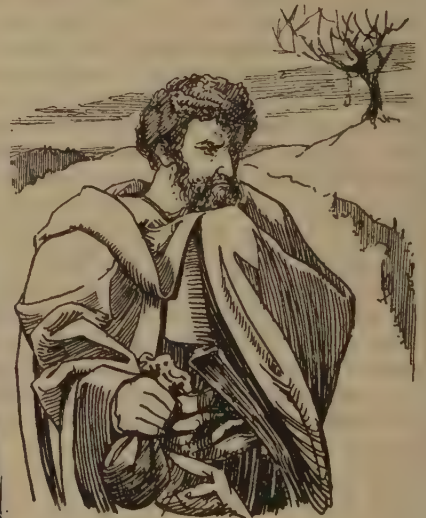
for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good,  
and let your soul delight itself in fatness. \* \* \* Seek ye the Lord while he may be  
found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the



forsake his way, and  
the unrighteous



his thoughts: and let him return  
unto the Lord, and he will have



upon him; and to our God, for  
he will abundantly pardon.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISA. 55.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou dost beset us behind and before by Thy grace and love. On all sides are the voices of blessing and warning calling us to Thyself and Thy service. Open our ears and hearts that we may hear, heed, and live. May Thy book, Thy day, Thy house, Thy people, and all Thy providences invite and constrain many to accept Thy love and life. For Christ's sake, Amen.

And when Christ calls He also draws  
To truth Divine and higher laws,  
"Come!" to the river says the sea:  
"Come," steel to magnet cries, "to me!"  
"Come!" to field and forest calls the Spring,  
When from winter sleep awakening.  
As runs the river to the sea;  
As steel the magnet draws we see;  
As earth's charmed atoms to Spring's call;  
So the soul to the wondrous Saviour's thrall.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Isaiah prophesied, B. C. 759-698. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Isaiah, the Jewish people, and needy everywhere.

**Scripture Setting:** Gospel Calls. A call from God, Hosea 14. A call to all, Prov. 8:1-17. A call from Christ, Matt. 11:20-30. A worthy call, Heb. 2:1-15. A desirable call, 1 Pet. 1:13-25. An urgent call, Rev. 22:7-17. A call to repentance, Matt. 3:1-12. A call today, Heb. 3:7-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** The whole chapter is

an attractive picture of the great salvation. We see it to be (1) A salvation for all, vs. 1; (2) A salvation that satisfies the soul's craving, vs. 1, 2; (3) A salvation assured by Divine covenant, vs. 3, 4; (4) A salvation in Divine purpose and power, vs. 5; (5) A salvation which can be received by faith and repentance, vs. 6, 7; (6) A salvation that is abundant, vs. 8-10; (7) A salvation that gives increasing and abiding joy.

"Love's redeeming work is done;  
Come and welcome, sinner, come."

### GOD'S COURIERS OF SALVATION.

**The Courier of Blessing.** "Well, how shall we find the way?" The question was an anxious one, with almost a note of despair in it. "Oh, you will have no trouble at all. Just watch the guideposts at the crossroads, and go as they direct." How many, many travelers have reached the desired place, by following this simple rule. Do you know that God has given, and is giving, full directions as to how we can reach salvation and Heaven? He has placed guideposts at all the cross-roads of life, and anyone who wishes can easily find the way to Him and to His Heaven. Too often the travelers are too careless, or too self-willed to watch and read these directions on these guideposts. They prefer to go their own way. So God has sent out couriers of salvation, persons, providences, and even things to call to men, arrest their attention, and entreat them to turn from the wrong way and travel in the right way. In all these ways God is saying, "Ho! Ho! This is the way." One of the most common of these is the courier of blessing. The figures of water, wine, milk, bread, suggest the variety and importance of these blessings. Every one of them is a voice from God, saying, "Ho! everyone, Come." If we should oftener count our blessings we would oftener go the way God calls us.

**You Are That Traveler.** A traveler is out upon a journey across a wide waste of desert. Days have passed by, and he is out of both water and food. Much of the journey lies yet before him. The parching sun is overhead and burning sands beneath his feet. At night he finds no place of lodgment but in the desert. He is thirsty, fainting, losing hope. All of a sudden there runs some kind friend to his rescue, with all needed supplies, and

all given in great abundance free. Will he accept them? He surely will. You are that traveler. You are on the way to eternity. Unless you are succored you will die, for you are empty-handed. Jesus runs to meet you with all the riches of His grace. Will you eat and live? I hope you will.

**The Courier of Warning.** The great storm has swept away the railway bridge, and the train is soon due on that track. The station agent sends out a courier to flash a warning signal to the engineer of the train. The engineer does not need to be urged to heed it, but stops at once and so saves his life and his train. "Wherefore do ye?" How good, kind and gentle God is in this warning! "Why will ye die?" "Ho! come this way," "hearken to me." There is danger ahead, and the things that attract and allure can never satisfy. God knows this and sends His warning couriers to urge man to the right way. "Enter ye in at the straight gate." "Unto you, O men I call; and my voice is to the sons of man." The courier of blessing offers all needed good for this life, even a hundred fold; and the courier of warning would lead the traveler to escape death, and find "in the world to come life everlasting." By hearing and heeding we can save the whole life train, and be helpful in warning and saving others. Watch for the courier of warning and be sure to listen to him. It may be just a whisper to your own conscience.

**Blessed, and a Blessing.** A Christian workingman in Birmingham, England, has been laboring for some months trying to get some of his sin-bruised brothers back home to God. At last he came to his minister with face radiant with joy. "I've got him," he said, in his homely, colloquial, familiar way, "got him after eighty visits."

Night after night, for eighty nights, he went out for a single man, catching him before the drink could get hold of him. He prepared the way of the Lord for that man.

The Christian should be a courier that cries aloud his God-given message. Help us all to be advance agents for Christ the King. Forbid that we should do aught but advertise him. Whether men hear or forbear, may we ring true to our mission and message. May we not grow weary in the work.

## **The Courier of Divine Love and Guidance.**

What does that mean? It means that God Himself has come down "to seek and to save the lost." Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd, and He is not content until every sheep and lamb is safe in the fold. He seeks, and seeks, he knocks and knocks, he waits and waits. This story says to "seek ye the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." All men are away from God, and opposing Him even as pictured out by the last pictures of the wicked person and the unsaved man. But notice that picture of mercy, running up into and between the pictures of the wicked and the man. The mercy and love of Jesus Christ are doing this constantly. Paul told the wicked Athenians that they even lived and moved in God, and that He was all about them; and that "they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us." This courier of Divine love comes to every human heart and says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock." And we should open to this Christ courier at once. I wonder why all do not, for He is "altogether lovely" and "the chiefest among ten thousand." Oh, I see why. There is another courier, always following the love courier. It is the hate courier; he hates Jesus Christ, and hates love, and hates the soul, and is trying hard to deceive it and destroy it. This hate courier is Satan, and he says "wait a little, wait just one day, until you do this or that." He knows that if he can keep the soul from the love courier this one day, he can more easily keep it the next day, and the next. Isn't he cunning? As cunning as he is mean and bad. The only way to beat him is to obey the love courier at once, who says, "Follow Me." This love courier says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

**Whosoever Will May Come.** The wretched woman of the town resolved to go back home and live a better life. One wild night she reached her father's house and knocked. She heard steps and voices within, but the door remained bolted. Presently the voices ceased, the steps receded, the light moved up the stairway. Penitent though she was, her home was closed against her. Not so with our Heavenly Father; rather, He calls unto all to come.

He waits to be gracious and welcomes every returning prodigal.—Burrell.

## **The Courier of Pardon and Forgiveness.**

We have known that all these couriers come to lead us to the wonderful peace of God. We know, too, that we came into the land of peace and joy only through the gateway of pardon and forgiveness. All of God's couriers of salvation are shouting "grace, grace;" and "life, life." These are just the words sinful man needs to hear, for he knows that he is unworthy, and that he is dead and helpless. But this courier cries that "He will abundantly pardon." So we may be sure that even the hidden sin will be pardoned, and that even the sinful nature will be changed and made pure, for "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Chapter 53 is the "It is finished" chapter; chapter 54 is the "I will do it" chapter; and chapter 55 is the "abundant pardon" chapter. The avenger of blood is after every member of the human family, because everyone belongs to a sinful race, and every one has actually sinned. This pardon courier comes crying forgiveness if we will only flee to the haven of refuge, which is Jesus Christ. With all these couriers meeting us constantly in life's highways how easy it is to be saved! All we need to do is to let ourselves be guided to safety and blessedness. Listen any time, and you can hear the courier crying, "Ho every one! This is the way."

**Full and Free Pardon.** "Abundantly pardon" means abundant love, abundant ways and means, forgiving abundant sins, abundant fulness of grace and life, abundant blessings and joy.—A. C. M.

"God calling yet, I cannot stay;  
My heart I yield without delay."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who was the first herald or courier of Jesus Christ? 2. Name some other persons or things that call people to Christ. 3. Name some Scripture characters who heard and obeyed the call. 4. Name some who heard and rejected the call.

**Challenge Text.** "Lo, all these — worketh God — with man to — back his — from the pit." Job 33:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Every need and sin is a cry for a Saviour and is a proof there is a Saviour. 2. Man will toil and sacrifice for worldly good, and will not accept a free salvation. 3. This chapter tells us the what, when, why, and how, of salvation. 4. The best things are the freest, because we are not able to buy them, or create them. 5. Yet God graciously accepts our faith and love as a sort of purchase money. 6. God's promise of grace is even more certain than the laws of nature. 7. God gives strength and guidance to every one who desires to find Him. 8. There is a time coming when it will be too late to seek God and salvation.

DR. J. M. COON.



# JEREMIAH TRIED AND ACQUITTED

Then  
said the  
princes  
and  
all the  
people  
unto the



and  
to the



This  
man  
is not  
worthy  
to die:

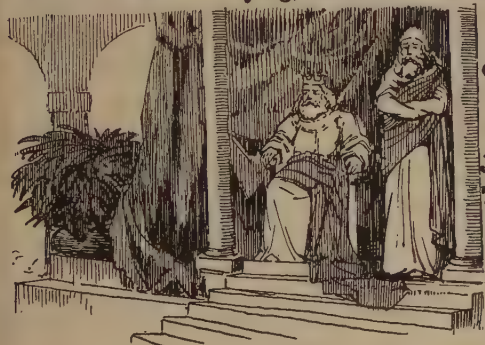
for he hath spoken to us in the name of the Lord our God. Then rose up certain of the



of the  
land, and  
spake to  
all the  
assembly  
of the



saying, Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah



of Judah, and  
spake to all  
the people of  
Judah, saying,  
Thus saith the  
Lord of hosts;  
Zion shall be



like a field, and

shall  
become  
heaps,  
and the  
mountain  
of the  
house as  
the high  
places  
of a





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JEREMIAH 26.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou hast made us for Thyself, and therefore we are destined to triumph over all sin and all enemies. Even life's severest trials are made to minister to our higher good. Keep us humble, patient, reverent, faithful, watchful, that we may enter into the victory Thou art planning for us. For Christ's sake, Amen.

Give thy day to duty!  
To that high thought be given  
Thine every hour.  
So shall the bending heaven  
As from the root the flower  
Bring to thy glad soul beauty.  
—Richard Watson Gilder.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, About B. C. 608. Place, Jerusalem, at the temple. Persons, Jeremiah, priests, prophets, princes, people.

**Scripture Setting:** God Guiding and Girding. Helping the discouraged, 1 Kings 19:9-18. Inspiring trust, Psa. 43:1-5. Revealing His grace, 2 Cor. 12:1-10. The love of Christ, 2 Cor. 5:14-19. Supplying all our need, Phil. 4. All things for good, Rom. 8:28-39. Under His shadow, Psa. 91. God's shepherd care, Psa. 23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This trial and acquittal of Jeremiah furnishes a good illustration

of God's care of His work and workers. 1. He gives boldness for the proclamation of His will and purpose, vs. 7, 8. 2. He sustains and inspires amid greatest opposition, vs. 9-11. 3. He gives special grace and heroism that His servant may reaffirm the message, vs. 12, 13. 4. He inspires His workers with marvelous faith and dauntless courage, vs. 14, 15. 5. He raises up able advocates and defenders, vs. 16, 17. 6. He vindicates his workers by and with God's Word, vs. 18. 7. He protects and preserves them for other work He has for them to do, v. 19.

### FIGHTING ALONE AND WINNING.

**Standing Alone for God.** Did you ever attend a trial at court? The court room was nearly full when you got there. You have just taken your seat, and the order is given, "Bring in the prisoner." Soon the man on trial is brought in. All eyes are turned towards him as he is led to the seat reserved for him. Then you hear whispers on every side, for many people judge a case almost at once. Some say one thing and some another. The judgment may be because of his looks or acts or walk. Then the real trial begins before judge and jury. Let us take a look at this man who is on trial in our story. He is meek and mild in appearance, and really looks as if he were a good man. His name is Jeremiah, which means "The Lord layeth the foundation." I think we shall find some traits of character which are like great stones in the foundation of a building. He does not seem frightened at all, and he has said, "as for me, behold, I am in your hand; do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you." That looks as if he thought something else was more important than even his life. This is the case, for he has told them what God ordered him to speak. He knows God's message is true, and he is willing to stake his life on it. He seems entirely alone standing there for God and His truth. He was called the "weeping prophet" for he was so tender and pleading in his efforts to make his people better. But every feature of his face has an edge of firmness now and his eyes flash a quiet courage. It makes one think of Daniel when he was tried; or of Peter and John when they were tried; or of Christ Himself before Pilate. The mere fact of being gentle and kind does not prevent one from being

firm and strong. They are often the people who can be firmest and strongest.

**Who Is the Brave Boy?** There is a great difference between a bold man and a brave man. A bold man may be a coward at heart, a brave man is never a coward. A brave man may be timid, and hesitating, and cautious, but he is not a coward. When the Emperor asked for a volunteer on a difficult and dangerous mission there were many who ran and asked to be sent; they were seeking favor with the Emperor. But he chose one man who had said very little, whose face blanched at the thought of the errand, but who said quietly, "I will go." The Emperor saw that here was a brave man, not necessarily bold and daring. He measured the cost, took his life in his hand, and went out to meet the danger.—Exchange.

**Strange Accusers.** Look about the court room now and see those who have accused Jeremiah. They are priests, and prophets as pictured out in the first pictures. But Jeremiah also was a prophet. These then must be false prophets and false priests. They are jealous of Jeremiah, and would like to have him put to death. They even said that he was worthy of death, and many people sided with them. These false prophets and priests had great influence, because the false gods were worshiped by many of the people. Jeremiah prophesied that God would visit judgment on the nation and city for their wickedness. Then it is said that they brought him to the city gate for trial. That was the court room of those days. It is a great study to contrast the face of Jeremiah with the faces of these prophets and priests. With bad hearts they could not help having bad faces. They are filled with envy, jealousy and hate, and they show it. He is like a lamb among wolves or like an angel among devils. It looks as if people and all are against him.



But let us see what happens next. The hate of the wicked may be one's best commendation.

**A Good Recommendation.** "Have you any recommendations?" was asked of the boy who applied for a position. "No, sir." "Why not?" The lad's lips trembled. "I—was—discharged," came at last in a faint voice. "My lad, why were you discharged?" the employer asked tenderly. "Because I would not work on the Lord's day," came back the reply, steadily and bravely. "Yes, I do want a boy," Mr. Lansing said, as he placed his hand on the petitioner's head. "I believe you are just the boy who will suit me. Come here at this hour tomorrow morning."

**An Unseen Power at Work.** All seemed to be against Jeremiah at first. But now the princes and some of the people are in his favor. They were influenced by the character and work of Jeremiah, but greater than all, and back of all, was the power of God caring for His prophet. So these princes say that Jeremiah is not worthy to die. The elders also and the people join in the plea that he is innocent, and a strong argument is presented. We will look at that soon, but just now it is well for us to remember that God keeps watch of His own servants and of His own people. Even when He must afflict them, as here, yet He does that for their good and saves them in it. Sometimes God works through others as He does through these princes. Sometimes he comes Himself, and walks with His afflicted servants, as He did with the Hebrew children in the fiery furnace. Sometimes he sends His angel, as He did to Peter in prison. God has many ways of comforting and helping those who love and trust Him. In the first chapter of this story we saw Jeremiah standing alone for God. But here we see he is standing with God, and also with many others whom God has influenced. You remember that God said once to Elijah when he thought he was the only true worshiper left, that He had seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal. God has His forces everywhere and of all kinds, and can do whatever He sees to be best for His people and His cause.

**All Things Work Together for Good.** Life is a flying shuttle. But the pattern grows, the web is wrought. It takes both dark threads and golden to work out God's design. You cannot judge the purpose of the Weaver by the thrust of one shuttle or the weave of one thread, whether it be dark or bright. "All things work together for good to them that love God." We are yet on the loom. The shuttles are not yet empty. Give God time to put this and that, dark threads and bright, together, and complete the purpose of His providence. With every new day let us think less of our present desire and more concerning the Divine Weaver's design.—G. B. F. Hallock.

**Learning from History.** What great les-

sons we learn from history! Bunker Hill and Washington's monument and the Declaration of Independence mean very much to us all. So other nations have their glorious past for their guidance and inspiration. Every person, too, is better and stronger for all the splendid and heroic deeds of his ancestors.

"Deeds of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime."

Here it was specially a lesson of warning, and also of example. A prophet had sent a message much like this of Jeremiah. Hezekiah, who was king at that time, heeded the warning and repented, and so saved himself and the nation. The last picture shows in a striking way, that God is able to fulfill his threats of judgment. A city may be like Jerusalem for glory and strength and yet God can make it to be "plowed like a field," and even the great temple itself may become "as the high places of a forest." The great lesson is that man cannot fight against God successfully, and that it is far better to heed His warnings, and thus receive His blessings. To make sure that Jeremiah should not be put to death, God sent a man by the name of Ahikam to be with him and keep him from harm, and so he was not only acquitted, but kept and guarded.

**The Lesson We All Need to Learn.** "But is a man to do nothing for Christ that he does not like to do? God pity him, if not. Liking or disliking has nothing to do with it. We have orders to 'go,' and we go. Love constrains us." Look anywhere, look everywhere, and you will see this same thing. People doing what they ought to do. Not what they want to do. It is the lesson of all history that is worth reading. Duty is duty. Duty's commands ought always be obeyed. Self-denial, service, duty, was Christ's teaching and Christ's example. And that is the way to Christ's crown for you, for me. We must suffer with him if we would reign with him.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What great apostle was tried and acquitted? 2. What greater person was tried and condemned though innocent? 3. Whose face looked like that of an angel when he was tried and stoned? What caused that look? 4. When did an invisible hand write sentence of judgment on the wall? 5. To what class of prophets does Jeremiah belong?

**Challenge Text.** "The Lord is my \_\_\_\_\_ and my \_\_\_\_\_; whom shall I fear?" Psa. 27: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The brave man makes friends, and also enemies. 2. It is foolish to cry peace and safety when there are perils and enemies. 3. Obedience to God will secure protection from wicked men. 4. He who is faithful to God can defy the power of man. 5. Every life has its times when God interposes and delivers; watch for them. 6. The believer is protected by God, and therefore he should be consecrated to God. 7. The Christian life is a warfare, and it takes courage to live it.

DR. J. M. COON.



And they went in to the king into the court, but they



in the  
chamber of  
Elishama  
the scribe,  
and told all  
the words  
in the ears  
of the king.  
So the king  
sent Jehudi



and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi

in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes



which  
stood  
beside  
the king.  
Now the  
king sat  
in the



winter-house in the ninth month: and there was a

burning before him. And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he



with  
the  
pen  
knife,  
and



that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth. Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king, nor any of his servants that heard all these words.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JEREMIAH 36.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Teach me to receive in humility Thy warnings against sin even when they are disagreeable to my nature. In Christ's name. Amen.

Though the cause of evil prosper yet 'tis Truth alone is strong,  
And albeit she wander outcast, now I see around her throng  
Troups of beautiful, tall angels, to enshield her from all wrong.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 607. Place, Jerusalem. **Persons,** Jehoiakim the king of Judah, Jeremiah the prophet, Baruch the scribe, Michaiah and Jehudi.

**Scripture Setting:** Rejecting the Truth of God. Jehoiakim pays tribute; his city is taken, 2 Kings 23:35; also chapter 24. Jesus reads in the synagogue and is rejected, Luke 4:16. A day of atonement proclaimed, Lev. 23:27. A good king gives heed to the law, 2 Kings 22:12-14; 2 Chron. 34:18-20.

An awakened conscience, Acts 24:25. Command to speak God's words, Ezekiel 2:7.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** 1. A good man does his duty even when it involves peril to himself. 2. The Lord gives all a chance to repent and reform. 3. The blessing of the written Word. "(1) It is present for everyone. (2) It is present in all its parts." 4. "The guilt of indifference to the Divine warnings. It involves (1) Contempt of God. (2) Unbelief. (3) Extreme hardness of heart."

### THE BURNING OF THE PROPHECY.

It was in the great city of Jerusalem, where were the temple, the king's palaces and many other beautiful buildings. The king, Jehoiakim, lived in luxury and hosts of people did whatever he commanded. Though he held his throne subject to tribute to Egypt, yet he was in his own land ruler over all. He was not a good ruler, either, but a very bad one, self-willed, tyrannical and ill-natured to every one around him.

**An Unwise King.** Few people would have ventured to tell him anything unpleasant, even when it was for his good or that of the country. Like most people, especially such as are used to having their own way, the king did not enjoy disagreeable truths. Jehoiakim preferred to have near him men who told him he was a great king, that his land was not only prosperous but always would be so. He liked such as told him that other nations were afraid of him and that they would never venture to attack him. But sometimes the only way to save people and to save a country is to get them to realize that certain things are wrong and must be changed.

Jehoiakim and his country were then in danger, but he did not wish to think about that. Most nations then were ready to fight any other nations when they had power to do so. At that time Egypt and Babylonia were the most powerful countries, and, as has been stated, Jehoiakim paid tribute to Egypt. But far away to the eastward were the Babylonians, who were growing rapidly stronger and making war upon many weaker peoples.

**The Prophet.** At that time a good man lived in Judah called Jeremiah, who was a prophet. God enabled him to foresee many things and authorized him to tell about these

coming events, that all might prepare for the evil or reform and be saved. It was made plain to Jeremiah that unless Jehoiakim changed his ways, obeyed God, looked after the defences of his country, and performed his duties as a good king should do, the Babylonians would come and destroy him.

Jeremiah had been accustomed to address the people and rulers at the temple and to tell them whatever God inspired him to utter. Many of his prophecies, which foretold peril unless they did better, had given offence and he had been forbidden to speak any more. So he called to him a man named Baruch, a ready writer, and to him Jeremiah dictated his prophecies. Baruch wrote them down upon pieces of parchment, which were then fastened together end to end, and made into a roll. Jeremiah then bade Baruch take the roll, go to the temple and read it to the people on a great fast day. As at that time many people were gathered for the fast from all the cities of Judah, multitudes heard the prophecies read.

**Warnings.** In these prophecies the nation was told that great peril was coming from the Babylonians and that unless they ceased to do evil king and people would be taken and carried into captivity. Such foretellings of evil could not but make an impression upon many people. Among others who heard the warnings was Michaiah, who, being greatly stirred up, went to the king's house and told the princes there of the dreadful prophecies. The princes commanded Jehudi, a page of the king, to go and get the book and bring Baruch to read to them. This was done.

The princes were startled by the words, and they warned Baruch that he and Jeremiah should hide themselves, for they knew

the king would be angry. They kept the book and laid it away in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and went and told the king.

The king then ordered Jehudi to bring the book and read it to him. So Jehudi read to the king and the princes the prophecies of Jeremiah. Or rather, he began to do so, for he was not allowed to finish, as you can see by the picture.

**Foolish Anger.** Jehoiakim had heard from others something of the nature of the prophecies. He also knew the character of Jeremiah, that he was a man who would fearlessly declare the truth. So he was ready to be angry before Jehudi began to read. When he heard from the book some of the severe things that the Lord had declared by the mouth of Jeremiah he grew more and more angry.

The king was seated in his winter palace, and there was a fire on the hearth.

When Jehudi had read three or four leaves, the king took a knife, and frowning angrily, cut the roll with it. Certain of those who looked on cried out and tried to restrain him. But he raged all the more and declared he would not leave a fragment of the roll. So with his own hands he cast the roll piece by piece into the flames on the hearth. It was soon reduced to ashes.

Having destroyed the roll, Jehoiakim felt more comfortable. The evil foretellings would annoy him no more, as he thought, and the prophet was forbidden to speak again at the temple. He fancied all would be well.

A returned missionary once related that he had been talking with an intelligent Chinaman in regard to the Bible, and had assured him it was very ancient. He gave him a copy of the Book. A few days later the Chinaman came to him with a look of reproach, and pointing to the first chapter of Romans, said, "You told me your Book was old, but that chapter you have written yourself since you came here and learned all about Chinamen."

So the Bible reveals the heart to itself whether it is good or evil. And the sinner oftentimes hates it because it exposes him to himself.

**The Prophecies Restored.** But although he had burned the only written copy of the prophecies he did not succeed in accomplishing what he wished. For Jeremiah was bidden by the Lord to dictate the prophecies again.

More than that The prophecies came true. The Babylonians came in due time against Judah. And the king was not ready to meet them.

We are to remember always that the truth cannot be destroyed. Many people have tried to destroy the truth. In the olden times many of the prophets were put to death by men who fancied that if they killed the prophets they would at the same time make their words of no effect. But their teachings lived on after their bodies were dust and ashes. The early Christians were persecuted by Jews and Romans. Multitudes of them were thrown to lions, burned at the stake, crucified, beheaded, but the truth for which they died lives on. We should believe the truth and know that God will take care of it.

Voltaire declared he would destroy the Bible, so that it would not outlast the age in which he lived, the Eighteenth Century. Yet the Nineteenth Century saw it translated into all the languages upon the earth and distributed in countless copies.

**The Undying Word.** As King Jehoiakim was blind to the fact that he could not destroy the truth, so all sinners are blind to the consequences of their wrong ways. They do not wish to think that while others suffer for their sins they themselves will do so. They fancy they can escape; that they will not be found out and punished. They do not wish to see, and so they shut their eyes.

The Bible has been attacked by unbelievers and foes in every age. On several notable occasions its foes have collected all the copies of it they could find and have burned them publicly. Yet it lives on and guides countless thousands into the way of life.

A few years ago a young American, on an exploring expedition to Labrador, became too ill to travel onward with his companions and had to be left behind, while they pushed on to find food and help. When they returned, he had passed away. Beside him lay his diary and a Bible open at the fourteenth chapter of John. In his diary he told that this chapter had comforted him inexpressibly. So the Word of God not only rebukes sin, but it is the greatest means of joy and consolation when all else fails. No circumstances are so desolate but that the Bible can bring Divine strength and comfort to the sufferers.

**Practical Truths.** 1. It is useless to fall into a rage because unpleasant truth is given to us. We should welcome the warnings and then do that which is right and avoid the evil which is foretold. 2. To refuse to listen to truth does not help matters. 3. An obedient child is better and wiser than a disobedient and bad king. 4. Every one of us who does right, who turns from sin, in so far, helps to save our country from its perils. 5. Jehoiakim brought his country into distress by rejecting the Word of God; he could have saved it by obedience. As we love our land, we must remember we can strengthen it against its enemies by loyalty to the truth, by righteous lives and by making the Word of God known to others.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# JEREMIAH PERSECUTED

and he



the prophet, saying, Thou fastest away to the Chaldeans. Then said Jeremiah, It is false, I fall not away to the



But he hearkened not to him: so Irijah took Jeremiah, and brought him to the princes. Wherefore the



were wroth with Jeremiah, and



and



in the house of Jonathan the



for they had made that the prison.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JEREMIAH 37.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, In Thy plan for our earthly life Thou dost make a place for even the hard things. Every burden has its wings; every trial has its compensations and inspirations; every dark hour has its glorious and shining messages from the Infinite. May our souls be alert to hear Thy voice and behold Thy beauty and grace. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Behold, we live through all things—famine, thirst, Bereavement, pain; all grief and misery, All woe and sorrow; life inflicts its worst On soul and body,—but we can not die Though we be sick, and tired, and faint, and worn,—  
Lo, all things can be borne!

—Elizabeth Akers.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, About B. C. 589. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jeremiah, Irijah, Zedekiah the king and the princes.

**Scripture Setting:** Girded for the Life Battles. By right motives, 2 Cor. 5:14-19. By a right spirit, Psa. 40:10-17. By a right aim, 2 Tim. 4:1-8. By consecration, 2 Cor. 8:8-24. By right conduct, Prov. 3:5-18. By seizing opportunities, Eph. 5:15-21. By a heroic faith, Heb. 11:32-40. By deathless devotion, Rev. 2:8-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage gives a

picture of an ideal worker in varied life relations: 1. He is instant and constant in service (v. 4). 2. He is ready for God's new word and work, as providences lead the way (vs. 5-7). 3. He is brave and faithful to deliver the Divine message (vs. 8-10). 4. He seeks to save life and help the cause of his Lord (vs. 11-13). 5. He submits to persecution, but remembers his office and the claims of his Master (vs. 14-16). 6. He is wise and prudent in and for the truth (vs. 17-19). 7. He fights valiantly for life, but is ready for death, rather than disobey God (vs. 20, 21).

### WAYS A GOOD MAN MAY BE HINDERED.

**Getting Lost in the Crowd.** In an army or any large company of men, a man could drop out and the lack would scarcely be noticed. Also, one might be lost because the army prevented him from doing what he might or ought to do. In this latter way, Jeremiah came near being lost and so hindered in his work. Sometimes in a Sunday school class, or young people's society, one member may be lost because there are many others, or because some one of them may think that he or she can not do much, or will not be missed. Jeremiah was not that kind of a man. He intended to count one wherever he could. These armies had not altogether prevented him, but they had hindered some. The army of the Chaldeans left off fighting Jerusalem because the army of Pharaoh came. Really it was God driving away the Chaldeans to test and try His people. God had said that the Chaldeans should burn the city with fire. Jeremiah trusted that the Lord would take care of him; but he knew, too, that he must do his part. So as soon as the army left he hurried out to go to his native town to get supplies. His farm, or estate, was there and he went to collect his portion so as to be prepared against famine. Jeremiah believed in trusting as if all depended on God and then planning and working as if all depended on himself. He did not purpose to get lost in the army nor because of it.

**Men Who Counted for Something.** History bristles with instances of men that felt it their duty to speak the truth that was in them; men who through their speech altered the course of the world. In Old Testament times there were Elijah, Jeremiah, and Amos, who thundered against the other proph-

ets; in New Testament times there were John the Baptist, Peter, John, Paul, Christ Himself. At the dawn of the modern era we have Luther, who faced the power of the Roman Catholic Church and spoke the truth that he saw. Almost in our own day we have men like Wendell Phillips, Whittier, Beecher, and William Lloyd Garrison and the great Lincoln taking a determined stand against slavery and crying aloud until their voices were heard. "I am in earnest," writes Garrison; "I will not equivocate, I will not excuse. I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard."—R. P. Anderson.

**Arrested and Accused Again.** In our last story Jeremiah was arrested, tried and acquitted. Now he is caught again. Some think this was spite work by this man Irijah, for it is thought that Jeremiah had predicted the death of Hananiah who was Irijah's grandfather. Anyhow, a man sent of God like Jeremiah will make enemies because of his exposing the sins of the people. Some such thing probably made this guard charge Jeremiah with being a deserter to the Chaldeans. This made Jeremiah's blood boil, if he was mild and gentle. He replied to this base insult as quick as an echo, by saying, "It is false; I am not a deserter to the Chaldeans."

But this man had the star of authority on his uniform, and he blustered around and marched Jeremiah off to the princes, who were the leaders, and who also were Jeremiah's enemies. So this seemed to be a more serious hindrance to the plans and work of the prophet, besides putting his life in danger. Jeremiah had not sneaked away in the night, but had gone "in the midst of the people"; that is, with many others who were going on similar errands. This was a mean official trick to hinder and annoy a good man



in a good work. But Jeremiah was ready to be arrested ten times or a hundred times just so he was doing his duty.

**A Poor Brand of Princes.** When Jeremiah was hurried away to the princes it should have meant his quick release. But these persons were even worse than Irijah. He might be excused for arresting Jeremiah on mere suspicion; but the princes should have heard his explanation and defense. Instead of that they judged him unheard and beat him and thrust him into prison. Princes, indeed! They were such only by name and dress. At heart they were full of hate because Jeremiah was good, and had told them the truth. These were not the princes who had been friendly to Jeremiah on two previous occasions. They had the same office, but were entirely unworthy to fill it. Sometimes such a thing happens in our day. We have known of aldermen, mayors and governors who were unworthy to fill those high and responsible offices. The office was honorable, but the officer was disgraceful. Good people are at fault if they do not put out the bad officers and elect good ones.

The pictures show these princes in their uniforms and they look as if they were good men; but the conduct is the test and measure of the real man. By their conduct they show that they are cruel, prejudiced and revengeful. Jeremiah is the real prince here, and he carries himself with dignity and is patient under the unjust treatment. He works, or suffers, as the case may be, and trusts that God will make it all count for His cause and glory.

**What's This Stone For?** A gentleman who was walking near an unoccupied building one day saw a stone-cutter chiseling patiently at a block of stone in front of him. "Still chiseling?" he remarked, pleasantly. "Yes, still chiseling," replied the workman, going on with his work. "In what part of the building does this stone belong?" asked the gentleman. "I don't know," replied the stone-cutter; "I haven't seen the plans." Then he went on chiseling. Now, that is what we should do. We have not seen the great plans of the Master Architect, but each of us has his work to do, and we should chisel away until it is done.

**The Prison Becomes a Gateway of Safety.** This "prison" was probably an underground cell, where public offenders were held. Into this Jeremiah goes, the two false princes rudely pushing him as the picture shows. These cells were under the house of Jonathan, the scribe, who is shown in the last picture, writing off the law. Sometimes there would be twenty, or more, such cistern-like cells for imprisoning people. This Jonathan may not have been a bad man him-

self. He has a very good name and we may hope that he was true to it, and also true to the great friend of David by that name.

We know that David's friend Jonathan would not do a mean or unjust act. Sometimes those scribes just wrote in a kind of business-like way, without thinking much of what they wrote. Would it not be odd, and even worse, if he should be writing some command about love or forgiveness, or kindness; and yet have one or more persons imprisoned unjustly right under where he was sitting? But how is this prison a gateway to safety? Well, Jeremiah is kept from being killed, and later he asked the king to look into his case. The king did this, and removed him into "the court of the prison," and ordered them to feed him daily. The king also received from Jeremiah the messages of God to the people. The prison really was the first link in the chain of providences which protected Jeremiah, and finally released him. So he found out again that "all things work together for good."

**Leave Results With God.** Be patient. Keep sweet. Do not fret or worry. Do your best and leave results with God. Believe firmly in God, in the fulfillment of His purposes and in the march of His providences. God's laws are immutable, and work with undeviating regularity. Walk in fellowship with God, and every year you will be a stronger, better, happier and sweeter man. Do not mar your peace or power by needless worry. Live by faith in the Son of God, who loves you and gave Himself for you. On some bright tomorrow you will come to anchor under a haven of sapphire and in a harbor of calm, with chimes ringing their welcome from the spires that sentinel the city of God, while from the battlements millions will shout, "Well done!" while God Himself will say, "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—George B. Vosburgh.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell about Peter's imprisonment and deliverance; also that of Paul and Silas. 2. Tell of a Bible young man who had a dream in prison. 3. Recite, or read Christ's "blessed," which speaks of persecution (Matt. 5). 4. What famous book was written in an English prison? 5. Why are godly people often persecuted?

**Challenge Text.** "In the world ye shall have —; but be of good —, I have — the world." John 16: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. As Christ was "made perfect through suffering," so also the believer may expect it. 2. Persecution and trials equip one to be helpful and sympathetic. 3. Paul's joy in the Lord was greatest in his epistle of suffering. 4. Persecution brings out both the strength and beauty of the Christian character. 5. God is glorified and declared in and by the persecution of His people. 6. Even the gentle and timid may be made strong and fine to endure hardship. 7. If we give God first place He will give us best place. 8. The true believer is the greatest saving force in society and the nation.

DR. J. M. COON.

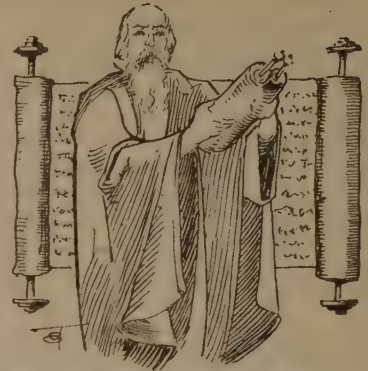


# JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON

Then the king commanded Ebed-melech the



saying,  
Take from  
hence  
thirty men  
with thee,  
and  
take up  
Jeremiah  
the



out of the dungeon, before he die. So Ebed-melech took the men with him, and went



of the king.  
under the  
treasury, and  
took thence  
old cast  
clouts and  
old rotten  
rags, and



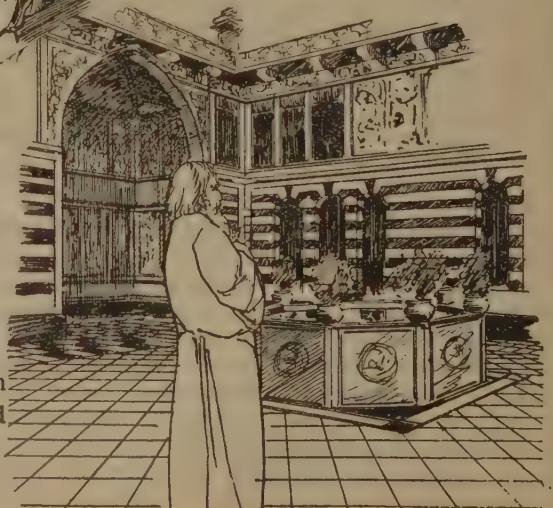
to Jeremiah. And  
Ebed-melech the  
Ethiopian said unto  
Jeremiah, Put now  
the old cast clouts  
and rotten rags  
under thine  
armholes under  
the cords. And



So they



with  
cords,  
and  
took  
him up  
out of  
the  
dungeon  
and  
Jeremiah  
remained  
in the



of the prison.



# JEREMIAH IN THE DUNGEON.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JEREMIAH 38:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thy saving power is great and Thy keeping power is also wonderful. Thine eye is ever on those who love and serve Thee: Thy hand is ever quick to help. Thou canst use the slave and the king to do Thy bidding.

Help us to see that we are always safe in doing Thy will, and that we are only safe and happy when obedient to Thee. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Let me but do my work from day to day,  
In field or forest, at the desk or loom;  
In roaring market place or tranquil room;  
Let me but find it in my heart to say,  
When vagrant wishes beckon me astray,  
"This is my work; my blessing, not my doom;  
Of all who live, I am the one by whom  
This work can best be done in the right way."

—Van Dyke.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, About B. C. 587. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jeremiah, Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, Zedekiah the king, and the princes who cast Jeremiah into the dungeon.

**Scripture Setting:** The Believer in Prison. Joseph in prison, Gen. 41:9-14. Daniel in prison, Dan. 6:10-17. Peter in prison, Acts 12:1-10. Paul in prison, Acts 16:22-32. Promise of help, Isa. 43:1-7. Courage in prison, 2 Cor. 4:6-18. Confidence in God, Psalms. 27. Praise for deliverance, Psalms. 18:6-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The experience of Jeremiah is a common one, though the form of imprisonment may vary greatly. In a study of persecution in general, we may note: 1. The be-

liever may expect persecution, if not in one way then in another, vs. 1. 2. The persecution will usually be according to one's fidelity and loyalty, vs. 2, 3. 3. Persecution is apt to be under the guise of the public good. The rascals persecuting are good at finding "reasons." 4. The powers that should protect are themselves wicked, or under the power of the wicked, vs. 5, 6. 5. God is in full knowledge of it all to control or stop it, vs. 7-9. 6. Persecution is made to declare the glory of God, advance His cause in the earth, and develop and glorify those who suffer. 7. The true attitude in persecution is patience in the trial, assurance of the Divine care and fellowship, and watchfulness for escape or service or both.

## A PREACHER RESCUED FROM A PRISON.

**A Trick of the Devil:** "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise." So said Luther when his enemies threatened, and his friends entreated. He would not swerve from the right, and so he was persecuted. Jeremiah is a good deal like Luther in his courage and convictions. As we sometimes say of a brave man, he had "the courage of his convictions." For this reason he was persecuted and imprisoned. This was not just the way his enemies put it, nor the way they would like to see it stated. The way they did put it was a trick of the devil. Satan is very shrewd and in his opposition to good people he tries to make his hatred look plausible. If he can't find any little slip in conduct, or weakness in the character, then he will manufacture something. He did so here, and influenced the princes to charge Jeremiah with being a traitor, because he had warned the people to flee to safety ere the king of Babylon would destroy the city. If any would flee to the Chaldeans they would be saved. They misrepresented Jeremiah's message, just as the Jews misrepresented Christ's words on several occasions. Notice how good Jeremiah looks in that second picture. The five times his face is seen in these pictures it is full of faith, peace, and purpose. He is always master of the situation, and he does not worry about what happens. We know too that he was much in prayer.

**Courage and Conquest.** A lad of seventeen had been sent to a saloon to take the measures for a

new counter. It was very cold, and he arrived with his teeth fairly chattering, for his coat was thin. The saloonkeeper mixed a hot drink, and pushed it over the counter to him. "It'll cost you nothing," he said; "drink it down, and you'll soon stop shivering, my boy." "He meant it kindly, too, and didn't think any harm," said the apprentice, as he told the story. "That's what made it harder to push it back, and say I didn't want it." "It must have been a big temptation," said a friend. "Well," replied the lad, frankly. "I'd rather have had it than some other kinds. You see, it takes two to make a successful temptation."—Exchange.

**Two Strange Helpers.** They are shown in the first picture. One is a black man, an Ethiopian; but he seems to have had a white heart. He was a servant of the king, and had charge of the woman's department of the king's house. In this way he was with the king frequently, and he could see him when he wished. When he learned what had been done to Jeremiah, he was greatly stirred. He went straight to king Zedekiah and pleaded for the life of the prophet. He knew that Jeremiah would soon perish by starvation and exposure, if not taken from that filthy prison pit. The name of this black man was Ebed-melech, which means, "servant of God." He certainly was true to his name in this act. It took courage also, for sometimes a king would order a slave killed for daring to make any request. He was rewarded for this act of kindness by being spared when Jerusalem was destroyed. That was even better than a Carnegie medal for heroism. But who is the other strange

helper? It is the king himself, giving that order to take thirty men and rescue Jeremiah. The strange thing about it is that he changed so quickly from an enemy to a friend. It was his weakness which led to Jeremiah's imprisonment. I think God must have breathed a little strength into him for this order.

**How the Boys Helped a Cripple.** "Here, boy, let me have a Sun." "Couldn't sell you no paper in this here block, mister, 'cause it belongs to Limpy. He's just up to de funder end now; you'll meet him."

"And who is Limpy, pray? And why does he have this special block?"

"'Cause us kids agreed to let him have it. You see it's a good run 'count of the offices all along, and the poor chap is that lame he can't git around lively like the rest of us."

"Yes, I see. So you newsboys have a sort of brotherhood among yourselves?"

"Well, we're going to look out for a little cove what's lame, anyhow."

"There comes Limpy now; he's a fortunate boy to have such kind friends."

The gentleman bought two papers of him and went on his way down town, wondering.

**Lend a Hand Here.** Did you ever see a lot of men working at something, when all had to work together? It might have been boatmen, or men in a shop, or on a building. The leader gives the signal, and then they all catch it up by their hearty "heave-ho, heave-ho." In this way they all act or pull together, and the work is soon done. These four men in the picture are thus working together. You see they had to, in order to pull Jeremiah up in comfort, or even to pull him up at all. Perhaps that one with the staff is giving the signals how to do it best. He is watching anxiously so that there shall be no blunder, or failure. The three who are grasping Jeremiah are bracing themselves to do their part. They are all busy, standing "shoulder to shoulder," and using their hands to help. How many times in life, at school, in play, at work of all kinds, much depends on all helping and helping together. Once four people brought a poor paralytic to Christ, and let him down through the roof. Christ healed the man, and He said it was because of the faith of all of them. It may take four of you, or even more, to bring that boy or girl to Sunday school or to the Young People's society. But it will pay, and the Master will see each worker and reward him. Don't be a shirker, or a jerker, or a kicker when there is a chance to do a good work with others.

**How One Class Did It.** A hint as to a method that wins may be secured from this incident related by a member of a Bible class. To this member's

house came a workman, prepared to fix the telephone. When asked to join the Bible class, and handed a card of invitation, he said: "What kind of a bunch have you down there in that church of yours? I only came to town last Tuesday and already I have had five invitations to join the class. This is the sixth card that I have had given to me. Really I never saw a place where people looked after a fellow like this." And they won their man.—Exchange.

**The Power Behind.** "Time and God work wonders," said the old minister to a young pastor who was troubled about his church. God works in His own time and way. So here, it is God working through men and through the instruments used. These old rags shown in the pictures, may have saved Jeremiah's life! they at least added much to his comfort, by keeping the cords from cutting into his flesh. Rags and cords and men and even the king all had their places and uses, but "the power behind" is what really helped and saved the prophet of God, and that power was God. You have heard the old soldier talk about "the man behind the gun," so we think of God working out His purposes by many providences,—selecting, adapting and directing men and all things for His glory and the good of His people. Back of the love of friend, of mother, of wife, is the love of God which inspires and sustains all the others.

**God and the Daisy.** "I wish I could be of some use," said a newly opened daisy which grew in a pleasant field; "but I am so small, I wonder why I was made." The little flower looked timidly around, and as a soft wind played over the field, waving the long grass it kissed the little daisy, and said: "God has made nothing in vain, only look up." As the trembling flower raised its head, a bright sunbeam glancing by dried the teardrop that dimmed its eye. The daisy felt grateful, and looked up with a smile.—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What Ethiopian eunuch is mentioned in the New Testament? 2. How was Daniel watched and imprisoned? 3. Where and when did Jesus say, "Gather up the fragments"? 4. Tell of four men who carried a paralytic to Christ. 5. How was Christ's word about the temple misinterpreted?

**Challenge Text.** "He brought me up also out of an ——— out of the miry ———, and set my ——— upon a rock." Psa. 40: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. A prison may be an honor to one, and if so it is a palace. 2. Abuse of God's servants is in reality an insult to the Almighty. 3. The motives of good people are sometimes misunderstood and misinterpreted. 4. "Those persecuted for righteousness' sake prove the reality of virtue, the value of religion, the truth of God's Word." 5. A little help is worth a great deal of pity. A tender heart makes a gentle hand." 6. Even the weak and lowly, when acting in the fear of God and under his direction, may awaken the consciences of the great. 7. We should never hesitate to stand for the right.

Dr. J. M. Coon.



# EZEKIEL A WATCHMAN

Son of man, I have made thee a



unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely



and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life: the same



shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou



the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a



doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock



he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand.

EZEK. III: 17-20.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EZEK. 3:4-27.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Reveal to us Thyself and show us also Thy will. May we ever be on the outlook, watchful of all Thy providences. Help us to see the needs and sins of others so that we may warn and help and save. May we be true "watchmen" in word and life and constant influence. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Thou must be true thyself,  
If thou the truth would'st teach;  
Thy soul must overflow if thou  
Another's soul would'st reach;  
It needs the overflow of heart  
To give the lips full speech."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 593. Places, Chebar and Tel-abib, in Babylonia. Persons, Ezekiel, angel spirit, Jews.

**Scripture Setting: Duty of the Believer.** Saved to serve, Eph. 2:1-10. Debtor to all, Rom. 1:8-15. Works to be judged, Eccl. 12:9-14. Responsible to God, Rom. 14:1-10. True to one's self, Job 2:1-13. Inspiration to duty, Isa. 61:1-11. Divinely appointed, Isa. 21:1-12. Fidelity imperative, Acts 20:17-35.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We see here a beautiful blending of privilege and duty in the Chris-

tian life and work. 1. The dutiful privilege to live in the best spiritual fellowship, vs. 12, 13. 2. To be guided and helped by the Holy Spirit, vs. 14, 15. 3. To receive orders and strength from God, vs. 16, 17. 4. Privilege and duty meet and kiss each other, vs. 18, 21. 5. Privilege and duty safeguarding and protecting each other, vs. 19. 6. Privilege and duty joining forces in saving the lost, vs. 21. 7. Privilege is the more important from the standpoint of the believer; duty is the more important from the standpoint of God. Which, then, is more important? Both; and again I say both.

### OUR DUTY TO WARN AND HELP.

**Who Is the Watchman?** Did you ever stand on the busy street in a great city, and see the people passing and crossing? Who is that in the middle of the street dressed in a special uniform?

He keeps telling people what to do when they ask him. He is there also to watch and warn any who may be in danger. We call him a policeman, but he is a watchman for the city. Ezekiel was made a watchman to warn people against sin and its consequences. Ezekiel acted as such a watchman for many other nations besides Israel, as many as eight in all. That first picture shows a watchman, on the high wall looking out for any enemies that might come. There are many watchmen in life of different kinds. The preacher is a watchman, who warns all to flee from sin and Satan; and who warns them also when he sees Satan coming like a wolf or a lion, to hurt and destroy. Father and mother are watchmen, who guard the home from the evil persons and things that try to get in. Every one who knows the truth and is trying to please God, is a watchman over and for others, to protect and help them. Even a boy or a girl may sometimes do a service which will bring safety and blessing to many people. Such a boy or a girl is a watchman.

**Two Kinds of Death.** That man lying there in the second picture is dead; and the three people seem to be wondering what killed him. Perhaps someone failed to give the warning, and he was struck by a robber or a falling tree; or he might have been killed by a wild animal. All such kinds of death are what we call physical death: that is, the breath leaves the body, and one ceases

to act or think. The spirit has gone from the person, and then the body is buried in the ground.

That third picture is very different from the second, but it shows the other kind of death. He looks strong and vigorous, as far as physical life is concerned; but he has no spiritual life. He is a wicked man, and Paul calls all such "dead in trespasses and sins." This is a very much worse kind of death than the mere death of the body. This is the death of the soul, and means a hard and bitter heart, hating God and all good men and things. If such a person dies in that state, the body is buried in the ground, but both soul and body are sent away from God and Heaven to dwell forever "with the devil and his angels." He was determined to work for Satan in this life, and he must dwell with him forever. Scripture calls this "the second death." We need to keep warning people to escape.

**Awake, Thou That Sleepest.** A railroad collision occurred. The telegraph operator confessed that he was asleep at his keyboard and that he is responsible.

It is a crime to sleep when sleeping jeopardizes human life. There are other positions of responsibility where the safety of the souls of men and women is involved—positions where sleep is as common in its practice as it is tragic in its results. Millions are being hurried on toward death and judgment, all heedless of their peril. How often the watchmen on the walls are fast asleep and fail to sound the alarm! How many churches and Christians are sleeping away the golden hours while the Christless multitudes sweep by to their doom! Awake! Awake!—Exchange.

**The Warning That May Save Both.** I mean both the one who is warned and the



one who warns. It is a great thing for one to warn another, and thus save a life; but this is a kind of watching and warning which saves both. This great truth is stated very clearly here: "If thou warn the wicked, and he turn not, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." So it seems that our own salvation and blessedness are assured and increased by our fidelity. It is also shown that these blessings will be ours even though we fail to persuade others. God does not hold us responsible for what others do; but he does hold us responsible for what we do, and especially in the matter of warning the wicked. The reason the figure of a snake is used in that picture of warning is because the snake stands for sin. Sin and Satan are cunning and deceitful just like a snake; and so people need all the more to be warned against them. That man acts as if he had not seen the real danger before, as indeed he had not. The man who is warning him has now done his duty, and he is rewarded for the work, whether the wicked man turns or not. But quite likely the wicked man will turn when he sees the great danger. To one who is a preacher, or Sunday school teacher, or other worker, or who is a Christian at all, even a boy or a girl—this is a great incentive to be faithful to all and at all times.

**The Hiss of the Serpent of Sin.** "Papa, pussy's very angry; she hissed at me just now. I can't get my ball." The child's plaintive persistence at last attracted the father's attention. Telling the lad to rise, he sent him for a couple of servants. They came to move the large old-fashioned bookcase in the corner of the room. It was the child of an India British official that uttered the cry, which proved to be a warning just in time. As the men moved the case they heard the hissing, which they understood full well. The space cleared displayed a cobra coiled up in the corner with its head raised, ready for instant attack. No time was lost in killing it, and so both the boy and others were saved.

**The Neglect That May Hurt Both.** This is seen in the last two pictures. The "wicked" man and the "righteous" man show the great difference in the face between those who do wrong and those who do right. It does not take long to decide which one you would rather be. The really beautiful face always comes from a good heart, redeemed by Christ and made new and pure by the Holy Spirit. This "seemingly righteous" man is one who has a good face and may come to have a good heart, and so be righteous in fact. He is like the good young man who came running once to Christ and claimed to obey all the commandments. Christ loved

him and warned him of his lack; but he made the very warning a "stumbling block," and he refused to come to Christ. God does not tempt anyone to sin and the only way in which it may be said, "I lay a stumbling block before him," is that God gives a warning and the man turns it into a stumbling block. Now, such a man "shall die in his sin . . . but his blood will I require at thine hand, because thou hast not given him warning." The neglect to warn hurts both. This truth is even more important, at least more solemn, than the other; for our failure brings injury and possible death, both to ourselves and others. The poet has put it this way, "Heaven's gate is closed to him who comes alone." Spurgeon was once asked what would become of the heathen if they did not hear of the gospel. He replied that it was a much more vital question as to what would become of us if we neglected to take the gospel to them.

**Was It His Business?** A wealthy man was asked to aid in a series of temperance meetings, but he refused, saying, "Gentlemen, it is not my business." A few days later his wife and two daughters were coming home on an express. In his fine carriage he rode to the station for his family. "Accident" was the cry that greeted him. He finds the accident has occurred twenty-five miles distant on the road on which his loved ones were returning, and was caused by the drunkenness of the engineer. It is his business now. In half an hour the train arrives. He hurries toward it, and finds the mangled and lifeless remains of his wife and one of his daughters. In another carriage lies his other daughter, with her body crushed and her life ebbing away. His neglect to help may have been partly to blame for the drunkenness which led to the death of his family.—Exchange.

**Quiz.** 1. To what class of prophets did Ezekiel belong? 2. Name three ways in which any Christian can be a watchman. 3. Name the other "major" prophets, and some of the "minor" prophets. 4. If one warned us of danger how should we feel towards him? 5. Who are God's watchmen now, to guard us from sin?

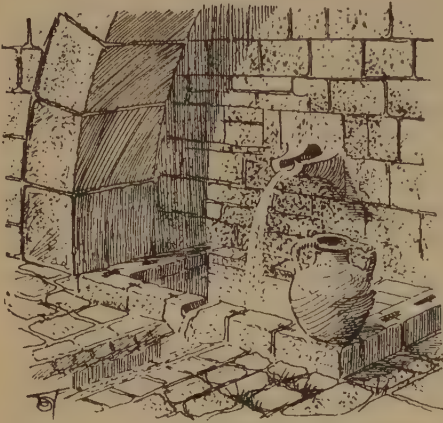
**Challenge Text.** "Now then we are ——— for Christ as though God did ——— you by us; we ——— you, in Christ's stead, be ye ——— to God." 2 Cor. 5: (1)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God has stationed many special watchmen to warn man against sin. 2. The more truth and blessing one has the greater is his responsibility. 3. Every Christian and every church has a duty to the lost everywhere. 4. Sin unrepented becomes man's curse and doom. 5. Any service God requires of us is by that fact made possible. 6. By warning and helping others we bring greatest blessing to ourselves. 7. He only is prepared to "go" and speak who has "come" and heard. 8. He who is "lifted up" by the Spirit's power will be able to declare the Spirit's message. 9. "Heaven's door is shut to him who comes alone."

DR. J. M. COON.

# THE NEW HEART

Then will I sprinkle clean



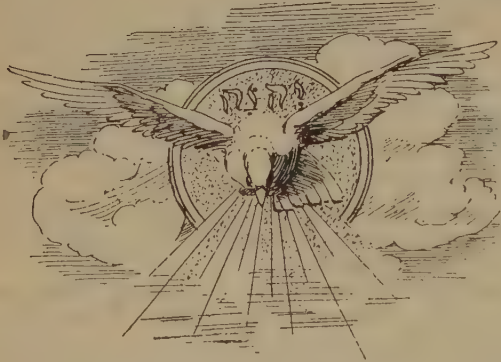
upon you, and  
ye shall be clean:  
from all your  
filthiness, and  
from all your



will I cleanse you. A new  
heart also will I give you,  
and a new spirit will I  
put within you: and I will  
take away the stony



out of your flesh, and I will  
give you an heart of flesh.  
And I will put my



within you,  
and cause  
you to



in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the



that I gave  
to your  
fathers;  
and ye  
shall be my



and I will be your God.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EZEKIEL 36:25-38.

**Prayer:** Lord, We rejoice in Thy great power by which Thou canst change even the hard and wicked heart. By Thy Spirit and grace, and for the sake of Thy Son, Thou dost give the new heart to all who will accept it. Help us that we may feel our need and come to Thee for cleansing and life. Then may we have the power by which we may serve Thee and win others for Christ. For His sake, Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 587. Place, In the Euphrates Valley. Persons, Ezekiel, Holy Spirit, people.

**Scripture Setting:** The New Heart. Need of a new heart, John 3:1-8. Proof of a new heart, Tit. 3:1-8. A heart of flesh, Ezek. 11:14-20. A heart to obey, Deut. 30:1-8. A heart toward God, Jer. 24:4-10. A spiritual heart, 1 Cor. 2:6-16. The heart's cry for God, Psalms. 42. The heart's cry for holiness, Psalms. 51.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** When God would "make all things new" in the human soul, he begins with the heart. If that citadel and center is brought into full and sweet submission all

### WHAT IS IT TO BE A CHRISTIAN?

**The New Nature.** My friend and I were at an open air restaurant in Paris and directly in front of the famous Eiffel tower. This tower is nearly 1,000 feet high, and is one of the most beautiful and graceful of structures. "Shall we go up to the top?" my friend asked. "Certainly," I replied. The trip took four hours because of the crowds going up and down. Many thousands were on it at once, and each one could advance only in his turn. But I speak of this here in order to say that the beautiful tower was supported by four sustaining legs, starting far apart and converging towards the top. These supported the tower and made it possible. The true Christian is the most commanding and beautiful form of life among men. In this story we want to find out what makes it so. We shall discover that four fundamental things are necessary in order to its full strength and beauty. All must be new from center to circumference. The new nature is shown in the first two pictures. The water is a striking symbol of the cleansing power of God, and His quickening and transforming grace. By God's help the Christian puts away all idols of whatever kind. Though Ezekiel is a thousand miles away and in captivity, yet God gives him this beautiful picture of a new land and a new life. This picture prophecy is partly fulfilled in the return of the Jews from captivity; but it is fully and finally fulfilled, both for men and nations, in Jesus Christ and His Church.

If peace be in the heart,  
The wildest winter storm  
Is full of solemn beauty,  
The midnight lightning-flash  
But shows the path of duty,  
Each living creature tells  
Some new and joyous story,  
The very trees and stones  
All catch a ray of glory,  
If peace be in the heart.

—Charles Francis Richardson.

### ITS RELATIONS.

else follows. A human soul is a miniature world, and here are some of the kingdoms which are conquered when the heart is won and made new: 1. The kingdom of the outward life—"filthiness" and "idols." 2. The kingdom of thought and desire—"new spirit" and "heart of flesh." 3. The kingdom of our duties to God—"my statutes," "my judgments," "my people." 4. The kingdom of temporal good—"corn," "no famine," "the fruit," "the field." 5. The kingdom of spiritual ideas and ideals—condemning self and glorying in God. 6. The kingdom of duty and service—"shall be builded," "shall be tilled," "inhabited." 7. The kingdom of prayer—"I will do it," "I will be inquired of," "I will increase them."

**The Desert Shall Blossom.** A heathen Fingo traveling through Hankey, where the London Missionary Society has a mission, sat down to rest at the church door. He asked one of the deacons how they got food in such a place, for he had formerly known it as a desert. The deacon told him to look and see if he was not in health and well clothed. He called a fine child, and asked him if it did not seem well fed, and asked him to attend service next day and see if it was not so with all of them. The Fingo, lifting his hand to heaven, exclaimed, "It is always so where that God is worshiped."—Dr. A. Thomson.

**The New Heart.** This is the second important condition or factor in making a Christian. The third picture sets this forth. We know that a man or boy will do about as his heart prompts him. The heart of every one is wicked by nature, and is called here a stony heart. If the heart is bad, the nature will continue to be bad, even though it may try to be good, and may really seem to be good for a time. At last the heart will control all the life. The need of a new and loving heart which is the "heart of flesh," is great, because the heart is the seed bed for the life. In the parable of the sower the hard and stony ground could not receive the seed, but the good ground could. When new and right the heart is like the hot bed of the florist, to grow all kinds of beautiful flowers and plants. If it is bad, Satan will use it to grow weeds and thorns. In one of Ezekiel's other pictures (18:31), he says to the people, "Make you a new heart," and here he says "A new heart will I give." This shows that we must work with God,

and let him work in and with us, to get the new heart. Paul puts both acts in working together when he says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

**The New Power.** This is the third needful thing to make a Christian. It is shown by that strange picture of a dove in the circle. The dove represents the Holy Spirit, as when He descended on Christ at His baptism. The circle stands for both heart and life, and those odd letters are the Hebrew for the great name of God, Jehovah. If one has the Holy Spirit giving right desires and great strength, and has also God ever in him and before him, he will be apt to be a good Christian. The next picture is closely connected with this for it is the Holy Spirit who enables us to understand God's Word, who also makes us love it, and who gives us willingness and strength to obey the commands of God. David says, "Thy Word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against Thee." So the Holy Spirit and the Bible are the great forces which make the Christian mighty. Such a one can say with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me."

And one of the later prophets cries out, "Not by might nor by power (that is any human effort), but by my Spirit saith the Lord." Those two people seem to be on their knees studying the "roll," which was their Bible. This is the true attitude for all who would learn God's will. If not in the very posture of prayer, one should be reverent, prayerful and earnest in searching the Scriptures. See Acts 17:11 for a model class in Bible study.

**The Electric Current.** Every condition of expert operating may be fulfilled, but so long as the electric circuit is closed, all your efforts are simply sounding brass and clattering platinum. Not a single spark of electric life do you transmit; not a single message of good or ill, of bane or blessing, is conveyed to the waiting listener at the other end of the line. Why? Because the battery is not working. And all your working is effort without result, activity without power. But now you open the little brass lever which connects your key to the battery hidden beneath the table—immediately every letter you form thrills with life, every word you write flashes a living message into the mind and heart of the far-away receiver. Through your work, dead and mechanical in itself, the electric battery is now pouring forth its vital stream, flooding with life and power. So the Holy Spirit floods the soul with light, and life and power.—Exchange.

**The New Life.** This is the fourth important thing to make a beautiful Christian. It follows from the others, and never can exist

without them. But it is the most important of all so far as one's influence and usefulness are concerned. Then it is the first thing the world sees in a Christian. Paul likens a good man to a letter that is "known and read of all men." In the sermon on the mount, Christ said "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Those last two pictures show two ways in which the outward life proves that one is a Christian. One way is by the many blessings which such a person receives from God. These are represented by pictures of the goodly land they dwell in. All the gracious and kindly dealings of God to His people are saying always, to all others, "Come thou with us and we will do thee good." The other way is by the goodly people such a person associates with. One is known by the company he keeps, and if he is found at prayer meeting and church service and Sunday School, people will at once say, "Why, he is a Christian." His power and influence are beyond calculation.

**Two Notable Illustrations.** Jonathan Edwards, by his godly life and abundant labors, transformed Northampton, Mass., to be the model small city in all the world. So John Wesley changed the village of Cornwall, England. A young nobleman rode up and down the streets of that village looking for something stronger than water to drink. At last he stopped, and made impatient inquiry of an old peasant who was on his way home after a day of toil: "How is it that I can't get a glass of liquor anywhere in this wretched village of yours?" he demanded harshly. The old man, recognizing his questioner as a man of rank, pulled off his cap and bowed humbly, but nevertheless there was a proud flash in his faded eye as he answered quietly: "My lord, something over a hundred years ago a man named John Wesley came to these parts." And with that the old peasant walked away.—Sunday School Advocate.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What Scripture texts can you quote respecting the heart? 2. What is the great mistake the heart makes? 3. What is the best gift a boy or girl can give to Christ? 4. How do you give it?

**Challenge Text.** "So teach us to number our — that we may apply our — unto wisdom." Psa. 90: (2).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God is constantly asking the heart to come to Him for cleansing. 2. Every such call is a warning of peril and punishment. 3. "Is the heart right with God?" is the greatest question one can ask. 4. If the heart is really right, all else will in time be right. 5. No one can come into the new spiritual Kingdom without a new spiritual heart. 6. A single soul, however wicked and ignorant, is worth one's best efforts to save. 7. No two hearts are alike, and no two are saved in just the same way. 8. Jesus Christ is infinite in His merit and resources and so can save all who are willing to be saved. 9. "Son, daughter, give me thine heart."

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the



And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. \* \* \*

So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the



bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered

them above: but there was no breath in



Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, thus saith the Lord God:

come from the four winds. O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and



upon their feet, an exceeding great army.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EZEKIEL 37:1-14.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We adore Thee as the Source of all life. We come to Thee for the renewal of our own souls. We pray that we may so live that Thy Spirit may evermore abide with us. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Come Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove,  
With all thy quickening powers.  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
In these cold hearts of ours.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 587-586. Place, vicinity of Babylon. **Persons,** Ezekiel, resurrected men.

**Scripture Setting: Study of Spiritual Life.** Regeneration, necessity and source of, John 3:3-16. From death to life, John 5:24. Jesus, bread of life, John 6:27, 33, 35, 40, 47. Jesus and more abundant life, John 10:10. Jesus, the resurrection, John 11:25, 26. Jesus, the way to the Father, John 14:6. Jesus, giver of eternal life, John 17:2, 3. Purpose of Scriptures, John 20:31. Meaning of baptism, Rom. 6:4, 5. Christ in us, Rom. 8:10. Eternal life manifested in Christ, 1 John 1:1, 2.

**Life and Conduct Setting: The Vision.** 1. It

was intended to inspire the Jews with hope of deliverance from captivity. 2. It represented Israel as a nation dead, without hope, and scattered one from the other. 3. It was prophetic of the return of the Jews from captivity to their own land; to their national life and to the service of the temple. 4. It declared that only through obedience to God's Word and the influence of His Spirit these things were to be accomplished. 5. It symbolized the power of God's Word and Spirit to restore the spiritually dead to life and to inheritance of God's best gifts. 6. It foreshadowed the coming of Christ's kingdom and the redemption of the world.

### A WONDERFUL VISION.

**The Spring.** After the long, icy winter has held the earth in its grasp for months, and all nature seems dead and incapable of renewal; trees lift their bare arms to the winds and the grass lies yellow and shrunken, what a miracle it is that spring comes again. How wonderful that the power of God renews the sap in trees and the branches once more are clad in green, and grass and flowers come to life, and the seeds we plant break their shells and come forth as food for man and beast. We should not allow this miracle to grow commonplace to us simply because it occurs each year, for it is actually just as marvelous each time as if it had never occurred before.

**Life.** Not only is the renewal of life at springtime a miracle, but all life is so. All the wisdom and research of man, with the subtlest instruments he can invent, have not been able to find the secret of life and to tell us what it is. One thing lives and has the power of reproducing life, and another is dead, inert, incapable of growth or self-movement. The living thing is characterized by certain attributes and qualities which the dead matter lacks; that is all we know, save that the secret is with God and the power comes from God.

**Man a Miracle.** The life of humanity and of each man is a miracle. There was a time when there was not one human being in all this great world. When the first man and woman were created, when flesh and blood in human form stood erect and filled with the thinking, feeling spirit, that was miracle. Now, when there are millions of us on the earth, this is but multiplied miracle.

Each babe, each boy or girl, is a miracle, more wonderful than even the springtime, for the human being thinks and feels and loves and hopes.

**The Spiritual Life.** The more clearly we realize the truth that all life, in plant and seed and animal, is full of mystery and wonder, the more we feel that our own natural being, and that of all men and women, is not a commonplace thing but a Divine result, the better will we be prepared to perceive the wonders of the higher life, the spiritual life.

The spiritual life, the life of the soul, is the highest miracle of all, since the soul is the most wonderful part of man's being, and the most wonderful fact in the world save the existence of God Himself. The soul may lose the fulness of its life, just as the plant may wither and die, or the body may grow feeble and lose its powers. Sin, evil, when admitted into the life, tends toward the loss of the spiritual faculties. The spirit of man is at its best only when in direct relation to the Spirit of God. Sin shuts out God's Spirit, cuts off our communication with Him. We might as well expect to live physically without air and light as to live spiritually without the Spirit of God. He is the Source of spiritual life. When He comes to us we are spiritually alive, and when He departs spiritual life declines.

**Ezekiel's Vision.** The vision of Ezekiel in the valley bore upon life, upon the great mystery of which we have been thinking. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and carried him to a great valley in Chaldea and showed him a multitude of dry bones of



men who had been slain. And there God taught him, and through him the people of Israel, a great lesson. Ezekiel was one of the Jewish exiles in Babylonia. He had been carried away while he was a young man. The king had taken many captives to the city of Babylon, but he also planted a colony of Jews in other parts of his kingdom. Ezekiel was a member of a colony settled on the banks of the Chebar. He was not only a prophet, but he was a priest. Far away from Jerusalem and the temple, he ministered in the spiritual temple to his countrymen. His book is remarkable for the wonderful visions contained in it. He gives an account of his call as a prophet; he tells of the general carrying out of his commission; he tells of the rejection of the people of Israel by God because of their idolatry. He rebukes in detail the sins of the age; he tells of the nature of the judgment upon them and the guilt which caused it. He announces the meaning of the punishment which is now beginning to be inflicted on them. He proclaims God's judgments on seven heathen nations. Then, after the destruction of Jerusalem, he gives prophecies concerning the future of Israel. He announces a glorious consummation. It is among the prophecies concerning the future of Israel that the Vision of the Dry Bones appears.

**A Dead Nation.** Israel, that had once been a glorious and independent nation, was now a scattered people, captive in a strange land. Under the dominion of a great world-power, it seemed as if they could never recover their nationality, their country, their independence. They seemed like so many dead men: dry and scattered bones on a battle field. They were humiliated, despondent, hopeless. Among themselves they spoke of the valleys of Babylonia, in which many of them dwelt, as their "graves." They felt that they were a dead nation.

**The Valley of Bones.** It was to people in this condition and in this frame of mind that Ezekiel's vision came. The Spirit of the Lord showed the prophet a great valley full of bones: bones of multitudes of men that had been slain and left to lie there and bleach and dry in the sun and winds. Life had gone; the flesh had gone; nothing was left but dry bones, and these threatened soon to dissolve into dust. The Spirit asked the prophet if these bones could live again. It seemed a hopeless condition, but Ezekiel, realizing that with God, the Source of life, all things are possible, answered, "O, Lord God, Thou knowest." To Ezekiel, gazing

on the desolation around him, came the command to prophesy upon these bones, and say, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord," and declare that God would clothe them with sinews and flesh again, as proof that He was Lord. With perfect obedience, Ezekiel spake as commanded unto the dry white skeletons. Even as he spoke there was a noise and a shaking and the bones came together in their proper places. Then, wonderful to behold, there came upon them sinews and flesh and skin. Still there was no life in them. They were but the forms of men.

**The Breath.** Again came the Divine command, and now it said to prophesy unto the breath, "Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." Once more he obeyed, and now the mysterious, vital breath came unseen into those human forms. Then from the ground the vast army rose up, stood upon their feet, alive. Such was Ezekiel's vision of the change of dry bones into a host of living men.

**The Meaning.** Now the Spirit taught Ezekiel the meaning of his vision. He said, "These bones are the whole house of Israel." He was bidden to prophesy unto them, "Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel. . . . I shall put my Spirit in you and ye shall live: and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord."

This was therefore, first of all, a message of hope to the discouraged Israelites; a promise of the renewal of their national life. The requickenings of their spirits by which this restoration could be accomplished was to be by the Spirit of God: "I shall put My Spirit upon you and ye shall live." This was to be a miracle, directly from God, and not a mere natural reawakening. This did, in due time, come to pass, and the people of Israel—the dry bones—were restored to their country and for many ages enjoyed once more their national life. Again, Jerusalem became their capital. Again the temple arose, and, purified from idolatry, they worshiped Jehovah as of old. This surely was a great miracle, to bring the scattered Israelites together once more into their own land and to restore their national life.

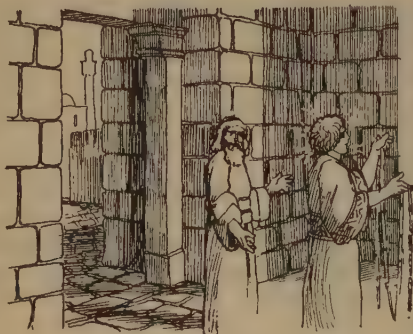
**Spiritual Resurrection.** The spiritual life of today is another great miracle. God has raised up a people out of the death of sin and has filled the world with the spiritual power of Christians and of the Church. By nature, sinful men are like the dry bones—lifeless. It is the Spirit of God that has come and is the Source of all the spiritual power in the world.

This is true of the individual sinner. He is as the dry bones; it requires the same Almighty power to raise him from spiritual death. But no case is hopeless. To man it is impossible, but God, the Miracle-worker, who creates the springtime, who gives life to man and beast and plant, can take the worst sinner and create him into a new man.

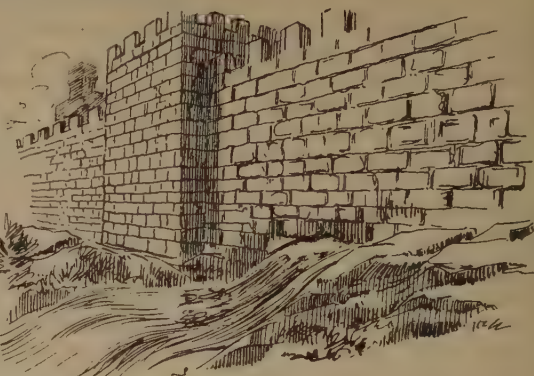
DR. C. D. WILSON.

# THE LIFE GIVING STREAM

Then brought he me out of the way of the



northward,  
and led me  
about the  
way without  
unto the  
utter gate  
by the way  
that looketh  
eastward;  
and, behold,  
there ran out



on the right side. And when the man that had the



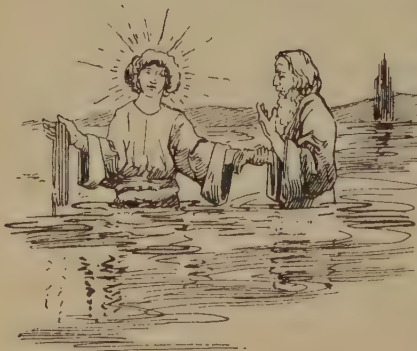
went forth  
eastward, he  
measured a  
thousand  
cubits, and  
he brought  
me through  
the waters;  
the waters  
were to the



Again he measured a  
thousand, and brought  
me through the waters;  
the waters were to the



Again he measured a  
thousand, and brought  
me through; the waters  
were to the



Afterward  
he measured  
a thousand  
and it was a  
river that I  
could not  
pass over:  
for the  
waters  
were risen,  
waters to



a river that could not be passed over.



# THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EZEKIEL 47:1-12.

**Prayer:** We thank Thee for the blessed revelation of Thyself in Christ, in Thy Word and in Thy providence. We thank Thee that through faith the grace of salvation is given unto us. We pray that the river of living waters may speedily bring refreshment and salvation unto all men, everywhere. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"Beneath the cross those waters rise, and he who finds them there,  
All through the wilderness of life, the living stream may bear;  
And blessings follow in his steps until, where'er he goes,  
The moral wastes begin to bud and blossom as the rose."  
—Anon. in Peloubet's Notes.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. about 560. Place, vicinity of Babylon. Persons, Ezekiel, and the Divine Messenger.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Water of Life. Satisfies eternally, John 4:14. Jesus the source, John 4:10; 7:37. Believers become a source of living water, John 7:38, 39. Given freely, Rev. 21:6; 22:17. Wells of salvation, Isa. 12:3. God shall lead to, Isa. 49:10. Is without price, Isa. 55:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The significance of the vision which Ezekiel saw may be set forth as follows: 1. The river of God has its source high up in the Temple where God dwells. 2. The waters

of life would issue from the Temple as a result of God's reoccupying His house. 3. The widening and deepening stream symbolized the growth and increase of the small number that would return from exile and of the kingdom of God then represented by the Jewish kingdom. 4. Wherever the river of life flows, the trees of life grow—in the heart, in the church, in the world. 5. The transformed desert pictured the change God would work in the then desolate land of Israel. 6. The change produced by this river typifies the change to be wrought by the spreading of Christ's Kingdom to the desolate places of the earth.

## THE WATER OF LIFE.

**A Great Blessing.** Pure, clean, refreshing, purifying water has been, in the literatures and languages of all peoples a symbol of good and desirable things. Nothing is more suggestive of satisfaction than this common, necessary, universal product of nature. The wells that the patriarchs digged became one of their most prized possessions. Among the worst of the sufferings the Israelites endured on their wilderness journey was lack of water at times, and there was pathos in their cry to Moses as the thirsty multitude said, "Give us water to drink." In the Jewish ceremonial law, constant reference is made to water for the purposes of purification. When the waters on the wilderness journey of Israel were found bitter, great was the disappointment of those who had hastened their steps through heat and dusty sand for draughts which they could not after all enjoy. When record was made of droughts that caused a price to be put upon water we realize to what extremities suffering men were brought.

The Psalmist uses no more beautiful symbol than that of water, "trees planted by rivers of water," "He leadeth me beside the still waters," "as the hart panteth after the water brook, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God." Solomon can find no lovelier symbol for a message of cheer—"as cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." The prophets are full of this symbolism. Isaiah tells of good to come, saying, "in the wilderness shall waters break out," "the thirsty land shall become springs of water," and his great expression of God's invitations is, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, Come ye to the waters." Jesus at the well told the Samaritan woman, "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Water is the cleansing symbol used in baptism by the command of Christ. The Bible in its closing chapter

calls, "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

**The Vision.** It is of waters Ezekiel tells in this lesson. After he had foretold the restoration of Israel from captivity to their own land, the revival of their national and religious life, he told also of the temple as it was to be, its parts and ornaments, the priests' chambers and the outward court. Then he pictured the return of the glory of the God of Israel to the temple. Then he saw in his vision, as he was led through the temple and to the door of the temple, waters issuing out from under the threshold of the temple to the eastward. When he was led out of the gate to the northward, since he could not follow the course of the waters from where he stood, he again saw an increasing stream pouring forth. As the waters swelled, the man with him, who had a line, began to measure the waters, and he measured a thousand cubits as they waded and the stream was to their ankles. Pressing on, as the river deepened, he measured another thousand, and now the waters were to the knees. After passing on the distance of another thousand, the waters were to the loins. Rising higher and higher, as he measured another thousand, the river was so deep that he could not repress it. Now they were "waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over."

In his vision, the Lord asked if he had seen all this, as he caused him to return to the brink of the river and gaze. He saw on the bank many trees on the one side and on the other. Then the Lord said to him, "These waters issue out toward the east

country and go down into the desert and go into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live. . . . And by the river, upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat and the leaf thereof for medicine."

**The Meaning.** Such was the wonderful stream Ezekiel saw issuing from beneath the temple and becoming a great river that flowed on through desert places, enriching all lands through which it passed. This means that blessings and salvation were to flow out from the temple into great multitudes and unto many peoples. God's dwelling with Israel was to bear blessings unto all. The waters of salvation were no longer to be shut up, as it were, in pools beneath the temple, but to break forth as a river that would flow through desert places and make them blossom. No one locality, no one people, was to be given the monopoly of salvation.

On account of its broad, universal spirit, this is one of the most significant and beautiful passages in the Bible. It is a foretelling of the time when Jewish exclusiveness was to be broken down, when the treasure that was put in their keeping should be distributed among all the children of men. God had chosen the Jews not for their own sakes but that they might receive the revelation and preserve it for other nations as well as for themselves. Abraham had been told that in him "should all the nations of the earth be blessed." This was the teaching with which the Jewish people began their career. But, being set apart from other nations in order to preserve the truth, they, as time went on, came to look upon themselves as favored of God for themselves and not for the sake of what they could give to mankind. This vision of Ezekiel revives the universal spirit of religion and reminds the Jews that the blessings of salvation are not for Jews exclusively but for all nations.

**"Salvation is of the Jews."** And indeed the waters of life have flowed into the world from beneath the temple. Christianity is the fulfillment of Judaism. The Jews, in spite of their lapses and errors and sins,

preserved for mankind the religion of Jehovah. Amid the idolatries of the ancient world the Jews, in the main, kept alive the conception of God as a Spirit and as the Creator and Preserver of all things.

From beneath the temple flowed out the river of the Old Testament Scriptures. To the prophets and holy men of Israel did these revelations come, and they wrote down and preserved for mankind this wonderful and priceless volume.

**Our Debt to the Jew.** From Israel came the ethical teachings that today are the foundation principles of all our best modern life. We received the principles of our art from the Greeks, our principles of law and government largely from the Romans, but the modern world received its morals from the Hebrew people.

Above all gifts of the Hebrew race to the world, there came from it, after the flesh, Jesus Christ. He came into the world in their land, He was nurtured among Jews, He made His first disciples of Jews, He worshiped His Father in their temple and in their synagogues. He used the Old Testament as the basis of His teachings and proclaimed that in them were foretellings of Himself.

**Universal Religion.** Moreover, the Gospel was carried out from the land of its birth to many nations by the Apostles and disciples of Christ, all of the Apostles being Jews, and most of the early missionary disciples being also of that people.

Unto us have come the waters of that river of salvation, and the waters are flowing everywhere, into all lands, for the blessing of all nations.

During a revival a worldly man was awakened, but tried to conceal his feelings from his wife, who was a Christian woman. While she went to church one evening, he was left at home with his three-year-old daughter. He began to walk up and down the room in great anxiety of mind. The child observed his restlessness, and asked, "What is the matter with you, Papa?" He replied, "Nothing," but continued to show that he was troubled. The child watched him sympathetically and then asked simply, "Papa, if you were thirsty, wouldn't you go and get a drink of water?" It seemed to him as if a voice from Heaven had spoken to him. Why should he not refresh his thirsty soul? He thought of the living fountain opened in the Gospel. He believed, and from that evening he began a new life.

**Practical Truths:** 1. Christ is the true "temple" and the "door" from which come the living waters. 2. Growth in grace is progressive and increasing. 3. If we drink of the waters of life we shall be sustained, strengthened and blessed. 4. We shall bear fruit. 5. We shall be the means of healing and saving others.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This

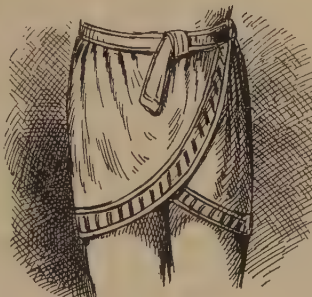
whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This



was of  
fine  
gold,  
his



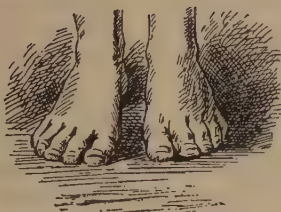
of silver, his belly and his



of  
brass,  
His



of  
iron,  
his



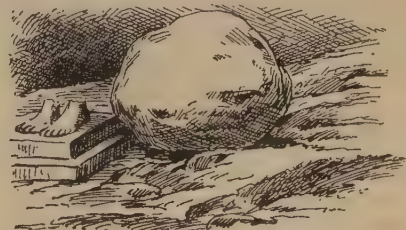
part of iron and part of clay.

Thou sawest till that a stone cut out without hands, which

that were of iron  
and clay, and brake  
them to pieces.  
Then was the iron,  
the clay, the brass,  
the silver, and  
the gold,



together, and became like the chaff of the  
summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried  
them  
away,  
that no  
place was  
found for  
them: and the



that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS DANIEL 2.

**Prayer:** Our Father, With Thee is all wisdom and light and understanding. Thou canst give unto men as Thou seest best. Grant unto us the light that may make plain the way wherein we should walk. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
Does his successive journeys run;  
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.  
—Watts.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. about 605. Place, Babylon. Persons, Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, magicians and sorcerers.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Prosperity of the Kingdom. A blessing unto all, Gen. 49:10. Shall possess uttermost part of the earth. Psa. 2:2. Exalted among heathen, Psa. 46:4, 10. Earth filled with His glory, Psa. 72:2-19. Kings shall praise God, Psa. 138:4, 5. All nations shall come, Isa. 2:2. An eternal kingdom, Isa. 9:2-7. Nature changed, Isa. 11:6-10. Wilderness and desert transformed, Isa. 35:1. Ends of earth to see salvation, Isa. 52:1-15. Good tidings for all, Isa. 61:1-11. The Spirit poured out, Joel 2:26-32. Like leaven, Matt. 13:33. Like mustard seed, Matt. 13:31, 32. Signs of, Luke 7:22. All enemies subdued, 1 Cor. 15:24, 28. All

things in one, Eph. 1:10. All kingdoms Christ's, Rev. 11:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this lesson are: 1. The tyranny and unreasonableness of a heathen king. 2. The blind fury and short-sightedness of a king that would slay all his wise men. 3. A common danger draws Daniel and his companions together and closer to God. 4. The power of a good man to petition God and prevent disaster. 5. God's purpose in revealing the future to a heathen king, thus proclaiming to a whole nation His nature and power as the only true God. 6. God advancing His servants and showing the superiority of the man whose trust is in the Lord. 7. The growth of Christ's kingdom from a small beginning and its ultimate triumph over the kingdoms of the world, foretold.

### THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD AND OF CHRIST.

**The Anxieties of Kings.** It is natural that the minds of such men as build up vast enterprises should ponder the question as to how long that which they have established will last. Men often begin their works with selfish motives and then, as their works expand, they grow into a larger purpose and interest. They come to a desire to leave behind them a permanent institution, a kingdom that passes to their descendants, a fortune that remains in their line. Napoleon Bonaparte was at first anxious to gain power for himself; then he wished to establish a dynasty with his brothers on thrones of other countries and with a son of his own at the head of the Empire. In a world of change, very few things last through the ages. Empires come and go. Fortunes are scattered. Noted families sink to obscurity and new ones become leaders. When Napoleon was on St. Helena, he was fond of comparing himself with the kings of ancient times and of comparing them all with Christ. He said other empires pass away, but that of Christ endures age after age. That which appeared to him most wonderful was that Christ's kingdom abides, while the great structure he himself had reared had fallen to pieces in a short time.

Nebuchadnezzar, the head of the vast Babylonian Empire, had inherited his throne from his father, and, being a great conqueror himself, he had reasonable hope that his crown would pass on to his son. But this man, who was the mightiest in the world in his day, had thoughts that ran far beyond

his own period. His father and he had conquered other nations; would Babylon some day fall? What new empires would emerge? Such thoughts necessarily force themselves upon kings and leaders of nations. In our day, such questions as these arise: Will our Republic endure? Will rival nations dispute our power in the Pacific Ocean? Will the monarchies of Europe fall? Will the British Empire go to pieces? By such considerations we may be helped to understand the frame of mind and the order of thoughts of Nebuchadnezzar.

**A Dream-Vision.** A year on the throne, a year of ceaseless activity, of high-strung output of energy, had thrown Nebuchadnezzar into a sleepless state. In broken sleep he saw pass before him, like a panorama, strange and monstrous visions. Pleasant "dreams take a weight from off our waking toil;" unpleasant ones "leave a weight upon our waking thoughts." On his royal bed, Nebuchadnezzar tossed uneasily; dreams came and went; some made little impression, while others remained with him as presentiments of coming evils. One night there came to the monarch a dream of unusual vividness and strangeness, that impressed him as having some deep meaning and as bearing upon himself and the future. As he awoke he could see the vast outlines of his vision fading away as a mist. It was gone. Yet a feeling that what he had seen was of deep import remained with him. Strive as he would, he could not summon back that haunting imagery; the light of day, the scenery



beheld by his opened eyes, made fresh pictures upon his retina and overlaid the vision.

**A Lost Dream.** Haunted by the vanished dream, the king arose, partook of food, and pondered. He was used to issuing commands and having them obeyed. If he could not recall his own dream, he could order other men to bring it forth out of its hiding place. He would do that. This seems to us nowadays a monstrous thing to demand of any man. But a tyrant like Nebuchadnezzar was not restrained by what is reasonable. Moreover, he and his nation considered dreams in an entirely different light from that of the modern world; we take them with little seriousness, while they often regarded them as revelations. Still further, he had about him classes of men who made a business of dealing with the occult: men who were in some cases professional interpreters of dreams.

We would think it very strange today if a monarch in a civilized country kept men about him to read the signs of the future in the stars; to interpret omens by the entrails of fowls or the flight of birds, yet this was a common custom of ancient monarchs. So Nebuchadnezzar called for the chief men among the magicians, the astrologers, sorcerers and Chaldeans of the city. These men represented various orders, some being priests, some scribes, while others dealt with enchantment, magic, astrology and other means of attempting to read the future or interpret mysteries. They in general enjoyed great favor and received large profits. Doubtless some of them were intelligent men who on occasion gave sound opinions and good advice and sensible interpretations. But as a rule they dealt in trickery.

**A Tyrant's Demand.** While these men had thus far succeeded in inducing the king to believe in their mysterious powers they were now to be put to the most difficult test conceivable. It was a test that no perfectly sane man would have asked of them, but Nebuchadnezzar was not entirely sane, and later he suffered from insanity for a considerable period. Behold then the imposing company of the magicians and their associates assembled before the mighty king. The robed and crowned monarch had often summoned them before but never on an errand like this. It was a simple matter for him to state that he had had a troubled dream and for the magicians to ask for an account of the vision and they would furnish the interpretation. The king amazed them by declaring he could not recall his dream but expected them to bring it forth out of the

recesses of his memory and then to interpret it. He menaced them with the threat that unless this were done they should all die, but added if they succeeded they would be greatly rewarded. Horrified at their critical position, they declared such a demand as unheard of and the fulfilling of it beyond any man's power. In his fury, the king decreed their death.

**A Real Seer.** This decree, if carried out, would have included Daniel and his three friends, who were already enrolled among the wise men of the capital, and who by counsel and understanding had gained the good will of the monarch. When Daniel learned of this peril, he sought the captain of the king's guard and obtained a delay. Daniel and his friends then besought God to reveal the matter to them, and in answer to these prayers the secret was made known to Daniel in a night vision. Thanking God for his mercy, Daniel told the captain of the guards to spare the wise men, and that he would fulfill the king's demand.

**The Dream Recalled.** The king on his throne listened as under a spell while Daniel recalled to him that dream which all his own efforts had not been able to revive in his memory. Strange must it have been to him to have another man's mind give back to him that which had vanished from his own. Announcing to the king that it was God Himself who had revealed the dream to him, Daniel portrayed the vision of a great image, bright and terrible, which Nebuchadnezzar had seen, an image with head of fine gold, with breast and arms of silver, with belly and thighs of brass, with legs of iron, and feet of iron and clay. He told that in the dream there had come a stone that was cut without hands, which smote the image on the feet and broke them, and had broken the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold to pieces fine as the chaff of a threshing floor, that the wind had carried away the dust, while the stone became a vast mountain.

Again did Nebuchadnezzar see his own vision and acknowledge that this had been his dream. Then Daniel gave him the interpretation of kingdom after kingdom arising and falling until God should set up one that should never be destroyed. Awed by the mysterious recovery of his dream; awed by an interpretation that opened the future and revealed how short-lived would be his own greatness and that of kings after him; awed by the glimpse of that vast spiritual Kingdom God would establish, Nebuchadnezzar fell on his face, acknowledging the God of Daniel as the true God. Then he set Daniel and his friends in places of highest power in his kingdom.

**The Everlasting Kingdom.** All that Nebuchadnezzar foresaw in that strange vision and which Daniel interpreted for him has come to pass. Men differ as to just what kingdoms were foreshadowed, but the details are of little importance. The Kingdom which is to abide has come. The older empires have passed away. But age after age beholds God's Kingdom growing wider and stronger.

**Practical Truths.** 1. United prayer is a great power. 2. Give glory to God for whatever He does through you. 3. Let us realize fully that God's Kingdom is the greatest power on earth. 4. If you are promoted, help to advance your loyal friends. 5. The wonders of God's dealings should cause all to fall upon their faces in adoration.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# THE FIERY FURNACE

And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,

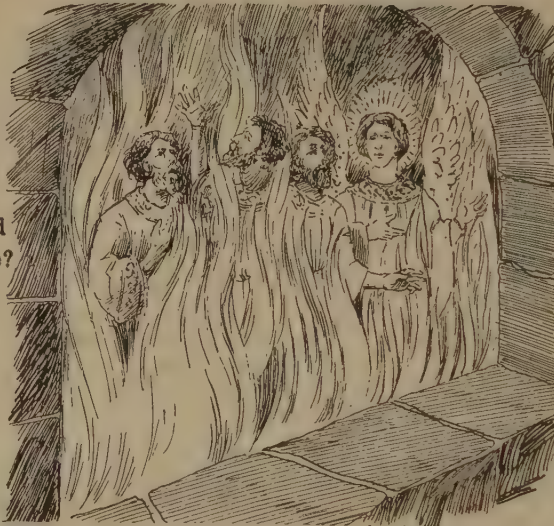


bound into  
the midst  
of the  
burning  
fiery  
furnace.

Then  
Nebuchad  
nezzar the



was astonished, and rose  
up in haste, and spake,  
and said unto his  
counsellors, Did not  
we cast three men bound  
into the midst of the fire?  
They answered and said  
unto the king, True,  
O king. He answered  
and said, Lo, I see



and they have no  
hurt; and the form of  
the fourth is like the  
Son of God. Then  
Nebuchadnezzar  
came near to the



of the midst of the fire.

and spake, and  
said, Shadrach,  
Meshach, and  
Abednego,  
ye servants of  
the most high  
God, come  
forth, and  
come hither.  
Then Shadrach,  
Meshach,  
and Abednego





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS DANIEL 3.

**Prayer:** Our Father, When we are tested, grant that we may not fail. Give us such faith that we may go forward in confidence. May we not fear the furnaces, but know Thou art with us. In the name of Christ. Amen.

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform.  
He plants His footsteps in the sea  
And rides upon the storm.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. about 580. Place, Babylon. Persons, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Nebuchadnezzar.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Trials of Faith. Noah preparing the ark, Gen. 6:14-22; Heb. 11:7. Abraham leaving home, Gen. 12:1-4. Abraham offering Isaac, Gen. 22:1-19. Moses when sent to Pharaoh, Ex. 3:11, 12. Moses at Red Sea, Ex. 14:15. Joshua and Israel taking Jericho, Josh. 6. Gideon commanded to deliver Israel, Judg. 6:36-40. Job, by affliction and adversity, Job 1:2. Ezra leaving Babylon, Ezra 8:22. The Syrophenician woman, Matt. 15:21-28. The two blind men, Matt. 9:28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features

of this wonderful story are: 1. A king debasing his subjects by compelling them to worship a dumb idol. 2. No toleration or liberty of conscience permitted: it was obey or burn. 3. The enmity of evil men against the good. 4. The remarkable faith and courage of the three Hebrew youths in defying the king and the fiery furnace. 5. The swift destruction of those who cast them into the furnace, showing how intensely the furnace was heated. 6. The intervention of God and the miracle of deliverance from the flames. 7. The effect on the king and his proclamation regarding the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

## THREE MEN WHO WOULD NOT DO WRONG.

**What Would You Do?** Would you worship an idol if by so doing you could save your life, and if by refusing to do this you were in danger of death? That is a very hard question, and Providence very kindly spares most of us from having to be put to the test. But a great many people have been tried in this or a similar manner, and to the honor of religion and human nature, by the grace of God, they have been able to refuse to do wrong and have through painful experiences entered into Heaven. Certain of those who have been forced to choose between denying Christ and a martyr's death have been young people, some of them mere girls, but they proved loyal and brave, faced lions, bore the fires of the stake, and thus, by their faithfulness, won others to the Master who could help them to such strength and courage in perils and tortures.

So there is no doubt that many young people today would surprise themselves and their friends by what they would bravely suffer for Christ if some dreadful persecution arose.

**A Vain King.** There were three men long ago in Babylon, who had to face the question whether they would deny the true God and bow to an image or not, and it was under most trying circumstances they had to arrive at their decision. It was in the latter part of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar that this happened. That king had been greatly impressed in the second year of his kingship by the interpretation of his dream by Daniel. As the years, full of wars and victories rolled by, the influence of that memory died away. He had brought many

nations into subjection to his rule. He had rebuilt Babylon until it was a marvel of splendor and glory. He was so accustomed to abject obedience from all men that he could not bear to be crossed in any of his purposes, small or great.

**The Great Image.** It appears that after his return from his conquests, while he was exulting in the sense of his greatness and power, he conceived the idea of setting up in the midst of a vast plain an enormous image of gold as a symbol of the splendor and grandeur of his kingdom and of himself. When this great statue of purest metal was in its place and the rays of the sun made it shine like something not of this earth, the king sent throughout his wide empire a summons to all the great men to come up to Babylon to behold it and to worship it. Obedient to the command, these chief men came from every part of the empire in their chariots and on their horses, in splendid array, to take part in the dedication of the statue as the symbol of Babylonian power. Princes, governors, captains, judges, treasurers, counselors, sheriffs, rulers of provinces, all came. So far as appears, all these subordinates of the mighty monarch were quite ready to bow and bend and worship whenever and wherever Nebuchadnezzar bade them. No matter what their private opinions were, they brought no scruples with them.

**The Test.** At the appointed time all assembled in the vicinity of the golden statue. Then a herald cried out unto all that at a signal, the sound of many musical instruments, all were to fall down and worship the image. The herald also announced that

any who failed to obey this decree were to be cast into a fiery furnace as rebels against the king's words. With such a threat in their ears, and with the king's officers near to observe and report such as failed to bow, we may be sure that the sound of the vast orchestra quickly bent thousands of supple knees to the earth. Down they all went. Loudly they all shouted their salutations of reverence to the huge, shining, dumb idol.

**The Faithful.** It is probable that Nebuchadnezzar considered the statue as a symbol of the power of the empire and bowing to it as an acknowledgment of his imperial rule, and that he deemed such as refused to bend as rebels against his supremacy. So did the Romans at one period demand that honors ordinarily given only to their deities be given to the emperors and statues of the emperors. But whatever view Nebuchadnezzar took of the matter, the worshipers of Jehovah were unwilling to give to any but God religious devotions. It is probable that all the Jews thus refused, but most of them were too obscure to be noticed.

**The Accusers.** But the envy of the native Chaldeans had already been stirred by the exaltation to high places of the Hebrews, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who, after the interpretation of the dream of the king, had been exalted and still remained in power. The fact that Daniel at this time was not arraigned may have been owing to his position as the chief of the magicians, a position so high as to remove him from the reach of foes; he may also have been absent from the city or may have been ill and so not present at the ceremonies. But the other three notable Hebrews were not only absent from the dedication, but when the sound of the music swept through the city, and men everywhere bent low, they stood erect and silent. Those who already envied them, saw in this conduct a chance to strike them down from their high places and get themselves into office.

**The Trial.** The Chaldeans carried their tale to the king. Nebuchadnezzar, in his rage, when the three Jews were brought before him, questioned them, found them ready to admit the charge. He offered them another chance; again the music would sound and they could then bow; while another refusal would send them to the fiery furnace. Unintimidated, resolute in their loyalty to God, they replied, "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burn-

ing fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Noble answer, worthy of all emulation.

**The Sentence.** Furious at this defiance, his face convulsed by anger, the king commanded that the furnace be made ready and heated seven times beyond the usual temperature. He would be present himself to see these rebels burned. He would see if their God delivered them. Thither was carried his royal chair, and the king sat down at a safe distance to see the rebels consumed. His mightiest men bound the victims and cast them into the blaze. Flames leaped forth and slew the captors of the three Jews.

**The Deliverance.** But an amazing sight was that which the king now beheld. His three victims were suddenly unbound and were walking about in the furnace as if it were a place of comfort and not of terror, and with them was a fourth form, as of some Divine Being.

Unable to resist such a demonstration of the power of the God in whom these men believed, the king cried aloud to them to come forth. As from a place of perfect safety the three men came out at the word of the king, while the nobles and princes, gathered there to witness the death of rebels, were filled with awe, for not a hair of their heads was singed, nor was the smell of fire upon them. Sudden and changeful as ever, the king now cried out in adoration of the true God, and decreed that all men everywhere should worship Jehovah, the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, who alone could deliver His servants in such a manner.

The true way to real influence with others is loyalty to what is right and true. They are the strong people who can, when there is a call of duty, stand against the multitude.

During Queen Mary's reign, Bishop Hooper was sentenced to be burned to death. A man tried to make him recant, and said, "Life is sweet and death is bitter." But Hooper replied, "The death to come is more bitter and the life to come is more sweet." When led to the stake, a box was placed before him, containing a pardon from the queen if he would deny his faith. He cried out, "If you love my soul, away with it!"

**Practical Truths.** 1. Do not let serious impressions prove to be transient. 2. Beware of pride that leads to self-worship. 3. Be not tempted by worldly interests nor frightened by worldly threats. 4. Rather offend the powers that be than God. 5. Decide for God and follow Him at all costs.





## DANIEL'S ANSWER TO THE KING

BY BRITON RIVIERE

Darius, the king of Persia, having made a decree that forced every man to worship graven images, cast Daniel, who refused to do so, into the den of lions. Here his destruction seemed inevitable.

Darius, though a heathen, feared Daniel and had great respect for his God. He hoped that Daniel would be protected and not destroyed. So the king passed the night fasting and had no music, nor could he sleep. Going early in haste to the den of lions, he cried to Daniel, "Is thy God whom thou servest able to deliver thee from the lions?" Having passed the night among the lions unharmed, Daniel turns his back upon them in calm confidence so strongly expressed in the words he now, with upturned face, addresses to the king, "My God hath sent His angel and hath shut the lions' mouths."

Riviere has made a specialty of painting wild lions. In this picture the erect and dignified figure of Daniel; the light from the now open den that had been sealed the night before; the grouping of the wondering lions and the dark background of the den make it tremendously impressive. In contrast with Riviere's other picture of Daniel this is noticeable: In the other, Daniel faced the lions, and the menacing attitudes of the brutes portrayed the first shock—the test of faith, while here, confidence and safety are expressed by the upturned face, the subdued lions and Daniel turning his back upon them.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON



DANIEL'S ANSWER TO THE KING.



## BRITON RIVIERE. 1840.

Briton Riviere, born in London in 1840, is the son of a drawing master, who was one of a family (of French Huguenot extraction) of artists and drawing masters notable in Cheltenham and Oxford in the time of the latter Georges.

From an early age, Briton delighted in picturing the cats and dogs of the neighboring houses; the cab and dray horses of London streets together with their drivers; and the ducks and swans of the Regent's Canal and the famous Serpentine in Hyde Park.

Landseer, during the painter's boyhood, was at the very height of his fame, and hardly had the youth completed his tenth year when the great artistic movement of the Pre-Raphaelites shook artistic England to its core. By father and uncles, the growing lad heard pro and con the purposes of the brotherhood discussed. Its avowed object was the encouragement in artists of an entire adherence to the simplicity of nature. John Ruskin, the great art critic and teacher famously defined its principles as the effort "to paint things as they probably did look and happen; not as, by rules of art developed under Raphael, they might be supposed gracefully, deliciously, or sublimely to have happened." The evident truth of the brotherhood's aims appealed to the youth so that his earliest work was much in-

fluenced by them. Even in his latest, is to be noted, by the trained eye, a regard for the honest verisimilitude of events and things that lifts Riviere's work, for sincerity of intention and truth of statement, far above the ruck of merely academic painters.

At eighteen, Riviere exhibited first at the Royal Academy. Still painting and studying, he took his degree from Oxford University in 1867, and thereupon settled down to the production of a list of animal and figure compositions that attest alike a breadth of knowledge, a stretch of imagination, and a mastery of technique that has justly earned his fame as the greatest English animal painter since Landseer. In many respects, he is held even greater than the famed Sir Edwin.

Of his pictures, "The Poacher's Nurse" (1866), and "Sympathy" (1878) have been always popular, but his "Circe" (1871) and "Daniel" (1872) were the first of his large paintings to attract marked attention. These were followed by "Persepolis" (1878, his masterpiece), "In Manus Tuas Domine" (1879), "Rizpah" (1886), "A Mighty Hunter Before the Lord" (1891), "Beyond Man's Footsteps" (1894, in the National Gallery), and "To the Hills" (1901). "Daniel's Answer to the King" is one of his later works.

JAKKO BEALING.



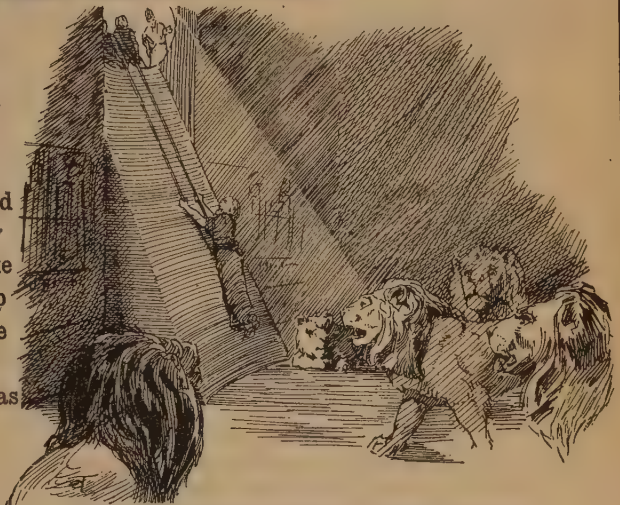
Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live for ever. My God hath sent his



and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt. Then was the



exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was



and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. And the king commanded, and they



which had accused Daniel, and they



them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS DANIEL 6.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Thy throne is ever open unto us, that we may come boldly and find help in time of need. We rejoice that in seasons of direst distress we may commune with Thee, and whether we live or die we may find rest and peace in Thee. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Many mighty men are lost  
Daring not to stand,  
Who for God had been a host  
By joining Daniel's band.  
Dare to be a Daniel, dare to stand alone,  
Dare to have a purpose firm.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. about 537. Place, Babylon. Persons, Daniel, Darius, accusers of Daniel.

**Scripture Setting:** Miraculous Deliverance of God's People (Old Testament instances). Israel from Pharaoh's army, Ex. 14:23-30. Gibeon from five kings, Josh. 10:11. Israel from Midian, Judges 7:16-22. Israel from Syria, 2 Kings 6:17-23. Samaria from Syria, 2 Kings 7:6-7. Judah from Sennacherib, 2 Kings 19:35-36. Three Hebrews from fiery furnace, Dan. 3:23-27. Jonah from the sea, Jonah 1:17; 2:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this story are: 1. The envy and jealousy aroused

by Daniel's blameless character and advancement lead his enemies to plot his destruction. 2. Daniel's faith and steadfastness bring honor to his God. 3. The weakness of a king who by flattery could be tricked into destroying his most trusted minister, as compared with the strength of a Daniel, whose faith in God enabled him to face lions. 4. Daniel in his life had so honored God that the heathen king was confident that God would honor Daniel. 5. The ministry of God's angels as shown in the protection of Daniel from the lions. 5. The just punishment meted out to Daniel's accusers—the wicked cast into the pit they digged for another.

### LIONS THAT COULD NOT BITE.

**Lions' Dens.** Lions' dens are, of course, nowadays in the savage parts of the earth, far away from our country, or in our land they are in the iron cages of menageries or zoölogical gardens. Young people, and older ones too, hugely enjoy going to see these great beasts in their cages and find them very noble looking, grand creatures in such safe places. Still other people delight in going off to Africa and Asia, where lions still are to be found in their savage state, and hunting for them with powerful rifles. Hunters of big game feel proud when they have stalked a lion in its native wilderness, running the risk of being wounded or killed, and bringing it low with a rifle ball well-aimed. Such bring home the lions' skins as trophies of pleasant adventures.

**Other Dens.** But it is true that in our own country, as in every land, there are many other dens of lions, in a figurative but real sense. This was the sense in which Paul wrote, in his prison at Rome, after he had been brought to his first trial before the emperor and had defended himself so that at that time he was not condemned to death. He said he had been delivered of God "from the lion's mouth." Every wicked cause in the world; every group of people opposed to the right; every evil force at work; everything that is set against the good and true is in a real sense a lions' den. More than that, every one who takes a stand for the right and the true is sure at some time and in some way to be cast into such a den of lions.

It is the very nature of evil and of people who are under the power of evil, to antago-

nize that which is good. If you take your stand for what is right and true, evil forces will at once array themselves against you.

**Other Heroes.** This has always been true in every land. When Aristides was in power in Athens he was so calm and fair in all his judgments that he became known as "the Just;" and wicked men who did not want justice done, but wished their own plans carried out, had him banished from the city. They cast him into the lions' den of exile; but that did not hurt him, for that act made his name shine all the brighter, and he is venerated by all good men. In the early ages of Christianity, especially, hosts of the followers of Christ were persecuted, arraigned before the courts, cast into prison and put to death. Many of them were literally given to lions who slew them in the arena for the entertainment of the populace. But by these sufferings the martyrs glorified Christ, won multitudes to the Master and entered into Heaven.

The heroes of every good cause, the men and women whose names we most revere in ancient and in modern times, have suffered in the lions' dens of antagonism, persecution, hatred, misunderstanding and censure, but the good they stood for has triumphed; they have rejoiced to endure hardship for their cause and have made the world better by their faith and loyalty.

**A Good Man.** It is because of what Daniel's life and example mean to us today that we may profitably recall his heroism. He had risen to great place and standing in Babylon in the early days of Nebuchadnezzar and had held positions of power under



successive empires and monarchs. Now Darius the Mede was supreme, and he had set over the kingdom one hundred and twenty princes, and over these he had placed three presidents, of whom Daniel was the first. On account of the excellent spirit that was in him, the king was thinking of setting him over the whole realm. He was to be Prime Minister. Such authority and influence as Daniel had and his prospect of promotion were certain to arouse the envy of many other men. Envy is one of the beasts that breathe out smoke and fire and venom. These men tried to find some fault in Daniel's public or private life, that they might attack him on that score, but he had lived so blamelessly they could discover no flaw.

**The Plot.** But his foes, seeking for some point of attack, knew that he was out of sympathy with the idolatrous religion of the country, and that he was most devout in the observance of the worship of Jehovah. They said among themselves they could find no occasion against him, "except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." They saw into his character deeply enough to be aware that nothing could deviate him from his religious convictions and worship. These men, representing the highest officers of the nation under Daniel, persuaded Darius to sign a decree that any one who should ask anything of any god or man for thirty days except from the king should be cast into a den of lions. This plan, no doubt, appealed to the vanity of Darius; and he did not foresee that in the carrying out of the scheme he would strike his favorite minister.

**A Brave Man.** Under such circumstances a great many people would decide that they were doing their duty if they drew the curtains and prayed where none could see them. The world owes a great deal to the fact that Daniel was not that kind of a man. When he learned of the king's decree, he went to his house. It was his custom, common among Jews, to open a window toward Jerusalem and kneel before that and pray three times each day. This habit of so prominent a man could not but be known. On this occasion Daniel was followed by spies who noted that his daily prayers to Jehovah did not cease. This report was carried to Darius, who was grieved that Daniel was thus entrapped by an unchangeable decree. Darius now realized that a trap had been laid deliberately for Daniel, but he was helpless. At every suggestion they reminded the king that a decree of the monarch could not be changed.

When Palissy, the Huguenot potter, was lying a prisoner in the Bastille for his adherence to the Protestant faith, it is said that the king of France, who greatly esteemed him personally, visited him, and told him if he did not comply with the established religion, he should be forced, however unwillingly, to leave him in the hands of his foes. "Forced, sire!" answered the old man, with fire and energy; "this is not to speak like a king. But they who can force you cannot force me. I can die."

**Among the Lions.** Sympathizing with Daniel, helpless so far as he was concerned, Darius could offer no hope, save the words: "Thy God, whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee." It was the custom in that land to keep dens of hungry lions for the punishment of criminals, and it was as an offender against the law Daniel was now cast among these savage beasts, while the opening was covered with a great stone. The seal of the king, which it was death to unlawfully break, was set there. The king went away sad, passed the night fasting and sleepless and forbade that music should sound in the palace. This conduct reveals the nature of Darius in a good light, as a man of kindness and justice who lamented the conditions under which he had been forced to act. Still hope lived in his breast, and he had some blind confidence that the God of Daniel would work some wonder in his behalf. Early in the morning he hastened to the scene of his unwilling punishment of a good man. With a ray of hope he called to Daniel, and was overjoyed to hear the voice of the brave servant of the Almighty who assured him God had kept him in safety. Speedily was the brave man freed from his captivity. Swift vengeance now fell upon the authors of this crime. A decree of the king went forth calling on all men to adore the living God in whom Daniel had trusted and who had so wonderfully delivered him.

**Honored.** Not only was Daniel after this more firmly fixed in the confidence of his king, but God was made known and honored. So every one who is true to convictions and to the right at the expense of temporary trials, gains far more than he loses. Such loyal lives reveal the reality of religion in a more convincing way than mere teachings, however important, can do. All of us are called upon today, as really as was Daniel, to be true at all costs and to trust God for the results.

**Practical Truths.** 1. It is fair to suppose that when any advise cruel measures, they have base designs hidden beneath their apparent motives. 2. When you are manifestly wrong, be willing to alter your course. 3. Do not expect to escape false accusations or censure, but so live that these will find no justification in fact. 4. When there is only choice between sin and suffering, choose the latter. 5. It is not in the power of men to keep us from prayer.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him.  
I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the



and  
cast  
forth  
his



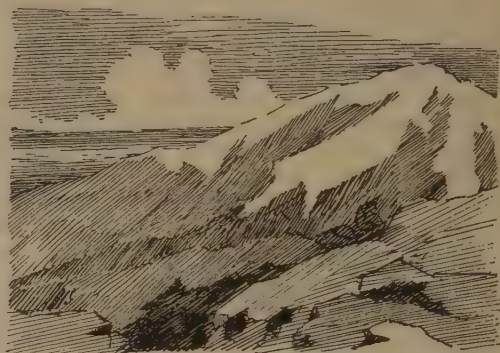
as  
Leb-  
anon.  
His



shall  
spread,  
and his  
beauty  
shall be  
as the



and his  
smell as



They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the



and  
grow  
as the



the  
scent  
thereof  
shall be  
as the



of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with



I have heard  
him, and  
observed  
him: I am  
like  
a green



From me is thy fruit found.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS HOSEA 14.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the gift of God's love to man and Thou dost also give the Holy Spirit. By this three-fold operation of the Godhead we are assured of the new heart and life. Pour out Thy gracious Spirit that our hearts may be as a watered garden, full of all beauty and fragrance. For Christ's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, About B. C. 727. Place, Kingdom of Israel. Persons, Hosea to the people of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** The Holy Spirit's Work. The Spirit leading, Rom. 8:1-14. The Spirit lighting, John 16:5-15. The Spirit in the Word, 1 Cor. 2:1-16. The Spirit in the heart, 1 Cor. 3:5-19. The Spirit in the churches, Rev. 1:10-20. Christ's spiritual glory, Mark 9:2-13. Spiritual glory, 2 Cor. 3:4-18. The Spirit's conquest, Col. 3:1-17.

## GOD'S GARDEN OF THE HEART.

**The Heavenly Gardener of the Heart.** As you look at that page of beautiful pictures I am sure you must think of a garden, well cared for and fruitful. It is a picture of what God would like the heart to be, for He wants the heart as His garden. He Himself is the Gardener. In the parable of the vine Christ says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the Husbandman," which means gardener. And Paul says, "Ye are God's husbandry," which means garden. There is no picture of the Gardener Himself here—yes, there is, too, for the whole page is a picture of what God can and will do for any heart that will let Him come in. The heart is the soil and He will come in and work it to produce all this glorious beauty and fruitage. He even stands at the gate of the heart garden and knocks and waits that He may come in.

Do you see those three "I wills"—"I will heal," "I will love," "I will be as the dew"? Those mean that God will dig up and cast out the sticks, stones and rubbish from the heart garden; that He will make the soil the very best by His love and grace; and that He will care for it and water it by the dew of His Spirit, that all the plants and flowers may grow rapidly. If God says "I will" we may be sure that He is able to do all He promises. The very last Scripture words on the page are, "From me is thy fruit found," which teaches that God alone in and by Christ and the Holy Spirit can make a heart right and full of good works.

### A Heart Garden.

A garden-plot of sunny hours  
God gives me when I wake,

"Breathe on me, breath of God,  
Fill me with life anew,  
That I may love what Thou dost love,  
And do what Thou wouldst do.

"Breathe on me, breath of God,  
Until my heart is pure;  
Until with Thee I will one will,  
To do or to endure."

### ITS RELATIONS.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in the heart and life is set forth here, under a variety of attractive figures and pictures. Taking the passage as a whole, we learn, 1. What man is redeemed from. 2. What he is redeemed by. 3. What he is redeemed for. 4. What he is redeemed through. 5. What he is redeemed unto. The picture is suggestive of beauty, fragrance, flavor, fruitage; and all because of the constant and favoring providence of God.

And I can make it bright with flowers  
All day for His dear sake.

Red roses, if my heart is sweet  
With love for all my own;  
And heart's-ease springing at my feet  
For every kindness shown.

And shining, sunny marigold,  
If I am brave and bright;  
And lilies, for the thoughts that hold  
My heart all pure and white.

Sweet violets, hiding in their leaves,  
For truth and modesty;  
And balsams, if a soul that grieves  
Finds comforting in me.

And poppies, if my toil brings rest  
To hands grown tired with care;  
And always—first and last and best—  
Forget-me-nots of prayer.

—Mabel Earle.

### Fragrant Beauty of the Heart Garden.

The lily picture and the mountain picture both suggest this. Nothing is more beautiful and fragrant than the lily. Its purity and ivory whiteness, with the sweet odor rising from it as a grateful and refreshing perfume, make it the most perfect symbol for this purpose. Of the mountain picture it is said that "his smell shall be as Lebanon." This is very suggestive, for Lebanon was adorned with olive plantations, vineyards and luxuriant fields. There was an abundance of sweet-smelling plants and shrubs, like the myrtle and the styrax. The "cedars of Lebanon" increased the fragrance, as also other aromatic plants. The wine picture adds to the idea of fragrance, for it is said that "the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." The olive tree suggests both beauty and fragrance. All this is a picture of what God

wants the heart to be and what He will actually make it be. Such a person would have a character that is pure, sweet, true and good, altogether a fragrant life, with a refreshing flavor and beauty to all who came in contact with it. This might stand for that quiet unconscious influence which comes from one who is holy in heart and life.

**Beauty of a Godly Life.** The olive is one of the most characteristic and beautiful features of all southern scenery. The hoary dimness of its delicate foliage, subdued and faint of hue, as if the ashes of the Gethsemane agony had been cast upon it forever; the gnarled writhing of its intricate branches and the pointed fretwork of its light and narrow leaves, inlaid on the blue field of the sky, and the small, rosy-white stars of its spring blossoming, and the beads of sable fruit scattered by autumn along its topmost boughs, the right, in Israel, of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow; and, more than all, the softness of the mantle, silver-gray and tender, like the down on a bird's breast, with which, far away, it veils the undulation of the mountains.—Ruskin.

**The Hidden Forces of the Heart Garden.** That second picture illustrates this. The roots are most important in all growth, but they are not seen by the eye. The soil also contains some of these mysterious forces and no one can tell exactly how and why the earth and water can put life and vigor and strength into the flowers and plants. By some hidden way that God has planned these silent forces work with countless little fingers. They are more skillful than the hand of any artist, for no man-made painting can ever equal the finished garden or park in its beauty and glory. The roots are the channels or roads, along which these fairy artists travel to do their work; and the trunks and great branches are the roadways above ground. Even when the work is being done, right before our eyes, we cannot see the forces that are doing it all. I heard of a boy who went into the cornfield and lay there watching to see how the corn grew. He thought he heard a slight rustle or crackle as of something in action, but he could not see anything. God works in the heart garden very much that way. A whisper from Him, or a breath, or even a look, will often produce wonders in a heart that is willing and loving. These forces often work best when hidden in the night of some dark trial or bereavement. Then God may come nearer even than at other times and graciously and richly bless, making the heart garden more and more beautiful and fruitful.

**Wonderful Fruitfulness of the Heart Garden.** Nearly all the pictures teach this

truth; and especially if we call fragrance a fruit. But the olive tree, the corn and the vine are the best symbols of fruitfulness in the strict sense. The olive produces many things for use, principally the oil which was a necessity in many ways. The corn is proverbial as a picture of abounding fruitfulness. The vine surpassed all in its producing power. All these figures are more than matched by the fruitfulness of the heart garden when the Heavenly Gardener has entire charge and care of it. Every flower and fruit in nature's garden may find its likeness and spiritual sister in the graces and virtues and good conduct of the heart garden of God. One must be holy and beautiful before he can act so before others. The last two pictures contrast the false gods with the symbol of the true God. The fir tree sets forth God's love and care as living and enduring through the year and years. Those horrid looking idols have no life, no power. The God of love and grace can and will bring blessing to every heart and life if given to Him. He is just now saying to you, "I will," "I will," "I will." He waits and waits for you to give Him your heart and say "I will" to Him.

**Plant Christ in the Heart.** We saw in a dime store a box filled with the dried up, shriveled bulbs of what they said were choice flowers. We invested, just in order to see if it could be true that such homely, lifeless-looking roots would ever become fragrant flowers. But sure enough, in a proper soil, and under a genial sun, and moistened by seasonable rains, those unsightly roots grew into fragrant, lovely, blooming hyacinths. Even so our Lord's disciples were shown on the transfiguration mount a gleam of the glorified beauty and deity that was wrapped up in the Man of Sorrows—this apparent root out of dry ground. Plant Christ in the heart and He will make both heart and life beautiful, for He is "Christ in you the hope of glory."—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What drove man out of the garden of Eden? 2. What garden did Christ suffer in and why? 3. What did Christ say about the lily? What about the barren fig tree? What about the vine? 4. If the flowers were to stand for spiritual traits and graces, how would you name them?

**Challenge Text.** Create in me a clean heart and renew a right within me. Psa. 51: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Repentance is a returning to God's love, law and service. 2. All worldly power cannot convert a soul or make a spiritual heart garden. 3. God's love is great, as man's need and sin and weakness are great. 4. To the heart that is open to Heaven, Jesus Christ comes as the dew and rain, to revive, freshen, sweeten, beautify and make fruitful. 5. The life roots are hidden from view and often grow rapidly and wonderfully. 6. The fragrance and flavor of the Christian character are often more effective than the direct Christian work.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE HOLY SPIRIT PROMISED

And it shall come to  
pass afterward, that  
I will pour out my



upon all flesh: and your



and your



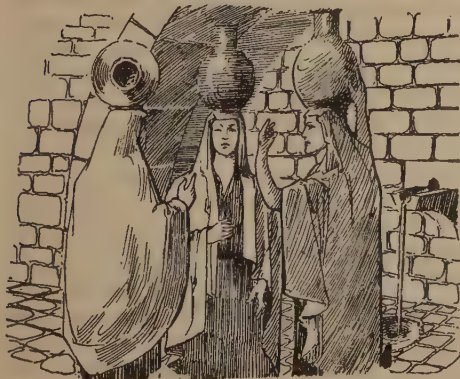
shall prophesy, your



shall  
dream  
dreams,  
your



shall see visions: And also upon the



and upon  
the hand -



in those days will I pour out my spirit.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JOEL 2:21-32.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the gift of Thy Holy Spirit who comes to carry on Thy work in human hearts and lives. We are but earthly, worldly, sinful, until Thy Holy Spirit quickens and inspires. Come Thou from the Heavenly heights and fill us with Thy grace and power. May we have spiritual tone and vision so that we may see and attempt great things for Christ. Be Thou unto us Guide, Guard and Comforter. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"We are but organs mute, till a master touches the keys—

Verily, vessels of earth into which God poureth the wine;

Harpers are we, silent harps that have hung in the willow trees,

Dumb till our heartstrings thrill and break with a pulse Divine."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 800. Place, Kingdom of Israel. Persons, Joel and the people.

**Scripture Setting:** Need of the Holy Spirit. To prompt praise, Luke 1:46-58. To reveal Christ, Matt. 16:13-20. To give humility, Phil. 2:5-16. To give devotion, Acts 4:7-20. To prompt sacrifice, Matt. 14:1-12. To give consecration, Rom. 12. To give faith, 1 John 5:5-15. To interpret providences, Matt. 10:7-23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** A distinction has been made between the purposes of God and His promises. The former are said to be gold in the mine; the latter, gold in the mint and ready for current use. It is discriminating and suggestive; but cannot be held too rigidly. Some purposes are practical promises; some promises are still in the

purpose. This lesson is a case of the union of both. The Holy Spirit is already a gift, and operating in human hearts; He is also promised as a greater gift because of the finished work of Christ. The purposes of God are usually stated in terms of "shall be"; and the promises usually in terms of "is," the present. For example, "All things work together for good" (not shall work); and "My grace is sufficient for thee" (not shall be). The promised Holy Spirit guarantees many and great blessings: 1. Vision of God, and joy in Him, vs. 21-23. 2. Gracious and many providences, vs. 24-27. 3. Marvelous ambitions and desires in spiritual things, vs. 28, 29. 4. Revelations of the mysterious and hidden works of God, vs. 30, 31. 5. Glorious and world-wide extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom, vs. 32.

### HOW GOD DWELLS IN MAN.

**The Holy Spirit as Christ and God.** There is a story told of good king Alfred, one of England's early kings that he loved to visit his people in their homes. Many a time he would come to the home of some humble subject, and eat with his family or even stay all night. That was an evidence of his love for his people, and it is quite different from what kings usually do. But this is a far more wonderful story of how God, the King of kings, comes into human hearts and lives. He comes not merely to visit man, but to dwell with him and in him. That is very much more than just coming into the home for a time. That first picture suggests in part how it is done. The dove is the symbol of the Holy Spirit, and it is here shown as coming down to earth and man.

But other very important things were done first; and had to be done before a holy God could live with sinful man. Some plan had to be devised, so that God could still be seen to be holy and just, and yet could be free to dwell in man. As Paul says, "that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Ah, that is it. Jesus was to come and bear the load of man's sin, and so save the honor of God's law; for even God could not save the sinner until His holy law was obeyed. So God planned man's salvation; Christ came and died, thus joyfully carrying out the plan: then the Holy Spirit

came to give man a new nature and dwell in him. This outlines the great work of each God person: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

**Try the Spirits.** The work of the Spirit in the world is to present Christ; to offer Christ to the world. The church of God all over the world is confronting a very subtle peril, that of putting the Spirit of God in a place of prominence that is unwarranted entirely by New Testament teaching. The work of the Spirit is to reveal Christ. The Spirit is the hidden worker making the Christ Himself the supreme and overwhelming consciousness of believing hearts, the one and only Saviour of men who need salvation.—G. Campbell Morgan.

**The Holy Spirit In Youth.** Now that God can come to the heart of man, we might think He would choose some of the great ones of earth first and dwell in them. But this story prophecy mentions the sons and the daughters first. It says that they "shall prophesy," which means that they will speak many things about God for Him. They could do this only because the Holy Spirit was in them. When Christ came to die for us, He came first as a babe, and so to the youngest and least. It seems very beautiful to think of the Holy Spirit doing likewise. Then, as a youth of twelve years, Christ set an example to all young people by that answer to His mother in the temple, "Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?" Some think it should read, "Do you not



know that I must keep busy in My Father's house." This sets a high standard for youth, in the church, the Sunday school, the prayer-meeting, the Young People's society. The pattern could not be followed at all in one's own strength; and the Holy Spirit comes to youth to enable them to do "as Jesus would do." And if young people are true and loyal in all matters pertaining to the house of God, they will be also in the home, the school and everywhere.

**The Case of One Young Man.** A young fellow who has since been an untold blessing to China, said: "I know I have the Holy Spirit not because I felt Him come, but because He keeps me thinking all the time about my Lord. I am a business man. If ever I lose touch with Jesus I go into my counting house and kneel down, and say, 'Spirit, what have I done to grieve Thee that I have lost the presence of Christ?' and He always restores the presence when I confess." I said, "You have hit the nail on the head this time; it is not how we get the Spirit, but how we feel about Jesus."—Meyer.

**The Holy Spirit In Man.** There are two pictures to illustrate this, the fourth and fifth on the page. One represents the extreme old men, and of them it is said that they "shall dream dreams." It is noticeable that the Holy Spirit does not neglect the old, who may feel that they have passed their useful days. As He comes even to the children, so He comes to the old men. And how considerate and gracious He is to let them rest and dream. We would like to hear one of those dreams sometimes. Then there is a group of young men, and they "shall see visions." A vision is quite different from a dream, for it comes to one who is awake, alert, ambitious and strong. You can almost hear them talk, as they think and plan great things for Christ and His kingdom. Some one has said that "young men are for war," and John said, "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong." A person who sees a vision feels that that is a call to him to go forth in toil and struggle and sacrifice to make the vision come true. This wonderful prophecy was fulfilled first at Pentecost—a bright picture of spiritual revelation. Later it was fulfilled by the election of a people of God from the Gentiles. Then from time to time, there are fulfillments in part at least, whenever and wherever there are gracious outpourings of the Holy Spirit, like the wonderful revival movement under Moody. There will come a final fulfillment by the return of the Jews, and the evangelization of the world. The Jews were the first to receive the message of salvation, and they are to be the great heralds of it at

the last. Paul tells of this in Romans, chapter 11, when he says, "If the fall of them (the Jews) be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness?" That whole chapter is a picture of the glorious consummation of all things, and we seem to be coming near to that day of triumph.

**The Holy Spirit In Women.** Here, again, are two classes, the servant class and the mistress class. Have you noticed that in each of these general divisions, youth, men, women, the ones named first are the least likely to be active and influential. The boy, the old man, and the servant are more promising for one reason or another, than girls, young men and women of influence. The Holy Spirit seems to teach that God is no respecter of persons, except that He specially favors those who are apt to be neglected or overlooked. Paul says that God hath chosen the weak things, the foolish things, the base things, and things which are despised, "that no flesh should glory in His presence." As Christ came to call the sinful and the needy, so the Holy Spirit also works with and for all classes. Look again at all these pictures, and mark how good the faces all seem. These servants seem patient and faithful; the women look holy and beautiful; the young men are bright and active; the old men are peaceful and contented; the boys and girls are joyous and willing. It is all because the Holy Spirit is dwelling in each, and adapting Himself to the condition and need of each. The very last promise is of the abundance of the Spirit, as if by a stream or flood. Then it will come true that "a nation shall be born in a day."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name one thing done by each person in the Godhead for the salvation of the sinner. 2. What reasons can you give to show that the Holy Spirit is a person? 3. How and when did the Holy Spirit appear to Christ? How did He appear at Pentecost? 4. Can you name any or all of the five Scripture symbols of the Holy Spirit?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The evangelization of the world is certain—"shall come to pass." 2. We have had many object lessons of the Spirit's power—Pentecost, the martyrs, great revivals, remarkable conversions. 3. The Spirit is a person as shown by His being named with Christ and God; also by His doing the works of a person. 4. The common practice of using "it" when speaking of the Holy Spirit betrays ignorance, and grieves both the Spirit and Christ. 5. No one can consistently plead inability to confess Christ or serve Him, for the Spirit is given to every believer. 6. This wonderful prophecy was fulfilled first at Pentecost; and it is having repeated fulfillments. 7. The final victorious result is as sure and glorious as the character of the tri-une God can make it.

DE. J. M. COON.



Seek the Lord, and ye shall live; lest he break out like



of Joseph,  
and devour  
it, and there  
be none to  
quench it in  
Bethel. Ye  
who turn



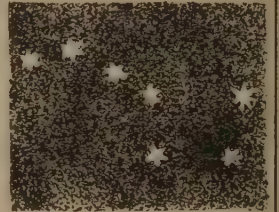
to



and  
leave  
off



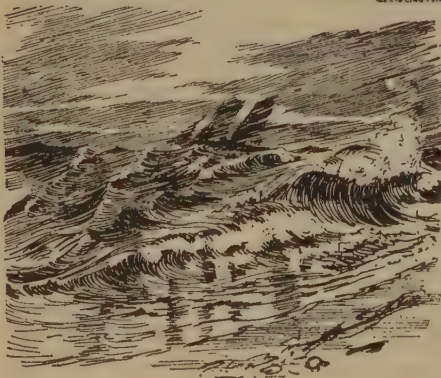
in the earth.  
Seek him that  
maketh the



and Orion, and  
turneth the



into the morning, and  
maketh the day dark  
with night: that calleth  
for the waters of the



and poureth them  
out upon the face  
of the earth: The  
Lord is his name:  
That strengtheneth  
the spoiled against  
the strong, so that  
the spoiled shall  
come against the





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS AMOS 5: 1-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Show ourselves to us—our sins and needs and utter helplessness. Then may we be moved to see and seek Thy grace. Help us that we may cast down our baser self, and let Thy shining presence come in and glorify the soul kingdom. Thus only can we serve and glorify the Christ King. For His sake, Amen.

Who has this courage thus to look within, Keep faithful watch and ward, with inner eyes, The foe may harass, but can ne'er surprise, Or over him ignoble conquest win. O, doubt it not, if thou wouldst wear a crown, Self, baser self, must first be trampled down!

—John Askham.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 800 to 784. Places, Amos lived at Tekoa, and prophesied at Bethel. Persons, Amos to the people of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** A Call to Repentance. Need to repent, Matt. 3:1-17. Call to repent, Josh. 2:1-17. Help to repent, Ezek. 18:1-23. A way to repent, Isa. 55:7-13. Welcome to the penitent, Luke 15:11-24. Salvation to the penitent, Acts 3:11-21. Wall of Divine love, Ezek. 33:7-20. Gateway to blessing, Hos. 14:1-9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This is a pre-echo of John the Baptist's great sermon, and also of that by the greater Christ. The text and argument are essentially the same in each case. In this insistent call to repentance we are confronted with the

great facts of life and duty. 1. Repent, for the true God demands it, v. 4. This is more than request; He now "commands all men everywhere to repent." 2. Repent, for false gods avail nothing, v. 5. And not only so, but they shall even be weak and helpless as sinful man himself. 3. Repent and so secure safety and blessing, v. 6. 4. Repent, and thus escape the terrible, threatened judgments, vs. 6, 7. 5. Repent, for God is great, worthy, holy and just, vs. 8, 9. 6. Repent, that you may have temporal and gracious mercies, vs. 10, 11. 7. Repent, and so quit your meanness and live peaceably with all men, vs. 12, 13. 8. Repent, that God may be allowed to fulfill all His purposes in you and through you.

## SERMON BY THE FARMER EVANGELIST.

**Repent, for God Is a Consuming Fire.** Nearly every one has heard of "Billy" Sunday, but many would scarcely recognize him if called Rev. Wm. Sunday. He was a wicked ball player, and after his conversion he became a preacher of righteousness, and was the means of leading thousands and thousands into the Kingdom. His great power was in getting a strong hold of the conscience of men by sermons on the judgment, eternal punishment, and the sovereignty of God. He was an Elijah kind of preacher, who did not fear to face the wicked Ahab; or like John the Baptist, who rebuked the wicked Herod. Amos, the farmer prophet and evangelist, was some such man. He was called from farm and shepherd life and commissioned by God to warn Israel of sin. This whole sermon is built around the idea of repentance, and so it is quite like John the Baptist's great message, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." That first picture is a striking one, as showing God's hatred of sin and the sinner. "God is love," we know; but this does not mean that He covers up the sin of any or excuses it. Because He is a God of love, He has provided a remedy for sin by the sacrifice of His Son. To any who will not accept salvation by Christ, God must ever remain a "consuming fire," as He is called in Heb. 12:29. The flames seem to have filled the whole house, and to be streaming out at every window; and the people are fleeing in terror.

**The Least Sins Judged.** The scales for weighing gold in the government offices are so delicately balanced that of two pieces of paper of equal size

and weight, the mere writing of a name on one piece will turn the scales. God's scales of human conduct weigh every least desire or thought, and it is judged accordingly. God is far more exacting than nature or science, as He is far more holy and omniscient.—Exchange.

**Repent, for Sin Disappoints and Curses.** When people try to get along without God, they make trouble for themselves and others. That judge in the second picture has a good looking face, but his heart must be wrong, because it is said that he "turns judgment into wormwood." By judgment is meant justice, or the rights of those who appeal to him. "Wormwood" is a bitter plant, and means that the wrongs of the judge are hard and severe on the innocent. Now, be sure and get the idea in that beautiful word "righteousness." It means rightness before God and between men. In its beauty and goodness it makes one think of the angel song, "Glory to God; on earth peace and good-will to men." The open book is the Bible, and the glowing torch is the Holy Spirit; and these tell where righteousness comes from. The Scripture story says that the wicked people "leave off righteousness." That would be bad enough; but the real meaning is, that they cast it to the ground, and make it lie there, so that it cannot have any part or influence in earthly matters. This is like the act of a traitor, who would pull down his country's flag, and stamp on it. "Righteousness" is God's beautiful flag, made from the robes of Christ's sacrifice and holiness; and he who casts it down is a traitor to God and all that is good. This is what

sin makes everyone do; and only by Christ's coming and dying in man's place can the sin of the traitor be pardoned.

**Sin Is Soul Suicide.** Man is one thread in the great texture of nature, and he cannot tear himself loose. Caught in this web of moral influences, man goes against nature only to find that nature turns and rends him. He who sinneth against nature wrongeth his own soul. In short, sin is a form of progressive suicide. God hath given men all appetites within, and their appropriate nourishment without, as bounties that are to be richly enjoyed by those who are obedient. But disobey His law at your peril. Hunger is good, but the transgressor is a hungry man who eats red hot coals. Thirst is not sinful, but when thirsty, the sinner drinks scalding water. The bread of obedience is ambrosia, and its wine nectar, but he who sinneth against nature and God wrongeth his own soul.—Newell Dwight Hillis.

**Repent, for the Lord Is Mighty and Gracious.** One very wonderful thing about the Bible is that a person cannot read it very long before he finds some gracious promises, that shine out like those seven stars shine in the night time. That picture and the next two show God's power, so that He can turn night into day, and make the very destructive waters of the sea to be poured "out upon the face of the earth in refreshing showers." Thus God is able to bring good out of evil and cause all things to work blessing.

When it is urged that we "see Him that maketh the seven stars," etc., it is shown that He has all power, and can grant any blessing. We may come confidently to Him who "rolls the stars along," and "holds the waters in the hollow of His hand," and how unreasonable it is for man, the crown of creation, to be a rebel and traitor, when all else is obedient. The lower world is under obligation to obey only because God created it; man is under obligation to repent and love God, both because God is Creator and Redeemer.

**The Right Kind of Repentance.** "I got tired lugging that wheelbarrow for grandmother while she was changing her plants," Ned said to his mother, recounting the day's events at bedtime, "and I said: 'I wish there wasn't another speck of this hateful dirt in all the world!' But then afterwards I 'pologized.'" "I'm glad of that," said his mother. "Did you tell her you were sorry?" "No, ma'am; that is not the kind grandmother likes best," said Ned. "I got another wheelbarrowful and just said: 'Don't you want some more of this nice dirt, grandmother?' And then we were all right again." So God likes a repentance that changes the life.—Exchange.

**Repent, for the Lord Delivers and Helps.** Man could not repent, unless God helped him by His Holy Spirit. When Peter was re-

leased from prison, he preached Jesus Christ to the people, and said, "Him hath God exalted with His right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." That was the very purpose of Christ's coming and dying. This last picture teaches the mercy and providence of God. "The spoiled shall come against the fortress," means that "God can make even the weakest to prevail against the strong." The coupling of the mercy and wrath of God is a common way of appealing to sinful man. It is also a most effective way, for when the terrible punishment of sin is seen and felt the man is more ready to accept the offered pardon. So the very punishment may be said to be a help to salvation. Paul had this in his mind when he cries out, "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God." The blessings we enjoy all call to us to repent; and so also do the judgments and punishments of God.

**Penitence the Gateway to Blessing.** Whatever may happen we are in God's hands. The flame may scorch; the storm may rage; clouds and darkness may hide the Father's face. The experience of life may make us feel at times that God is not a Father at all, but an impersonal force, and that we could manage the world ourselves more to our benefit, certainly more to our liking. The Scriptures do not say so. They teach exactly the contrary. They tell us that our afflictions are themselves blessings—if we knew all; that our burdens develop our real strength, that when we are weak then, through grace, we become strong. There is another horizon, broader than this. There is a real reward, a complete recompense, a logical, living and perfect realization—a "great" reward in Heaven.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. By what three words is "repent" described, in most of the ten commandments? 2. What are the twelve "blesseds" of Christ to all who repent? 3. What are the twelve "woes" of Christ to all who do not repent? See Matt. 23. 4. How much of John the Baptist's sermon on "Repent" can you quote?

**Challenge Text.** "Repent ye therefore and be \_\_\_\_\_, that your \_\_\_\_\_ may be \_\_\_\_\_ out." Acts 3: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Idolatry today—also is certain to bring weakness and punishment. 2. The faith preacher or reformer is "always opposed by the wicked. 3. Hypocritical and formal worship is worse than none at all. 4. The modern Pharisee also is worse than the modern publican and sinner. 5. Vain and proud Christian work is equally an abomination to God today. 6. Fine churches, eloquent preaching and operatic singing are not acceptable substitutes for heart love and worship. 7. The largest money gift is nothing and worse than nothing, if one has not first given self. 8. The beginning, middle and end of the Christian life is repentance. 9. Repent, repent, repent; and again God says, repent.

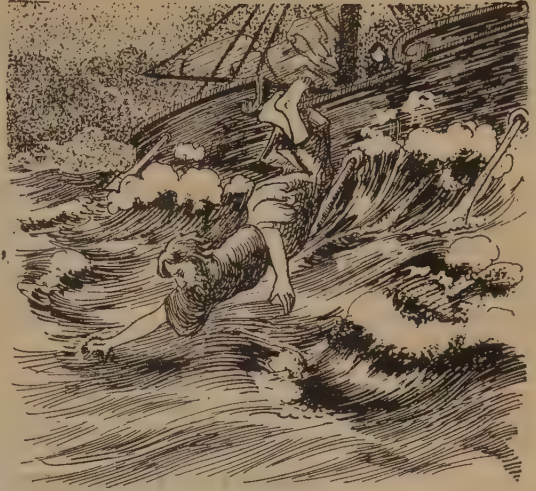
DR. J. M. COON.



So they



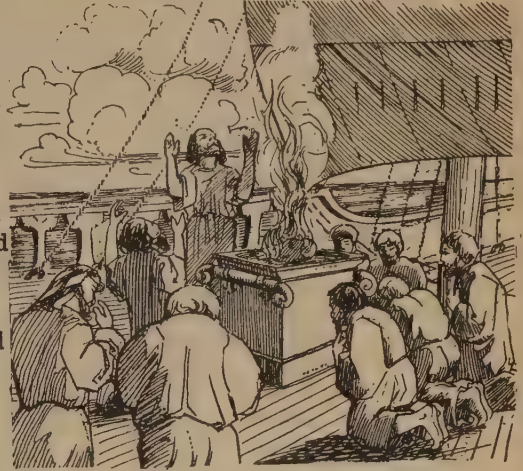
Jonah,  
and



and the sea



from her  
raging. Then the  
men feared  
the Lord exceed-  
ingly, and offered



unto the Lord, and made vows. Now the Lord had prepared a great



And Jonah  
was in the  
belly of the  
fish three days  
and three nights.  
And the Lord  
spake unto the  
fish, and it  
vomited out





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS CONTAINED IN JONAH 1 AND 2.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Help us always willingly and gladly to undertake the duties assigned us by Thee. May we not count the difficulties, but put our confidence in God. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Renew my will from day to day;  
Blend it with Thine, and take away  
All that now makes it hard to say,  
Thy will be done.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. about 780. Place, Joppa, the Mediterranean and the seashore. Persons, Jonah, the sailors.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Faithful and Unfaithful. Faithful hated but saved, Matt. 10:22. Blessed and promoted, Matt. 24:45. Increase talents, Matt. 25:14-17. In little and much, Luke 16:10. Faithfulness in a steward, 1 Cor. 4:2. Faithful fearless and crowned, Rev. 2:10.

**Instances:** Abraham, Gal. 3:9. Moses, Heb. 3:5. David, 2 Sam. 22:22-25. Elijah, 1 Kings 19:10-14. Abijah, 2 Chr. 13:4-20. Jehoshaphat, 2 Chr. 20:1-30. Job, Job 1:21, 22; 2:9, 10. Unfaithful cut down, Matt. 3:10. Lose all, Matt. 13:12. Slay the heir,

Matt. 21:33-42. Without oil, Matt. 25:8-13. Hide talent, Matt. 25:24-30. Punished, Matt. 25:41-46.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this unusual story are: 1. Jonah's misconception of the God he served: Seeking to escape from duty and God's presence by going to sea. 2. God's use of the elements to convict Jonah and declare His presence and power. 3. Jonah's heroic sentence of judgment upon himself to save his fellows. 4. God's unlimited resources and control of His creatures. 5. His miraculous method of preserving, punishing and teaching His prophet. 6. Jonah's prayer for deliverance from his living prison, and God's answer.

### A FLIGHT FROM DUTY AND WHAT CAME OF IT.

**A Deserter.** It is generally agreed that a man who deserts his duty is an unenviable person. One who has enlisted to serve his country in the army or navy and then slips away out of the service is liable to arrest if found, and to imprisonment, and in war-times may be shot. While society does not have the power to punish for every form of desertion, the act is just as base when one runs away from any kind of duty. Whatever we undertake that is right in itself should be carried through.

Jonah was a prophet who tried to run away from doing what God bade him do. Jonah was a native of Gath-hepher, a village north of Nazareth. He was the son of a man named Amittai. He was a prophet, that is one who spoke for God not merely to announce future events, but to proclaim whatever truth God gave him to utter. He is ranked among the "Minor Prophets," not because he was less inspired than the "Major" or "Greater" prophets, but because the "Lesser Prophets" left behind them smaller books. Jonah may have done a very great deal of prophesying, as it is probable that he did, but his prophecies in general have not been preserved, and so he ranks among the "Minor Prophets."

**A Great City.** The city of Nineveh was at that time the greatest in the world and was the capital of the chief world-power of that period. The walls were an hundred feet high, with fifteen hundred towers, and these were broad enough for three chariots abreast. Diodorus Siculus asserted that the circumference was fifty-five miles, and that pastures for cattle and pleasure grounds were included within the walls. Modern dis-

coverers have found the site of Nineveh and have uncovered a considerable portion of its remains, and have revealed to the modern world much of its ancient splendors.

It was to this mighty seat of empire the solitary Hebrew prophet was now ordered to go. To merely travel thither in those days, and especially for one who had little money, was in itself a great task from which many a man would have shrunk. Jonah was not only bidden to go to Nineveh, but to preach there, and not merely to preach to that city or to preach in it, but against it. His was to be an aggressive mission of denunciation. "Cry against it: for their wickedness is come up before me."

**Jonah Flees.** He decided to abandon his office as a prophet altogether, to leave his own people, his land and run away somewhere into the big world outside. The text in the King James version which states that Jonah rose up to flee "from the presence of the Lord," should be interpreted to mean "from being in the presence of the Lord," that is, "from standing in His presence as His servant and minister." Jonah knew, of course, that God is everywhere. He meant to withdraw from the service of Jehovah, thinking that if he went out of the land of Israel the spirit of prophecy would not rest upon him any longer. So he was like every other man who, through love of ease, desire for comfort, fear of men, or such lower motives, gives up his duty and indulges himself in following his own desires.

**On the Sea.** Jonah went to the seaport, Joppa. Many another man has thought to escape duty by way of the sea. On the sea, one seems to be leaving behind all the ordi-



nary relations and responsibilities of life and entering upon another world. The boy who wants to get away from books and from parental government is apt to think of the sea as a refuge, as a place where he can do as he pleases. Jonah had money in his pocket; and men often think money can help them out of any difficulty. Jonah found a ship in the harbor ready to sail for Tarshish, away off in Spain, and that seemed as far away to men in those days as the other side of the world does to us. Perhaps Jonah had changed his usual garments for such as would not suggest his nationality or his office. He was going to leave everything behind and start life anew. He paid his fare, shipped as a passenger and not as a man who was forced to work his passage. When the anchor was raised and the winds filled the sails and the ship sped out of the Joppa harbor, Jonah felt relieved; there was no journey to Nineveh for him; there was no more disagreeable prophesying. He was tired. The abrupt tearing away from familiar things had worn on him. The step had been taken. He would now relax and rest, while the boat cut its way through the waves.

The Legend Beautiful tells of the blessedness of doing our duty at whatever cost. A monk was visited by a glorious vision of the Savior, and gazed in ecstasy. It was his task at a certain hour to feed the poor who came then to the monastery. That moment now arrived; he stayed not to enjoy the vision, but went to his humble task. When he returned the vision was still there, and to him the Savior then said: "Hadst thou stayed, I must have fed."

**In the Storm.** A poet has said, "No exile from himself can flee." No man can run away from himself, from his conscience, from his memories. Jonah was the same man as before, and he was in the same relation to God as before. A mighty tempest came upon the sea, one so unusual and singular that the heathen sailors saw it was different from other storms. They were used to common winds and to high waves, but this tempest was like no other they had known. "The Lord sent out a great wind." Jonah was trying to run away from duty, but God sent His messenger of the wind after him. The sailors were stricken with great terror. Being men of various nations, each one called on his own god, as he had learned to revere this or that heathen deity. Having prayed, they set to work to lighten the ship by casting their wares into the sea.

Still the tempest raged, and the ship threatened to break into pieces. Being su-

perstitious, and having done all they could think of, they decided that the storm might be a sign of the wrath of the gods against some one on board. Wondering which man it could be, they recalled that Jonah had not been seen during the storm. The shipmaster sought him out, found him asleep, shook him, saying, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise; call upon thy god, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." Doubtless Jonah also prayed, yet the storm did not cease. The next thought was, who is the guilty man? They cast lots to decide this, and the lot fell on Jonah. Now they have found the cause of the storm. "Who are you?" they ask eagerly. "What is your occupation? country? people?" Jonah made plain that he was an Hebrew, and a worshiper of the God of Heaven, who had made sea and land, and that he had sinned and was fleeing from God.

**Jonah Overboard.** The sailors, terrified at the sight of a man who by his own acknowledgment had offended his God, asked what they should do to him. Jonah bravely and manfully, seeing that he had brought this trouble on innocent men, bade them cast him into the sea. Very magnanimously, these men resolved to make further effort before resorting to this measure. They laid hold of their oars, since the sails were useless, and pulled with their might, but they failed to make headway against such a storm. Then, with prayer that God, whom Jonah had offended, would not lay the matter to their charge, they cast the renegade prophet into the sea. Calm settled upon the waters; Jonah had vanished; and the sailors made sacrifice to the wonderful God of Jonah.

**Jonah Saved.** God did not mean to destroy his offending prophet, but rather to turn him back to duty. Providence had at the ship's side a great monster of the deep and into its opened mouth Jonah vanished. We are told that in the Mediterranean there is a shark or sea dog with so large a throat that it can swallow a man whole. It may have been a creature of this kind that took Jonah into the vast cavern of its interior. There, until the third day, Jonah remained, conscious, praying, awed to find that God was still keeping him alive. Then God interfered again. He spake unto the fish and it cast Jonah out upon the dry land.

An astonished, repentant man, Jonah once more surveyed the dry land. Evidently his plans of sea-going had been a failure. He thanked God for his wonderful deliverance, and turned his face homeward.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# GOD'S PITY FOR THE HEATHEN

So Jonah arose, and



unto Nineveh,  
according to the  
word of the Lord.  
Now Nineveh  
was an exceed-  
ing great city  
of three days'  
journey.  
And Jonah  
began to enter



a day's journey,  
and he cried,  
and said, Yet  
forty days, and  
Nineveh  
shall be



So the



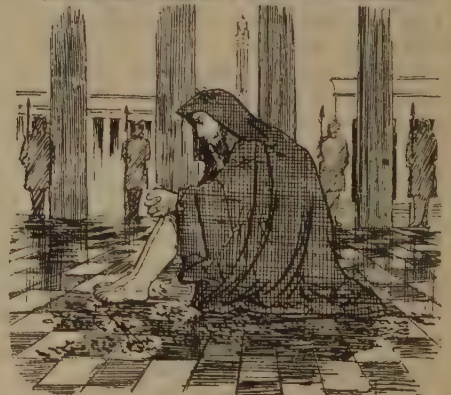
believed God, and  
proclaimed a fast,  
and put on sack-  
cloth, from the  
greatest of them  
to the least of them.  
For word came  
unto the king of  
Nineveh, and he



and he



from him,  
and covered  
him with  
sackcloth, and



in ashes. And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JONAH 3 AND 4.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for all the revelations given of Thy love and compassion for Thy children, who are in the darkness of heathenism. We pray that we may have the spirit of

Christ toward them and that we, in love and sympathy, may strive and give, so that the Gospel of light and salvation may be sent speedily unto all men. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C., about 730. Place, Nineveh. Persons, Jonah and the king and people of Nineveh.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Revelations Given to Heathen. Abimelech, to keep him from sin, Gen. 20:3-7. Pharaoh, to prepare for famine, Gen. 41:1-28. Balaam, forbidden to curse Israel, Num. 22. Nebuchadnezzar, of his madness and recovery, Dan. 4:1-18. Belshazzar, of his fate, Dan. 5:5, 24-29. Cyrus, of his mission to build the temple, 2 Chron. 36:23. The Magi, of the star, Matt. 2:1-11. The centurion, of Jesus' power to heal, Matt. 8:5-13. Cornelius, of the acceptance of his alms and the coming of Peter, Acts. 10:1-7.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** The special features of the lesson are: 1. Jonah, made obedient by his experience in the deep, obeys promptly the second command to preach in Nineveh. 2. The marvelous effect of his spirited preaching in bringing a great city to repentance. 3. God's great mercy in warning Nineveh and then turning from His purpose to destroy the city when they repented. 4. Jonah's inconsistency. Vexed that his prophecy concerning Nineveh is not fulfilled, he reproaches God for extending to 120,000 souls the same mercy that preserved him in the deep. 5. God's patience and forbearance with Jonah and the use of the gourd to teach him his own weakness.

## JONAH IS TAUGHT ANOTHER GREAT LESSON.

Jonah did a great deal of thinking after his bitter experience on the sea and in the great fish. That was a matter no man could readily forget. We may be sure he did not need further trials to make clear that it does not pay to run away from a manifest duty. Still there were other lessons he had not yet learned.

**On to Nineveh.** Now Jonah, who had thought by going to sea to escape from hearing any more voices from God, is startled by another message from on high. Perhaps this time it was delivered with a little more emphasis, a little more peremptoriness, with something in the tone that was reminiscent of the past. Part of it was a repetition of the former command, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city." He had heard that before. The concluding words are different, but they suggest what had gone before; "and preach the preaching that I bid thee."

"So Jonah arose." The narrative indicates promptness. There was no hesitation, no dallying. Whether that command came at midnight or in the midst of business, or at the table, it had an immediate and electrifying effect. "Jonah arose." And he went to Nineveh. It was a long journey, full of hardships, unpleasant, but the prophet plodded steadily onward in the direction of that city to which he was commissioned. No soldier ever executed the order of a superior officer more unquestioningly. He does not appear to have indulged in doubts and fears on the way. He went. And he went "according to the word of the Lord," as if he had a commission from a king, signed and sealed, in his pocket, and he had nothing to do but get to a certain place and deliver it.

**His Message.** When Jonah came in sight of the vast walls and towers and palaces of the mighty city of Nineveh, he was not in the least overawed. He had grown far past that. It would be very difficult to appal a man who had a vivid recollection of having been swallowed by a great fish and carried about in the bottom of the sea and then cast out on land, as he had been. All the armies of Nineveh could not have terrified him. The magnitude of his task did not daunt him, nor the fact that it would require three days to walk around the city or a day to walk straight through it. He came to the walls, passed through a gate and walked on. At first he was silent. He simply marched on and on across that wonderful place, with its huge palaces, its busy traffic, its parks and pasture lands within the enclosure. He was one little man in that great sea of people, and if he had not been sustained by the command of God he would certainly have felt it would be a vain thing for him to try to move that people by his words. He walked on for a whole day, and then he came into the neighborhood of the citadel. At that important point, from which his words would readily be reported to the king, he began to proclaim his message.

Then Jonah cried, "Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown." The mere announcement of such a disaster would naturally have a startling effect upon many minds. It would be like a cry of fire. Though no army was in sight; though it was not known that any foe was approaching or threatening, the proclamation of some mysterious and unknown impending danger would awe many. We are to suppose that

these words were only the substance of Jonah's message, and he must have gone into some detail. He must have let it be known that he spoke for God, according to God's command. He must have made it clear that it was on account of the wickedness of the Ninevites that God thus threatened them.

**Repentance.** Doubtless the news spread far and wide that a strange prophet was announcing the doom of the city. Men must have gathered many times to hear and to discuss what was said. Word reached the king himself that a seer from a far country had appeared in the streets crying out the near destruction of Nineveh. Possibly the king called Jonah into his presence and listened to his awful foretellings. It must have been the work of days rather than of hours for Jonah to be able to reach great numbers of the people with his message. And it must have been with tremendous power of conviction and earnestness Jonah delivered his prophecies. Behind his words were his experiences of God's dealings with himself. So, like flames of fire his words leaped and kindled men's hearts. Then, convinced of the truth of the prophet's words, convicted of the reality of the sins he denounced, a great hope came to palace and cottage that if these sins were repented of and put away God might withhold His destroying hand.

Awed, terrified, penitent, the Ninevites, from king to humblest subject, determined to seek God's pardon. The king left his throne empty, took off his royal robes, put coarse sackcloth on his body instead of linens and silks, and sat himself down among the ashes, as outward signs of his deep repentance. He bade his heralds cry throughout the vast city, "Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed nor drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth and cry mightily unto God. Yea, let every one turn from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from His fierce anger, that we perish not?" Thus all humbled themselves, and the very beasts were covered with the signs of the mourning of the city for its sins.

**Repentance Accepted.** The great heart of Him who is long-suffering and of great mercy was touched by this penitence. It was their sin He was angered against and not themselves. He rejoiced to forgive. "God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, and God repented of the evil that He had said He would do unto them;

and He did it not." What a beautiful revelation that is of the kindness and goodness of God. He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked. He cries, "Let the sinner forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let him turn unto the Lord, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God who will abundantly pardon."

**Jonah Angry.** But a certain imperfect man was all this while thinking of himself and of how badly he would feel if his prophecies did not come true. He would rather all Nineveh would have been blasted by the Divine wrath than that one poor little Hebrew prophet should appear to be wrong. God uses very imperfect instruments; otherwise little would be accomplished in the world. The greatest and the best have their mixtures of dross with the gold. Jonah was very angry. He prayed to God, "I pray Thee, Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish;" this was self-deception on Jonah's part; "for I knew that Thou art a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness, and repentest Thee of the evil. Therefore, now, O Lord, take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live."

There is a great gentleness in God's words in reply: "Then said the Lord, Dost thou well to be angry?" They show God's patience with his weak and changeable servant. But Jonah was too vexed to consider a fitting answer. He flung himself out of the city in haste. He chose a place to the east of the city where he could get a good view, at a safe distance, of whatever might happen. He made himself a booth of boughs, and sat in its shadow to see what would become of the city. It was a dreadful frame of mind for a prophet to be in, longing and waiting for a great city to be overwhelmed.

**The Gourd.** Then the kind God prepared a gourd and made it grow up over Jonah, that it might be a shade over his head from the heat. Its rapid growth, its pleasant appearance and its protection delighted the senses of the prophet, and he took a childlike pleasure in it, as many of us are apt to do in small things in hours of weariness and loneliness. The solitary man loved the gourd as a child loves a toy. But God had a lesson to teach His prophet and He prepared a worm, that next day smote the gourd so that it withered.

The sun rose that day with a great glare, so that all living things were oppressed. A vehement east wind beat down upon Nineveh and its neighborhood with its hot breath. The leaves had withered from Jonah's booth and the gourd and its vine lay shriveled as by fire. The unprotected head of the prophet was parched by the heat. Body and spirit weakened, and he lay back fainting and wishing for death. Then God said, "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?" And Jonah declared, "I do well to be angry, even unto death."

**God's Pity.** Then God, kind and pitiful toward Nineveh and wishing likewise to bring His servant to a right frame of mind, pressed home the lesson of it all in the words of vs. 3 and 4, chap. 4.

**Practical Truths.** 1. We should have hope for all who will repent. 2. We must amend our ways, if wrong, or God will not have mercy upon us. 3. Speak and act according to God's command. 4. Be not impatient, when God is long-suffering. 5. Our pride should be as nothing compared with the salvation of men.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# THE KINGDOM OF PEACE

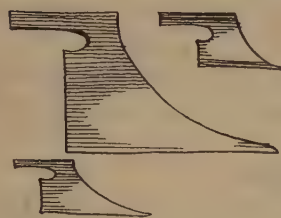
And he shall judge among many



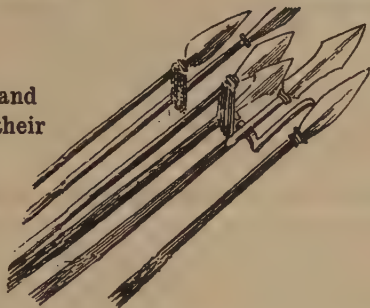
and  
rebuke  
strong  
nations  
afar off;  
and they  
shall



into



and  
their



into



nation shall not  
lift up a sword  
against nation,  
neither shall  
they learn



any more.  
But they shall  
sit every man



and



and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS MICAH 4.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, What great words Thou hast spoken to human ears and hearts! Words coined in Heaven, and fragrant with the love of God! The heart looks with joyous wonder on all Thy grace and power. Our faith tries also to grasp the fulfilment of that angel prophecy, "Peace on earth, good will to men." Hasten on the glad day when the wonderful pictures of Thy Word shall be framed in flesh and blood, in all the world.

"Kingdom of Peace, whose music clear  
Swept through Judea's starlit skies,  
Still the harsh sounds of human strife  
Break on thy Heavenly harmonies.  
Yet shall thy song of triumph ring  
In full accord, from land to land,  
And men with angels learn to sing:  
'Behold, the Kingdom is at hand!'"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 730. Place, In the kingdom of Judah. Persons, Micah to the children of Judah.

**Scripture Setting:** The Conquests of Peace. World wide conquests, Isa. 61:1-11. Christ a world-king, Luke 2:25-40. Gifts to the King, Psa. 45. Power of the kingdom, Heb. 12:1-13. The conquest power, Acts 2:1-13. Power in and by the cross, Gal. 3:1-14. Let the King come in, Psa. 24. King of kings, Rev. 19:6-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** For authoritative and victorious movement this passage is unsurpassed in the Bible. The King of kings has come to the time of His complete triumph among and before men. There is no hesitancy or circuitous action or

statement. Here are a few of the "impossible" things He accomplishes: 1. Universal expectation among the nations, and a falling into line with His purposes (vs. 1, 2.) 2. Jesus Christ exalted to be judge and arbiter among the nations—even the "strong ones" accepting His rule (vs. 3). 3. The devilish practices of war, centuries old, give place to the mandate of this King of peace, and war is a thing of the past, not even planned or prepared for. That suggestion of Satan, "In time of peace, prepare for war," is silenced forever. 4. Universal safety and prosperity, and consequent brotherhood and fellowship (vs. 4). 5. The correction of all evils, and the ushering in of the millennial day (vs. 5-7).

### PICTURE OF A CONVERTED WORLD.

**All Nations Changed.** Great missionary meetings of the "Laymen's Missionary Movement" were held in seventy-five of the largest cities of the United States. One of the most inspiring features of these meetings were the mottoes adorning the walls where the meetings were held. None were more striking and convincing than these two: "Unto Him shall the gathering of the nations be," and "We can do it, if we will; we can do it, and we will." Do you notice how beautifully these fit into each other? The first is the promise of God that it shall be; the second is the consecrated cry of man to do it. God is the power, and man is the finger tips. In that little great psalm, the 110th, it is said, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power." A willing people can do all that God wishes and promises. In that first picture you can see persons of many different nations. In the verse just before the Scripture picture in this story it is said, "Many nations shall come and say: Come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord"; and "We will walk in His paths." So we know that this will certainly come to pass, for it is said at the bottom of the page of pictures, "for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." We need to remember that all through this story, for here are some great and difficult things promised.

**The Purest and Mightiest Religion.** The growth of Christianity is one proof of its Divinity. Perhaps Mohammedism grew as rapidly at the outset, but it was spread at

the point of the sword. Perhaps Buddhism has numbered as many converts, but its doctrines were intertwined with confirmed social prejudices and tendencies. Both these religions, and all others that have secured wide following, are indulgent to man's carnal nature. Christianity calls to self-sacrifice, nevertheless it has today an immeasurably stronger and more persistent growth than any other religion. Christianity alone of so-called "faiths" overleaps all geographical limits and lives in all countries. Other plants which the Heavenly Father hath not planted have their zones of vegetation and die outside certain latitudes; but the seed of the kingdom is like corn, an exotic nowhere, for wherever man lives it will grow, and yet it is an exotic everywhere, for it came down from Heaven.—Maclaren.

**All Actions Changed.** That second picture looks like a blacksmith's shop, and you have looked in one like it now-a-days. The sword on the anvil, and that cluster of spears, could tell many a tale of bloodshed if they had tongues. They may have killed even one's own friend or brother, and they have boasted again and again of the great number of people they have slain. They stand for cruel and wicked actions, and the world has been full of such conduct. They are now changed into "plowshares" and "pruning hooks," as shown in the pictures. These stand for that which will feed and bless the world. The blacksmith shop may make us think of the great providences of God which bring about



such remarkable changes. It is said that He shall "rebuke strong nations." God's purposes have to go right on to fulfilment; and if men or nations get in the way, they will either be destroyed or be changed.

**Our Greatest Asset and Exhibit.** We show our commercialism, and charm the people of the world thereby, and they flock to our land in search of gold. We make a show of our muscle, and send our athletes to all quarters of the world to contest, and we receive plaudits. We show our patriotism, and fighting power. We send our fleet around the world, and the stars and stripes float upon the breezes of almost every land. From Mukden to Constantinople, from Alexandria to Florence, from the Philippines to Havana, our country made its naval display. But, with all this, we have not shown the very best thing we have to the world.

If we should do so, what would be the result? Why, "He will draw all men unto Him." He is the lodestone of the human heart. He is the magnet of the soul. A sight, a glad shout, and the heathen will crown Christ as King.—Exchange.

**All Motives and Spirits Changed.** That terrible picture of war in the middle of the page, says as loud as can be, "I will have my way," and "I'll make you obey." It speaks the selfish spirit and purpose, and this has always led to war and bloodshed. But by the wonderful power of this "Prince of Peace," a new kingdom is established, even the "kingdom of peace," and a new kind of subject is dwelling in the kingdom. It is said that "neither shall they learn war any more." This is very different from the condition of things today, when every large nation has to maintain a great army and navy in order to be ready for war. It would seem that only the small and weak nations can be protected from the dreadful ravages of war. But Christ is a Prince and King, and so can bring about these great changes. And He does it by the truth and love and by offering so many blessings that can come only from Him. He wields a sword, but it is the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

**Power of Love.** Christianity is a missionary religion. It is a creed which, twenty centuries after its founder's death, produces missions and missionaries as naturally as a living tree, in whose woody fibres the mysterious forces of spring are stirring, produces blossoms. And the missionaries it produces are of an absolutely unique type. He has the scantiest equipment. He carries no arms; he is clad with no civil authority; he has very little money; he is usually alone. He has only a message and a motive. The message is the story of Christ and the motive is the love of Christ.—W. H. Fitchett.

**All Conditions Changed.** The last two pictures show the blessings of peace. Instead of needing a standing army to keep off the enemies, a person is altogether safe when alone. The "vine" and "fig tree" suggest

prosperity; and the teaching is that, even when most prospered they are yet entirely safe. Now, if one is prospered in any way, he may be watched and hunted by those who will take away from him his property, his home, and even his life. We can get some idea, even now, of what such perfect security means, by comparing heathen nations with Christian, and by comparing a community with saloons and other wicked places; with another community that is free from such perils and enemies. We all know how pleased everyone will be when these good times come, for even now people like to live in a temperate and religious community. Even saloonkeepers prefer to live in a prohibition district. As we close the story, read again that last Scripture sentence, "for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." If all could really believe that, it would hasten the day of a converted world; by which we mean not that everyone will be a Christian, but that everyone will have a chance to become one by hearing of Christ.

### What of Tomorrow?

"Lie still," "Be strong," today; but Lord, tomorrow—

What of tomorrow, Lord?

Shall there be rest from toil, be truce from sorrow,  
Be living green upon the sward

Now but a barren grave to me,

Be joy for sorrow?

"Did I not die for thee?

Do I not live for thee? Leave me tomorrow."

—Christina Rossetti.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. To what class of prophets does Amos belong? 2. How many in that class, and how many can you name? 3. Give one or more passages of Scripture about "peace." 4. What is the cost of one large battleship, and how many missionaries would that money support? 5. Which is better even as a national protection, battleships or missionaries? 6. Is God with the battleships or missionaries?

**Challenge Text.** "Lift up your ——— O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting ———; and the ——— of glory shall come in." Psa. 24:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. "Watchman, what of the night?" "Traveler, the morning cometh." 2. It is man's business to find out God's will, and do it; it is God's business to work out the promised and purposed results. 3. It would be grand if only God could control nations! Well, He can, if we will not blunder in His way and so delay Him in His plans. 4. Emerson is wrong about "hitching our wagon to a star"; better let the golden chains bind us to the throne of God. 5. Wrong again are these war demagogues who propose to help out the Almighty with battleships and armies! 6. Every believer, by that very fact, is under obligation to advocate world conquests by peace; and to believe that it is feasible and practicable. 7. Did you think peace was a negative quality? No, no, it is the mightiest force in the universe; and therefore we talk of the conquests of peace.

DR. J. M. COON.

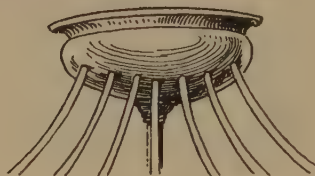
And the angel that talked with me came again, and



as a man that  
is wakened  
out of his sleep,  
And said unto me,  
What seest thou?  
And I said,  
I have looked,  
and behold



all of gold, with a



upon the top of it, and his



thereon, and



which are  
upon the top  
thereof: And



by it, one upon the  
right side of the bowl,  
and the other upon  
the left side thereof.  
So I answered and  
spake to the angel  
that talked with me,  
saying, What are these,  
my lord? Then the



saith the Lord of hosts.

that talked with me answered and said  
unto me, Knowest thou not what these be?  
And I said, No, my lord. Then he answered  
and spake unto me, saying, This is the  
word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying,

Not by  
might,  
nor  
by power  
but by  
My Spirit



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ZECH. 4.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art wondrous in the work Thou hast done for sinful man. Wondrous also, in the way Thou dost work. By the silent and mighty forces of Thy Holy Spirit Thou art ruling in human hearts and conquering the world. May every part of our being respond gladly to Thy call and love, and so may we become the marvelous proofs of Thy power. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Who from unsightly bulb or slender root  
Could guess aright  
The story of the flower, the fern, the fruit,  
In summer's height?  
Through tremulous shadows voices call me,  
It doth not yet appear what we shall be."

—J. R. Miller, D. D.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 519. Place, Mt. Moriah, in Jerusalem. **Persons,** The angel, Zechariah, Zerubbabel, the two anointed ones.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of the Holy Spirit. He is a Revealer, 1 Cor. 2:1-10. He is a Guide, John 16:7-15. He is a Quickener, Ezek. 37:1-14. He is a Helper, Rom. 8:14-27. He is a Comforter, John 14:16-26. He gives power, Acts 2:1-13. He is in the believer, 1 Cor. 3:5-19. He calls and pleads to the end, Rev. 22:10-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This picture vision

of the golden candlestick invites a study of the Holy Spirit, who is the light of truth. 1. The Holy Spirit must be spiritually discerned (vs. 1). 2. He works through the church and Christian (vs. 2). 3. He alone is the sufficient power to do the great work assigned (vs. 2, 3). 4. He is specially and gloriously revealed to those who seek Him (vs. 4, 5). 5. He is mightier than any human force or agency (vs. 6, 7). 6. He uses, honors, and glorifies human agents (vs. 8-10). 7. He sees, adjusts, controls, unifies all persons and things, to work out His purposes.

### GOD'S WAY OF BUILDING UP HIS KINGDOM.

**The Holy Spirit Works Through Man.** One of the most wonderful structures in the world is the splendid statue of "Liberty Enlightening the World," in the New York harbor. It is a mammoth figure of a woman holding aloft a torch in her right hand. Some idea of its great size may be had from the fact that a man can climb up the wrist by an inside stairway, and go out to the fingers and actually enter the little finger. All the rest is in fine proportion, and it is very striking and commanding. But it is all for the purpose of holding aloft this lighted torch to represent "Liberty" giving light and freedom to the whole world. It is all very suggestive of God's way of working His purposes in the world; and especially the way of His mastering difficulties, caused by sin and Satan.

Just then was a time of very great perplexity and difficulty in connection with the building of the second temple. Zerubbabel the governor, and all the people were discouraged. God graciously came to Zerubbabel, with a message of hope and victory, as shown in that first picture. The angel tells him that "the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you." (vs. 9.) God's Spirit works through man, and the first thing He does is to encourage and comfort. Notice that phrase "came again," for it teaches the great truth that God keeps coming and pleading with His people to be faithful and consecrated. Then to increase man's interest, the angel asks him what he sees.

**A Power Greater Than Edison's.** The enormous force generated by this brilliant man is seen in the fact that his inventions and those which he has materially assisted have given existence to indus-

tries capitalized at more than \$7,000,000,000, and earning annually more than \$1,000,000, while they find employment for half a million people. Even these stupendous figures do not cover the facts, for no figures can begin to indicate the value of the service Mr. Edison's inventions have rendered to mankind. And yet any believer may have and use a far greater power than that of this wonderful magician. A Moody or a Spurgeon is an illustration of what the Holy Spirit can do through one man.—Exchange.

### The Holy Spirit Works Through Light.

That torch of the Liberty statue harmonizes beautifully with the light of this golden candlestick, and the seven pipes carrying oil to the lamps. But this light stands for a liberty from sin and from the power of Satan. There is nothing that sin and Satan fear so much as light. They both love darkness, and do their worst work in the dark. But God is light, and Jesus Christ is the Light of the world. The Holy Spirit kindles the flame in the heart of the Christian and in the church. The "candlestick," which is the light-bearer, is of gold; and this means that the Christian and the church should be pure and holy, so as to give forth the light in the best way. They are made holy by trusting in Jesus Christ as Saviour. What natural light does for the physical world, Jesus Christ does for the soul, mind and spirit of men. He said to His people, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven." But light is not only an enemy of darkness, but it is the service of life, beauty, radiance, health, warmth, purity, joy, comfort, power. Are these not splendid forces to have? And with them one can master all difficulties.

They are all in God's message of life and light.

**The Holy Spirit Works With Christ and God.** We do well to get firmly in our mind the fact that all three persons in the God-head work together to establish their kingdom in the earth. God the Father plans the work, and in love and wisdom makes it all possible; God the Son carries out the plan by coming to the earth, taking human form, and dying on the cross; God the Holy Spirit convicts man of his sin, reveals Christ as a Saviour from sin, and persuades man to turn from sin and accept Jesus Christ. It is very important to remember that the work of each is vitally related to that of the others, and to some extent determined by that of the others. For example, the love of God for the sinner can be manifested only by and because of Jesus Christ's death. God's general love, like giving sunshine and rain, is exercised towards all men everywhere. But His love of joy and approval can come only to those who have accepted Christ as a Saviour. So it is with God as a Father. He is the Creator—Father of all persons; but He is the Redeemer-Father, or a real spiritual Father, only to those who come to Him by faith in Christ. To those who reject Him Christ said, "Ye are of your father the devil." Many other important distinctions will be seen by always keeping the work of the three Divine persons clearly in mind.

**The Constant Co-operation.** The engineers who directed the work of the Hoosac Tunnel started two gangs of men from opposite sides of the mount. So accurate was their survey that, when they met midway in the mount, the walls of the excavation, approaching from the different starting-points, joined within less than an inch. The practical working of the bore proved the scientific accuracy of the survey. Man starting from the side of human need, reaching upward toward God, is met by the revelation in Christ coming down from God, a revelation that exactly fills his need. This perfect match between the human need and the Heavenly supply is the perfect proof of the Divine origin of the Bible and the exact co-operation of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in redemption, in prophecy and assurance that all will be fulfilled as promised:—G. F. Pentecost.

**The Holy Spirit Works Victoriously.** How could it be otherwise? The full name of what may be called the Gospel firm, that has undertaken to build up Christ's Kingdom in the world, is God, Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit, and church. That firm can do any right thing it wishes to do. The only reason it delays or fails for a time is because

the earthly member of the firm shrinks or balks or is indifferent. A preacher once asked a traveling man about his firm and his line of goods. Then he said, "I also am a traveling man." The drummer inquired the name of his firm, and the preacher replied, "I travel for Lord, Church and Company." That is the same as the full name we gave above. Here are four impossible things which this firm can do; impossible, I mean, from the standpoint of the world. It can save a man from sin and make him holy in character; and man anywhere, even the very worst. It can make an efficient and successful worker of every saved person—no matter how poor, ignorant, young or obscure. It can destroy any work of the devil, like intemperance; and it can defeat and master the devil himself. It can evangelize this whole world in the present generation. These four things this firm can do easily and almost immediately if—if—if that earth member of the firm were willing. But it cannot very long prevent the Heaven members of the firm from final victory. If one church or one Christian will not help then other churches and Christians will be found; "for Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied."

**The Universal Kingdom.** "In the early settlement of California by the Spanish, the natives related that the great cross, planted by Portala, would grow at night till its point rested among the stars, glistening with a splendor that outshone the sun." This is mere superstition; but not so when we refer this language to the cross of Christ. Its top has entered the heavens; its arms are out-reaching to the ends of the earth; it is God's standard by which He lays claim to the kingdoms of the world, which "shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ."—Exchange.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. To what class of prophets does Zechariah belong? 2. How many in that class, and how many can you name? 3. What is the other class called, and how many and who are they? 4. When did the golden candlestick stand in the tabernacle?

**Challenge Text:** And they were all ——— with the Holy Spirit, and began to ——— with other ———, as the ——— gave them utterance. Acts 2. (?)

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. God's day, God's house, God's book, God's people, God's Spirit are the five great forces in spiritual work. 2. The many gracious providences of life are so many angels trying to waken us out of sleep. 3. The Holy Spirit is the only One who can reveal Christ and all spiritual mysteries to us. 4. How much we plan and toil, and sacrifice to do things in our own strength. Try God's way by prayer. 5. Every right work has a prophecy of triumph in it, and has the forces and resources by which to triumph.

Dr. J. M. COON.



# REBUKING AND ENCOURAGING JUDAH

Bring ye all the tithes into the



that there  
may be  
meat in mine



and prove me now herewith,  
saith the Lord of hosts, if I will  
not open you the windows  
of heaven, and



you out a blessing, that  
there shall not be room  
enough to receive it.  
And I will rebuke the



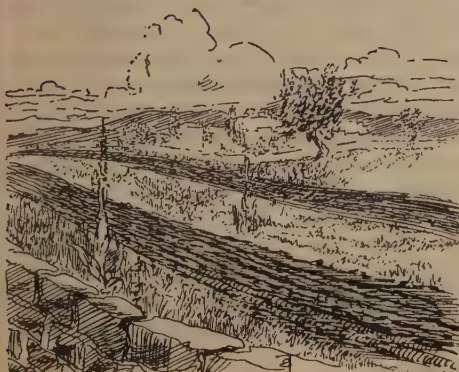
for your sakes,  
and he  
shall not  
destroy the



of your  
ground;  
neither  
shall  
your



cast her fruit before the time in the



saith the  
Lord of  
hosts.  
And all  
nations  
shall call  
you  
blessed:  
for ye  
shall be a  
delightful



saith the Lord of hosts.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MALACHI 3:1-18. READ CHAP. 1.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Grant us wisdom that we may discern the Divine law of benevolence and act upon it. Thus may we indeed receive Thy blessing. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"The faith of the Head  
Is the faith that is dead;  
The faith of the Heart  
Is better in part;

"But the faith of the Hand  
Is the faith that will stand,  
For the faith that will do  
Must include the first two."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about 420 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Malachi.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Tithing. Paid by Abraham, Gen. 14:20; Heb. 7:1, 2. Jacob pledged, Gen. 28:22. Law of, Lev. 27:30-32; Deut. 14:22, 29, 30; Deut. 26:12-14. Brought into God's house, 2 Chron. 31:11, 12; Neh. 10:37; Neh. 13:4, 5, 12. Of all things, 2 Chron. 31:5. Christ's views concerning, Matt. 23:23. Systematically, 1 Cor. 16:2. Rewarded, Prov. 3:9, 10.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** 1. The evils inflicted on Israel are traced to neglect of God's ordinances.

2. An opportunity to return is offered. 3. This will be accompanied by the removal of the evils. 4. The special wrong against God has been withholding of tithes. 5. God had withheld harvests because of their guilt. 6. Unless the whole of the tithes were paid they were guilty of defrauding God. 7. They were invited to put God to the test. 8. The point to be tried was not whether God would keep His promises, but whether He was a righteous Being. 9. The result of the test would show in what relation He stood to them and would demonstrate His goodness.

### A WONDERFUL VOICE.

The man who uttered these beautiful words is only a voice. History has been ransacked in vain to discover his home, his parentage, his personal appearance, his business, the date of his birth, or his death. Tradition has preserved for us beautiful guesses as to this mysterious personality: such, for example, as that he was Mordecai, Nehemiah or Zerubbabel, and even that he was an angel of Heaven! But nobody knows! Nothing of all that rich and wonderful life has survived but these few undying words, and the man himself is hidden in the past as the English skylark is buried in the depths of the heavens or our American thrush in the depths of the woods, when singing their melodies divine. Only voices! But such voices!

Listen then to a voice that for twenty-five centuries has been singing out of the dim past a song so noble and so sweet that it cannot possibly die away! The song of the skylark and thrush die away; but little children born ten thousand years after you have grown old and die will hear this same mysterious voice singing his wonderful, wonderful song, and when they try to see the man, will hear their mother say, "The man is but a voice!" Hush, then, and listen to its words.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the store house \* \* \* and I will pour you out a blessing."

It was four hundred and twenty years before the blessed Babe was born in Bethlehem that these words were uttered, and if you care to know what made the singer sing them, you shall hear. The children of Israel had returned from their captivity in Babylon, rebuilt their homes, and reestablished

their institutions. Once more the priests in the temple performed the sacred acts of sacrifice and prayer. Once more the people brought their offerings to God's courts, and then they fell away again. Doubts of God's providence crept into their hearts. They loved, too well, the money which they earned and the pleasures they enjoyed. The temple was forsaken for the mart of trade and places of amusement. The tenths of their incomes were no longer poured into the treasury. The work of the church was arrested. Vices sprung up. Sin abounded. Punishment followed. The land was devastated. Poverty and wretchedness were everywhere. Nobody cherished hope and nobody saw a light. When suddenly, out of the stillness of apathy, the wonderful voice was heard. Astonished, awed, inspired, the people listened. "Return unto Me and I will return unto you. Bring ye all the tithes into the store house—and prove Me whether I will not pour you out a blessing!"

It was like the crowing of the chanticleer announcing dawn! It was like the music of an army advancing to relieve a city of its siege. It was like the voice of a lake; of a thunder! The despairing men looked up from their furrows and the hopeless women from their homes and mills. "What!" they exclaimed, "Is that the only trouble? Is it because we have forgotten God that all these miseries have come upon us? Is it only necessary to remember Him and serve Him; to pay our vows and our tithes, to recover the lost joy and blessedness of our lives?"

Yes—that was literally all! And it is so today, it will be so tomorrow, and forevermore.

"Prove Me," says God to man, through



the voice of His prophet, "and see whether it is not true that I love and will bless you." Turn about is fair play. And God, who brings us into the world to test us, implores us also to put Him to the proof. "Try me, and see whether all that I declare and promise are not true," He beseeches. In that fact lies the glory of religion and the hope of humanity. Christianity is a practical philosophy of life. The God whom it reveals can be put to the test of benevolence and faithfulness as if He were a man. If you wish to know whether He exists, seek and you shall find Him. If you wish to discover whether He is opposed to wrongdoing and in favor of right living, you have only to try the one or the other on Him.

If you wish to know whether He will hear and answer prayer, you have only to pray in humility and sincerity. "Pragmatism" (in the most recent phraseology of philosophy) means **practicability**. It means the discovery of the value of any theory of life by its workableness. Will it work? Well, if it will work then it must be true, and the truer it is the better it will work. By that law we are willing to try our holy faith and we know that it will stand the test. Christianity is a workable theory of life. Any man or church, or nation, that wishes to know whether God is the sort of Being which the prophets, the Saviour, and His apostles proclaimed, have only to discover by actual experiment. Believe this! Believe in the moral earnestness of God!

#### "There Shall Not Be Room to Receive It."

Did you ever realize that your dissatisfaction with life grows not out of its emptiness and impoverishment, but out of your incapacity to receive and contain its richness? God pours you out blessings, which your little pint cup of a soul cannot hold! Not one person in ten thousand possesses the necessary powers of appreciation. If you had a cellar full of gold and did not know what it was, you would fill the world with clamor because God had not given you wealth! If you are deaf, it makes no difference whether the air is full of music or not. You shriek out your complaints of the lack of harmony in the world just the same. I have received and so have you innumerable gifts from God, which we had no talent for comprehending. Give a fine watch to a baby and it will put it into its moist little mouth to suck! Lack of appreciation; it has no room to hold it! I know husbands who have wives, and wives who have husbands, and parents who have children, who do not know

their value. They have no room to hold them! There you have the trouble with nine-tenths of the miserable, dissatisfied, complaining people who believe that they live in the worst possible of worlds. God opens the windows of Heaven and pours them out floods of blessing; but they haven't a cistern, a barrel, or even a bucket; capable of holding His gifts.

#### "Bring Ye the Whole Tithe Into the Store House."

There is but one way of putting God to the proof. It is, in brief, to fulfill all the conditions of existence. Do his will and you shall know His doctrine, His nature and purpose. **One** of the conditions is that of benevolence, of consecration, sacrifice. It is a Divine law that we must give back to the Giver some portion of His gifts to us. There are those who think that portion is known and is absolute. It is a tenth, they say. At any rate, this much is certain: Whatever portion belongs to God must be given to Him **in full**. "Bring ye the whole tithe!" We do not fail so much in not giving large amounts as in not giving all we promise. We withhold a **part** of what we know we owe. We take a "rake-off" from our benevolences, setting aside a part of our time, our money, and our service, only to cut it down and shave it off. No one, however, can know the mind and heart of God who does not pay **all** his vows and bring his **whole tithe** into the storehouse.

"I Will Rebuke the Devourers." The devourers! We should get on pretty well if it were not for the devourers! There lay the terrible peril of these Jewish people. On every hand were the devourers! The armies of their enemies devoured their homes and barns. The locusts, caterpillars and insects devoured the crops in their fields. The tax-gatherer devoured their savings. Their vices devoured their virtues. Everywhere, everything bad seems trying to eat up everything good and we modern men and women are victims of the devourer like those of old. Our time is devoured by trivial duties and cares. Our attention is devoured by insignificant objects and interests. Our spirits are devoured by ambition, avarice, lust of pleasure, pride. What is it that devours you? Envy, bitterness, revenge, care, worry? Nothing is more terrible than to see people being devoured by little insect vices! It is like watching a great elm tree being eaten up by caterpillars.

"And All Nations Shall Call You Happy." It is a beautiful thing about happiness that its self-disclosure is **inevitable**. If you are happy, it will be known! All nations shall call you happy! There is an aroma of joy that is more permeating than that of musk. Soul-gladness diffuses itself like light.

"What is it that makes you so happy, Mandy?" a lady asked her old colored servant. "Lawdy, Missus, I don't let nothing bother me. I jes' weah this old worl' lak a loose fittin' gyahment," she said. Learn to do that and you will be a delightful person whom everybody will love and call happy.

DR. CHAS. F. GOSS.





TEMPERANCE LESSONS  
FROM THE  
OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS







## DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

BY BRITON RIVIERE

Darius, king of Persia, made many princes rulers of different parts of his kingdom. Over them he set three presidents, of whom Daniel, a Jewish prophet, was first. Daniel had performed many miracles and commanded the admiration of everybody. But the Persian officials were jealous of Daniel, seeking to destroy him, and knowing well that it was only through his religion, and the prejudices of the king, that this could be accomplished. So the king was persuaded to set up many graven gods, with orders that everybody, without exception, should worship them and should pray to none other. But Daniel prayed to the God of Israel, where he could be seen, and therefore was arrested. The penalty was that the offender should be thrust into a den of lions. So, the king, regretfully, ordered this punishment for the Jewish prophet, hoping that the God of the Israelites would protect him. Daniel was miraculously saved from the lions, and having been drawn out of the pit, his accusers were thrown in and at once torn to pieces by the savage animals.

This picture of Daniel among the lions was painted by an Englishman, named Riviere, whose special talent has been manifested by studies of wild animals, especially of lions. In this bare chamber marked by the rigid, heavy stone in the walls Daniel stands erect, dignified, and with his hands bound behind his back. His straight figure contrasts strikingly with the undulations and writhings of the lions. One lion, the king of the den, stands erect but hesitating, his eyes full of wild surprise, and still he makes no attack. Another great animal crawls on his abdomen, showing his teeth; but still making no attack. There is a very old beast who looks on questioningly, and so they cringe and snarl, but let Daniel alone.

Such an expression of animal fierceness controlled by the calm, bound man is immensely impressive. This talented painter has many times painted these great beasts in various conditions and positions until his reputation is worthily great.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





COPYRIGHT 1912 BY THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

DANIEL IN THE DEN OF LIONS

After Briton Riviere's painting by Jas. Bealings.

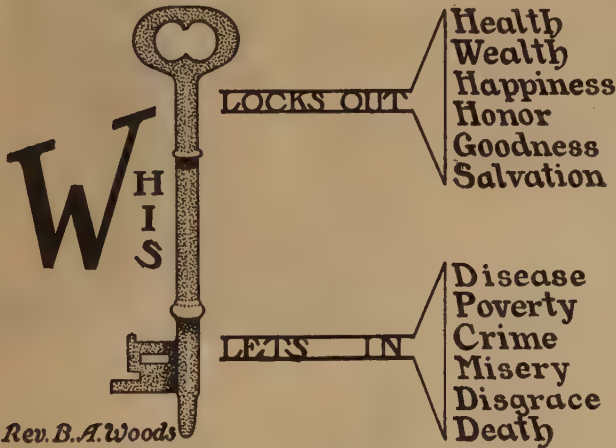




# TEMPERANCE TOPICS

THE **P** **R**ICE the drunkard  
**A**YS for his  
**O**TIONS  
**H**IS **O**RTION — hereafter —

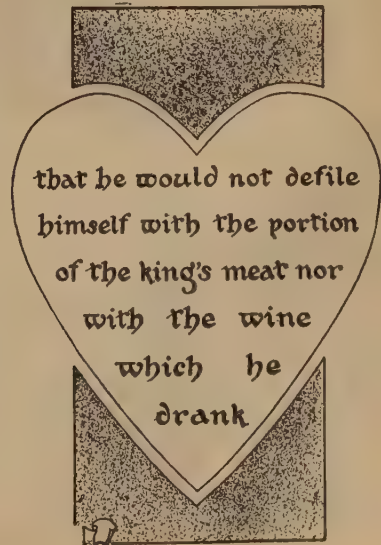
**H** **E**ALTH  
**A**PPINESS  
**O**NOR  
**O**ME  
**E**AVEN  
**P**ERDITION



**D**ESTROYS~  
 ~AMBITION  
**R**UINS~  
 ~CHARACTER  
**I**NFLAMES~  
 ~PASSION  
**N**UMBS~  
 ~CONSCIENCE  
**K**ILLS~  
 ~HOPE

**D** *a r e d* **P** *rayerfully*  
**A** *ntagonize* **U** *nhesitatingly*  
**N** *ebuchadnezzar* **R** *easonably*  
**I** *ntending to* **P** *romptly*  
**E** *at nothing from his* **O** *bediently*  
**L** *oaded table* **S** *uccessfully*  
**E** *arnestly*  
**D** *ecidedly*

**I**  
**N**  
**T**  
**H**  
**I**  
**S**



# NOAH'S DRUNKENNESS.

And Noah began to be an



and he  
planted a



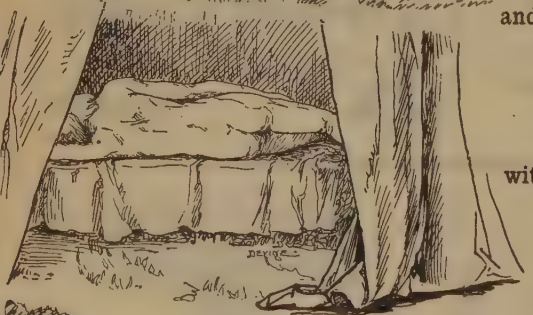
And he



of the  
wine,  
and was



and he was



within his



And Ham, the



of  
Canaan,  
saw the  
nakedness  
of his  
father,  
and



his two brethren without.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS GENESIS 9:20-27.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we every day obey the command to watch and pray. Do Thou save us from the sin of drunkenness. For the Savior's sake. Amen.

This our pledge secure,  
We'll never, never touch the wine,  
We'll drink cold water pure.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 2348, directly after the Deluge. Place, Armenia (a hill in the northwest, adjacent to the great Ararat, is designated as the region where Noah planted his vineyard). **Persons,** Noah, his sons Shem, Ham and Japheth, and Canaan, Ham's son and Noah's grandson.

**Scripture Setting:** Wine, Eph. 5:18. Duty to parents, Ex. 20:12. Disrespect to parents, Deut. 27:16. Charity for others' sins, Gal. 6:1. True source of happiness and prosperity, Psal. 144:15. True aspiration, Heb. 11:16. Oneness of all believers as betokened in the blessing of Shem and Japheth, Eph. 3:6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We have 1. the sad

story of the fall, through wine, of a man renowned for righteousness, obedience to God and sublime faith. 2. The misconduct of a son and grandson and the filial charity of Shem and Japheth. 3. The awakening of Noah to his condition, and his prophetic vision of the consequences of his weakness and Ham's and Canaan's sin, with a realization of the reward which shall come not only to Shem and Japheth, but their descendants. 4. The lesson shows us the weakness of human nature at its best and its proneness to sin. 5. The power of strong drink to overcome even the best of men, is set forth and the consequences of a good and an evil heredity are fully shown in the curse and blessing.

### HOW A GOOD MAN ERRED.

**Righteous Noah.** "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generation." He was one of the few patriarchs of whom it is said he walked with God and held converse with the Almighty; a man so superior to all the men of his times as to be held in remembrance by Jehovah. "God remembered Noah," and made a covenant with him. Surely, if it were possible, as the champions of so-called moderation declare, we have here a man who could use wine as one of the "gifts of God" and not abuse it, to his own harm and that of posterity. We shall see if the moderate drinker is safe.

**Little Foxes.** When the whole earth was filled with impurity, Noah was above the temptation of lust. When all the world was against him, Noah faced its sneers, and continued at the task God had assigned him, and never yielded to the temptation of disobedience; when "cribbed, cabined and confined in the ark," with no sign from God, while the world disappeared from sight, Noah withstood the temptation of doubt. But in the midst of his own vineyard, among his own family, Noah falls. It is comparatively easy to live aright before the public, to deport oneself nobly under great temptation, but the daily life in the house is the true test of holiness. The man who commands the admiration of his children, the child who holds the respect of brothers and sisters, is the real hero. The smaller temptations are the most effectual. Great temptations are met and vanquished in the open. Small temptations steal upon one like an assassin and defeat one unawares. They are the "little foxes that spoil the vines."

**Watch and Pray.** Alone in an evil generation, Noah had been drawn to God for com-

panionship. He must come to God daily and hourly to receive measurement and plans for the Ark. Only by faith could he endure the flood, but the waters had disappeared, the bow of the covenant had been set in the sky, and he was no longer in circumstances so difficult as to drive him continually to God. Only by living close to God, by bringing Him into all the little things of life, coming to Him with our least temptations, may sin be resisted. A man is never certain of himself. There are dormant and unsuspected germs of evil in every nature, ready to spring into fruitfulness under the slightest temptation. Nothing can keep us from falling into sin except the Master's direction, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation."

**New Development of Sin.** Noah planted a vineyard. Noah saw what sin had wrought in the destruction of a world. The old world and its inhabitants, its wickedness, had been washed away in the flood. It was a new world which Noah looked upon, and he and his family were to determine the future. Alas, that the one who had survived such great evil was to introduce into this fresh new world that which was to be the source of greater evil still! What a train of evil, misfortune and woe has sprung from Noah's vineyard! Not a nation or commonwealth, not a city or town, and hardly a home, but has suffered from it.

**A Drunkard's Shame.** What a sorrowful spectacle—the righteous and rescued Noah lying drunk on his tent floor! "In that heavy, helpless figure, lying insensible in his tent, is as significant a warning as in the flood." Lust floods in, in the wake of intoxication. Noah lies uncovered, exposing himself contrary to the law of modesty. Im-

purity is the twin sister of drink, and the saloon often lures its victims through impure pictures, sensuous music and bad books.

**Wine a Mocker.** Noah is not the only great and good man deceived by wine. The just Lot; Nadab and Abihu, priests of God, all erred through wine. It is a pathetic fact that a roll call of wine's victims would include the names of some of the wisest, most generous and biggest-hearted men in the world, destroyed by it. No will is strong enough to overcome this mocker, no brain great enough to withstand its attack, and no character so noble but it may fall before it. The only safety lies in total abstinence from all forms of intoxicating liquors.

**Behavior of Sons.** Ham's conduct was at first indifferent. No sorrow over his father's shame was manifest. He neither turned away nor covered his eyes. Such indifference betrayed a heartlessness appalling in a son. Then he told it to his brothers without. This was utter shamelessness. Learning of their father's pitiable and disgraceful condition, the other two sons, obedient to the great command with promise, seized the first robe at hand, spread it out and went backward, and with averted faces covered the nakedness of their father. Even the misconduct and unworthiness of a parent does not relieve a child from the obligation of the commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother."

**Christly Attitude Toward the Sinner.** The One who was in every way tempted as we are, and yet without sin, sees deeper into the hearts of the erring than any fellow sinner. "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more," was the tender admonition of Christ. The attitude of men toward the sins of others is a test of character. The reluctant exposure of sin, that good may come, is quite different from the publication of sin in gossip, for the amusement of others. Are not those who find pleasure in the sins of their fellows, who witness immodest plays in the theater, gloat over the criminal news in yellow journals, and choose those books whose plots are founded on crime or indecency, like Ham? Charity covers a multitude of sins. Each one of us is so liable to fall that we should see in another's fall a warning to ourselves, "Let us remember that life is a battle against sin; its victories recorded in Heaven, its defeats manifest on earth." Where no good can be done by talking them over, let us cover the faults, mistakes and sins of others as did the two sons of Noah their father's sin.

**The Awakening.** Noah awoke from his wine, and knew. Restored consciousness brought a sense of his humiliation. Noah had sinned but once. Alas, for the awakening of those whose whole lives have been spent in sin! Noah partook of wine under conditions exalted by advocates of the moderate use of alcohol. He began as a moderate drinker. We may reasonably infer that this was the first instance of complete intoxication. He did not frequent a public drink-

ing place, but drank in the home; the wine was not adulterated, but pure juice of the grapes from his own vineyard; but what disastrous results! A saint of God in a drunken debauch, humiliated by his own son and grandson. The hereditary effects of the father's weakness were now manifest in Ham's unfilial, unfeeling conduct and Canaan's sinful, shameless insult. Of all agents, alcohol is the most powerful in establishing an evil heredity. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes quaintly says, "We are omnibuses in which our ancestors ride."

**A Curse and a Blessing.** Noah had sinned in a sottish, bestial way, but the patriarch who had looked to God for help in all the perilous days of the flood, who had read the bow of promise in the sky, knew whence to seek help in his own degradation. In that awful moment of awakening, a cry for pardon and restoration must have gone up to Noah's God, or else the spirit of prophecy would not have come upon him in which he gave utterance to a curse and a blessing. There had been an act of mockery or abuse which Noah knew Canaan had done to him, so the curse falls upon the grandson, whom Noah calls his youngest son, according to the custom of that day, by which all a man's descendants are like sons. Noah's prophecy was not the angry and excessive wrath of an outraged father, but a prophetic vision of the future. It does not even require a prophetic vision to foresee misfortune following evil, and advancement, honor and supremacy as the reward of righteousness. Ever and always, before and since Noah's time, it has been exemplified in the history of the rise and fall of nations and in the lives of individuals.

**Quiz.** 1. What caused Noah's fall? 2. What other good men of the Bible fell through drink? 3. Can there be any moderate use of any evil? 4. What is the only safe course? 5. Upon whom does drunkenness fall most heavily? 6. Ought we not always to so live that it will be easier for those who follow us to do right?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. No one is above temptation. 2. Life's calms bring dangers as well as life's storms. 3. It is as necessary to pray "Lead us not into temptation" as "Give us this day our daily bread." 4. The propagation of sin is as great an evil as the perpetration of sin. 5. Wine is a mocker; he who begins by "drinking like a gentleman" often ends by being "drunker than a brute." 6. Sin not only hurts the sinner, but those about him and those who come after. 7. Unkindness is liable to be repaid in its own coin. 8. Charity toward others oft brings mercy to ourselves. 9. The good a man does lives through the generations that follow him.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



And Nadab and Abihu, the



of Aaron,  
took either  
of them  
his



and



therein,  
and put  
incense  
thereon,  
and



strange fire before  
the Lord, which he  
commanded them  
not. And  
there went out



from the Lord,  
and devoured  
them, and they  
died before the  
Lord. Then



said unto  
Aaron, This  
is it that the  
Lord spake,  
saying, I will  
be sanctified  
in them that  
come nigh  
me, and  
before  
all the



I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LEV. 10:1-11.

**READ, ALSO, EX. 24; EX. 6:13; NUM. 3:2, 26:60; 1 CHRON. 6:3, 24:1.**

**Prayer:** Our Father, Help us to take warning from the miseries and punishments that others bring upon themselves through indulgence in strong drink. Make our sons strong to resist the evil that deprives men of their good judgment and sets their feet in the snare. May our offering to Thee be our noblest manhood and unwavering service. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"I will promise Thee, dear Lord, that I  
Will never cloud the light  
Which shines from Thee within my soul,  
And makes my reason bright.  
Nor ever will I lose the power  
To serve Thee by Thy will,  
Which Thou hast set within my heart,  
Thy precepts to fulfill."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, the tabernacle in the wilderness, before Mt. Sinai.  
**Persons:** Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron; Uzziel, uncle of Aaron; Mishael, Elzaphan, cousins of Aaron; Eleazar and Ithamar, younger sons of Aaron, and people.

**Scripture Setting:** Priests are commanded not to drink wine, Ezekiel 44:21. Paul declares against the use of wine, Eph. 5:18. Abstinence from wine demanded from ministers, 1 Timothy 2:3; Titus 1:3. The acceptable offering, Ps. 40:6; 51:16; Romans 12:1. Who shall abide in the tabernacle, Ps. 15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special feature of this story is the sudden introduction of tragedy into the ceremonials attending the installation of Aaron and his sons into the priesthood. 1. The reckless sin through drunkenness of Nadab and Abihu in ignoring God's commands and offering strange fire before the Lord. 2. The miraculous and speedy retribution which destroyed them. 3. Aaron's obedience to the edict against outward mourning for his sons and his submission to God's judgment. 4. The burial of the two priests and the command against the use of wine immediately following.

### DISOBEDIENCE PUNISHED.

**The Occasion** Aaron and his four sons had just been installed in their Divinely appointed priesthood. The solemn ceremonies of their consecration, the offering of sacrifice, had been followed by the first Aaronic benediction, and then the glory of the Lord had appeared to a great congregation, filling them with such joy that they shouted and fell on their faces. Never before had God been so manifest to His chosen people. It was an occasion long to be remembered, and happy those whose privilege it had been to see the shining faces of Moses and Aaron, the flaming sacrificial fire and the glory of the great Jehovah.

**Nadab and Abihu.** These two elder sons of Aaron, with their father and seventy of the elders of Israel, had gone with Moses to Sinai, where they saw the awful cloud that covered the mount and the glory of the Lord that flamed from Sinai. Had not God a right to expect that those whom He had so exalted should honor Him? God's children should show forth His righteousness to the world. Our Lord is glorified in His disciples, and Paul prays that Jesus Christ may be glorified in the Church. The name Christian signifies "a little Christ"—in all things like Christ.

**The Offering of a Strange Fire.** Yet on the very day of their consecration to the priesthood, Nadab and Abihu "took each of them his censer and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them." It may never be known just what they did. Is it not enough to know that they put their own will against God's will

for them? It was not the act of a moment, to be forgotten the next. The whole of this second day, all the manifestations of God's power had been to instruct the people how God was to be worshipped. And now, in their robes of office, before the assembled congregation, the two priests come, not as God in His great wisdom has commanded, but with strange fire, "setting an evil example for worshippers through all generations. The inconsistent Christian is a stumbling-block to others. Paul rests the duty of total abstinence upon this basis. It is not good to "drink wine nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth." Solomon tells us that those who drink forget the law. It was under the excitement of wine that Nadab and Abihu offered that which God had not commanded. Today strong drink is the chief cause of the violation of the Ten Commandments.

**Punishment.** Because they ignored the command of God, Nadab and Abihu perished by a fire from the Lord, so miraculous that their bodies were not consumed, nor even their clothes. We must not read into this story the vengeance of an insulted and despotic God. Nature's laws are inexorable, with a death penalty for their infringement.

Aviation will never be a perfectly safe means of travel until man has solved and complied with every requirement of the laws that govern the air. Young Johnstone and a score of others met death the moment when, through some mischance, their aeroplanes opposed the course of natural law. If even the good intentioned are not immune from penalty, what of the wilful violator of God's law? To dally with sin is to "play with fire." Often the very instrument of a man's sin becomes his



punishment. For one thoughtless indulgence by a young man, a diseased body and life-long pain may be the penalty.

**Burial.** The father and brothers were commanded to mourn in silence, and not to manifest the usual outward signs of grief. It is a consolation to pay proper respect to the dear ones taken from us, and this command was not the childish anger of an offended Deity. For Aaron, the high priest, to have mourned would have weakened the impression created through the tragic consequence of disobedience, by indicating dissatisfaction with God's judgment. However, due provisions were made for the burial of the stricken priests. Two cousins, the next nearest of kin, were pallbearers, carrying the dead, in their priestly robes, just as they had fallen, out of the camp, while the whole house of Israel mourned for these two sons of Aaron and their sin. So is God's justice ever tempered with mercy.

**God First.** Above father and mother and wife and children and brethren and sisters, would Christ be exalted. What would be right at another time would be wrong and foregone if it interfered with a duty to God. Aaron refrained from mourning his own son, because his duties were so important that he could not leave the tabernacle for the days of purification that the burial of Nadab and Abihu would have entailed. But how many forego the prayer meeting, church service or Sunday school when attendance would interfere with some worldly pleasure!

**Strong Drink.** One wonders how men of Nadab and Abihu's training and experience could have sinned so recklessly. Ah, the secret is out—they are but two of the many men of exalted position who have erred through strong drink. From the command following right after, and forbidding God's priests to drink wine in connection with their service in the tabernacle, under the penalty of death, we may infer that the fatal sin was committed when the two priests were in a state of intoxication. Since Aaron and his two sons were in a well-nigh continuous service, the command amounted to almost total prohibition.

**Requirement of the Ministry.** Total abstinence was a requirement of the ministry under the new dispensation, but Paul's admonition was not adhered to. During the Middle Ages, many a priest of God was known as a wine bibber; the church followed Noah's example, and planted great vineyards. Small wonder that spirituality departed from the church, and those days

are known as the Dark Ages. How shocking it would be now to offer your minister a glass of whisky when he comes on a pastoral call! Yet, less than a hundred years ago, failure to do so was considered a mark of disrespect. Let the friends of temperance rejoice—the church is accepting Paul's teaching. Almost without exception, the Protestant ministers of the United States are "not given to wine." In England the custom of total abstinence among the clergy is becoming universal. When total abstinence is not imposed on the ministry, wine still causes forgetfulness, and disregard of God's law still makes priest and prophet err, and statistics show that eighty per cent of those deposed from the ministry in churches where the rule does not prevail, fall through strong drink.

**Office of the Church.** The good old deacon who complained that if his pastor kept on preaching against the saloon and drunkenness, people wouldn't know the "difference between religion and temperance," would have been disquieted by the interpretation of duty which the Lord spake unto Aaron, for with the command against strong drink, Aaron was told that it was a part of his office to distinguish between holy and unholy and between clean and unclean. Ezekiel pictures the priest or minister as a watchman whose duty is to warn the people of their sins. Not alone the ministry, but the church of God has a duty in the temperance reform, and the eight million Christian voters of the land should distinguish between the clean and unclean in politics.

**The Acceptable Offering.** "Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire before the Lord which He commanded them not. "There is no better or more profitable exegesis of the lesson than the Fifteenth Psalm, wherein David tells us that he who shall abide in the tabernacle of the Lord must walk uprightly, do right, speak the truth, refrain from evil speech, love his neighbor, abhor evil companions and choose God-fearing comrades; he must be a man whose word is as good as his bond, and generous and just in his dealings with others. Such a life, be it priest or layman, is an acceptable offering, for all these things He commanded.

**Quiz.** 1. What sudden deaths are recorded in the New Testament of professing Christians who would have deceived God in their offering? 2. What caused Nadab and Abihu's sin? 3. What prophet complains that priest and prophet err through strong drink? 4. What is an acceptable sacrifice to God? 5. What does God desire more than burnt offering?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Love and obedience must enter into service. 2. Responsibility is proportioned to privilege. 3. Disobedience is the starting point from whence all other sins enter. 4. The wages of sin is death. 5. Retribution may be not always swift, but it is sure. 6. Wine, considered the most moderate and harmless of all intoxicating drinks, lays the exalted low and counts as many victims as whisky and gin. 7. Total abstinence is the only safe course. 8. A good life is a guide post, pointing others to Christ; an inconsistent life leads to destruction. 9. God's will and God's way are always best.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

□ If a man hath a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not harken unto them: Then shall his father and his mother



and bring  
him out  
unto the  
elders of  
his city,  
and unto the



of his place;  
And they shall  
say unto the



of his city, This our  
son is stubborn and  
rebellious; he will  
not obey our  
voice; he is a



and a



And all the



of his  
city shall



with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS DEUT. 21:18-21.

**Prayer:** Dear Heavenly Father, Help us to remember Thy great commandment with promise. Keep us, we pray Thee, from bringing dishonor to our parents, and from the sins of disobedience and drunkenness. For the sake of Thy dear Son. Amen.

"Sooner or later the wrong will be righted,  
Sooner or later the wicked will fail;  
Sooner or later the dark will be lighted,  
Sooner or later the right will prevail."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1490. Place, The Land of Moab. (Our lesson is an excerpt of an account of what Moses said in one of his addresses to the children of Israel east of Jordan.) **Characters presented,** A father and mother, a disobedient, drunken son, the court of elders and men of the city.

**Scripture Setting:** The Disobedient Son. A father of leniency, 1 Sam. 3:13. A rebellious son, II Samuel, 18:15-35. The self-willed son, I Kings 12:6-13. A repentant son, Luke 15:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In the law concerning disobedience, we have brought before us a vivid picture: 1. The righteous, broken-hearted father

and mother, whose teaching has been scorned by their child. 2. The disobedient, rebellious, drunken son, whom their efforts have failed to reform. 3. The hearing before the court of elders. We can readily picture the sorrow and humiliation of parents compelled to thus publish their son's shame publicly. 4. The verdict of the elders. We feel sure these good men grieved for the parents, and pronounced the verdict with reluctance. 5. The punishment of death by stoning. 6. It recalls the picture of Christ when the woman was brought before Him to be stoned, and we rejoice that repentance and an appeal to Christ brings forgiveness for even the greatest sins.

### A FATHER'S AND MOTHER'S SORROW.

**Family Life Without God.** Long before the world knew of kings or queens, or fixed government, the people lived in what is called the tribal life, all the many generations of one family forming the tribe. Justice was not administered by courts, but by the chief men, or heads of the different branches of the family which made up the tribe. Each household was ruled, even in the matter of life and death, by the father. The custom still prevails among savages and in some heathen lands, where the father may brain his daughter with a club, or the mother may abandon her babe to die, and it is not a crime. Fear, not love, rules. The parent a tyrant, the child a slave. Such was the relationship between father and child in the time of our lesson, among nations that knew not God.

**God in the Home.** How different the family relation under God's law! The Bible abounds with beautiful pictures of home life. Abraham's love for his son was second only to his love for God. Ruth's devotion extended not only to her husband, but to her husband's people, country and God. True, disrespect, partiality, jealousy, envy, disobedience, marred the happiness of many of these homes, but the Jewish home life was vastly superior to the tribal life of the surrounding heathen, just as today the humble Christian home pictured by Burns in the Cotter's Saturday Night is a sweeter, better place than any home of wealth and grandeur, where God is not honored. It is worthy of note that Gladstone, Rhodes, Lincoln, Washington—indeed all the world's greatest men were nurtured in Christian homes.

**The Commandment with Promise.** In the Pentateuch, irreverence to parents is made almost equal in its sinfulness to want of reverence for God. The father stands to his earthly children as God to the children of His creation; therefore obedience and reverence are commanded. In a limited sense, he represents God, and is to give expression to the Divine character in all his dealings with the child. God is the universal Father, and His fatherly treatment of His children, an example of parenthood. Likeness to Him is expected and demanded of earthly parents.

**Shining Examples.** The Bible gives us many examples of dutiful children, Joseph, when ruler of all Egypt, presents a beautiful instance of filial respect, in his respectful and tender greeting of the aged father. Where can we find a more touching example of loyalty than in Jephthah's daughter, a voluntary victim to her father's vow? David's provision for his parents and his subsequent care for them show him as a dutiful son. What an example of filial devotion and solicitude was given us when Christ, amid the agony of crucifixion, with infinite tenderness and delicacy, commended his mother to the charge of the beloved John!

**Disobedience.** In contrast to these is the stubborn and rebellious son of our lesson, "which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother." He has been instructed by the father, entreated by the mother; yet he tramples on parental authority, despises their commands and disobeys their law. The voices of father and mother! How often has he heard the firm voice of the father, its stern tones breaking and melting into entreaty, as foreseeing the evils

which his son must encounter through disobedience, he would have the stubborn, sullen, self-willed boy follow his counsel. Yes, and the lad has stood immovable before his mother's voice, its tender entreaty, loving expostulation and broken-hearted grief over the wrongdoing of the child of her love. To the physical suffering of motherhood he has added the pangs of spiritual travail over a son gone wrong. It has been truthfully said that "a boy would be more merciful to shoot his mother through the head than to stab her through the heart by disobedience." There is a legend that only the father lived to see the prodigal son return. The mother's heart was broken when her boy left the home.

**Authority of Parents.** The Bible teaches parental authority, and commends discipline, even punishment. This boy has been chastened, but he will not harken unto them. Alas, for the boy who rebels against parental discipline! Absalom was such a son, plotting rebellion against a father whose love was so great that he would have died for him; would have borne Absalom's punishment, had God permitted. God likens His own tender compassion to the pity of a father for his children. Do not mistake firmness for sternness, or rebel against a father's just punishment.

**The Final Court.** The love and forbearance of father and mother is so great that we find no instance in the Bible where parents availed themselves of the right to bring an incorrigibly rebellious son to the court of the elders of the city for trial and punishment for violation of the fifth commandment. But how many a noble name has been sullied by a son's drunkenness and revelry! Though the parents would hide a child's faults, his own disobedience, folly and sin publish his disgrace. Each boy and girl has a reputation among their elders for good or evil. The truest estimate of a man's character may be gained from his fellow townsmen. The great banking and guarantee firms send blanks out to the home town of the young man seeking employment, concerning his conduct and reputation. An adverse report bars him from employment.

**The Indictment.** "This, our son, is stubborn and rebellious; he is a glutton and drunkard." We are not surprised to find that other sins have grown out of the boy's disobedience. Paul numbers the disobedient child with those of a reprobate mind, malicious and wicked persons, boasters, blasphemers, ingrates and traitors, even murderers. The warden of a great state reformatory for boys once told the writer there was not a boy in the institution whose first crime had not been that of disobedience to parents.

**The Punishment.** According to the stern code of earlier times, the disobedient, rebellious, drunken son was stoned to death by the men of his own city. The stern decree was justified by the civic good. For the same reason, in order that they may not contaminate their playmates, the present public-school system of our larger cities segregates the bad boy from the other pupils and commits him to a truant school or reformatory. For the old dispensation, with its death penalties, Christ has substituted the reign of love, the juvenile courts, and probation officers. Truancy, industrial and reform schools are the outgrowth of that old court of the elders, with its stern death penalty. Against the dark picture of accusing parents, stern judging elders, and stoning citizens, we see Ben Lindsay, "de kids'" judge of Denver, with his waifs rescued from the street, saved for the Christ who died to make men free—free from the sins of disobedience and drunkenness. We rejoice that where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound.

**Quiz.** 1. Name other rebellious sons mentioned in the Bible. 2. What examples of obedience are given? 3. Ask your teacher to read the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11) and of the boyhood of Christ (Luke 2:40). 4. What priest fell dead on receiving tidings of the death of two evil-sons? 5. What king mourned the untimely end of a rebellious son? 6. Which of the Ten Commandments is called "The Commandment with promise?"

**Seed Truths.** 1. Disobedience betokens a lack of self-control. 2. Obedience is a test of character. 3. Filial duty is a privilege. 4. Disrespect to parents brings disrepute to the child. 5. Every crime has its beginning in disobedience. 6. The community in which one lives is still judge and jury, and few can outlive the verdict of his neighbors. 7. "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure and whether it be right." 8. "He that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father."

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## NABAL'S REVEL.

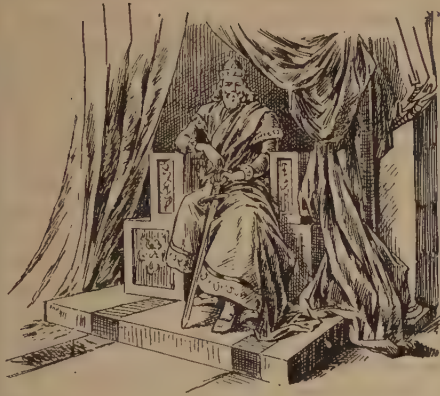
And Abigail came to Nabal: and, behold, he held a



in his



like the feast of a



and Nabal's  
heart  
was merry  
within him,  
for he  
was very



wherefore she told him nothing, less or more, until the



light.  
But it  
came to  
pass  
in the  
morning,  
when the



was  
gone  
out of  
Nabal,  
and his



had told him these  
things, that his  
heart died within  
him, and he  
became as a



And it came  
to pass, about  
ten days after, that  
the Lord smote  
Nabal that he died.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 SAMUEL 25:2-38.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we not give way to foolish wrath, or err through drunkenness. Give to us, we pray Thee, a generous spirit. We ask in the name of the One who gave Himself for us. Amen.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1061. Place, Carmel. Persons, David and his followers, Nabal, Abigail his wife, and the young men in his service.

**Scripture Setting:** Man's ingratitude and covetousness. Chief butlers' ingratitude to Joseph, Gen. 40:21-23. Hebrews' ingratitude to Moses, Ex. 2:11-15. Miriam's ingratitude to Moses, Num. 12. Israel's ingratitude to God, Dent. 9. Unwise economy, Prov. 11:24-26. Generous charity commanded, Eccles. 1:2. Woe to drunkard, Isa. 5:8, 11; 28:1; Joel 15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features

### THE FOLLY OF DRUNKENNESS.

**Sheep Shearing.** Nabal was a wealthy farmer, and our story opens upon a familiar pastoral scene—the annual sheep shearing. In Carmel, Nabal's flocks of three thousand sheep and a thousand goats were herded. The shepherds and helpers were young men and boys who welcomed the shearing as a relief from the solitary shepherd's life. It was a time of frolic and, in this instance, of drunken revelry. Only a generation ago, intoxicating liquors were served at every barn-raising and husking bee, during harvest time and butchering. On the spring sheep shearing, liquors was dispensed, and many an innocent frolic was turned into a revel of drunkenness. Frequent excesses and even tragedies followed such indulgence, and friends of temperance rejoice that the custom has become practically obsolete.

**The Master of the Sheep Fold.** Nabal was a man of great wealth and noble family. He was a descendant of Judah the lion-hearted, and of Caleb, so courageous; but his senseless head, mean heart and niggardly nature made him as inferior as his great ancestors were superior to average humanity. The highest family connection and greatest wealth do not change a man's real nature, or even gain for him true honor.

**David's Request.** Nabal owed much to David. Doubtless the sight of the young shepherds employed by Nabal recalled to him his own happy, carefree boyhood, when as a shepherd he himself tended his father's herds. David had no legal claim upon Nabal and he proffered none, but by all the laws of gratitude and requital his request was fair and just. It was courteous and modest. Sheep shearing was the time of remembering the flock and counting the increase over the previous year. It was a season of liberality and kindness. The Mosaic law commanded that a part of all increase should

"No tongue can express  
The power of true kindness to cheer and to bless;  
It soothes every sorrow, makes smooth every path;  
It lightens all burdens and turns away wrath."

of this story are: 1. The friendly spirit manifested by David toward Nabal and his possessions. 2. His modest request for acknowledgment of his services. 3. Nabal's churlish refusal and ingratitude for favors shown him. 4. The excessive and foolish wrath of David that would have shed innocent blood. 5. The wise tact of Abigail. 6. Her faith in God and prophetic vision of David's future. 7. Nabal's drunken excess and revels. 8. The penalty which befalls Nabal and others who sin against health through drunkenness. 9. The folly of man's taking vengeance into his own hands.

go to the poor and the stranger (Deut. 24:19-22). To give "as God hath prospered" is still one of the commands too often overlooked. We should share any great gain, the luxuries and good times that come to us with those less fortunate. David gently reminded Nabal of this custom; he hinted at the services which he and his followers had done him; he made no stated demand but modestly asked Nabal to give what might come to his hand, as a father might to a son who needed succor.

**Favor Unrequited.** A decent sense of gratitude would have prompted Nabal to make some return for David's services, even though there was no legal obligation. But there are small souls which are content to render no more assistance to their fellow men than they are legally bound to, and who boast that they will take all the law allows. Nabal was one of these; Shylock demanding his pound of flesh was such a man. They keep the letter of the law but have lost its spirit as enunciated in the Golden Rule of Christ, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

**A Lame Excuse.** Nabal would not part with anything he could possibly find an excuse for retaining, but he must have a cloak for his stinginess. This is the habit of miserly people. They not only refuse to aid the poor, but flout their poverty and impugn their misfortune; they will only help the "worthy poor" and do not even give to Christian benevolence unless assured that their money will bring a return. Such excuses may silence their own consciences as they continue to spend all their money on themselves, but will they satisfy the God whose favor extends over the just and the unjust? Nabal professes not to know his benefactor. He asks David's messenger, "Who is David?" and then justifies his re-



fusal of the request with, "Shall I then take my bread and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearers, and give it unto men that I know not whence they be?"

**Foolish Wrath.** Insult added to injury was more than David would bear. It aroused wrath altogether out of proportion to the offence. Railing against Nabal's ingratitude, he vowed he would destroy Nabal and all he had. In his unreasonable anger he would include even the innocent shepherd lads who had been special objects of his protecting care. Rallying his band, David started on his errand of destruction. Was this wrathful, revengeful, unreasonable man the same who but a short time before had staid his hand from hurting his enemy, Saul, because the Lord was judge and avenger? Truly, wrath is cruel and anger outrageous. "To lose our temper" on the slightest provocation is folly. Some erroneously think it the mark of strength to show temper and that failure to resent insult and injury betokens a lack of spirit; but the Bible says it is a man's "glory to pass over a transgression."

**A Tactful and Courageous Woman.** Since Nabal was as stubborn as he was stupid, and disagreeable at that, it was useless to expostulate with him; therefore one of his young men came to Abigail, Nabal's wife. He acknowledged their obligation to David and bewailed his master's stinginess and folly. Abigail, a woman of cleverness and promptitude, loaded her servants with all that a company of hungry men might need and started to intercept David. Abigail was not a woman to faint or scream at danger, but courageously and openly met the man whose warlike prowess had already been celebrated in song, and through her gifts and tact, dissuaded David from his wrathful purpose. Truly a wise answer turneth away wrath. Through Abigail's wisdom and tactfulness David was withheld from the needless shedding of blood and was restored to that spirit which had led him to leave vengeance in the hands of the Lord.

**A Drunken Frolic.** Nabal was too stingy to grant David's modest request, but for his own pleasure spent money like a king. How often those who are most niggardly in their gifts to God and to the poor lavish money upon themselves and gloat in reckless and wasteful expenditure for the gratification of their own evil desires. The people of the United States spend over two billion dollars for strong drink annually. The money spent

for drink would give an old age pension of twenty dollars a month to all persons over sixty years of age, and would also provide for the education of every child in the United States from five to eighteen years of age, and leave a balance to meet all the necessary expenses of government and to cover all the money expended for church and missionary purposes, and Christian benevolences. If such wicked and foolish expenditure continues, may not the United States meet the fate of the drunken Nabal? Let us take warning from the downfall of other nations through a like sin.

**The Morning After.** On her return, Abigail found Nabal so drunk that she wisely refrained from speech that night. In the morning Nabal awoke with the after effects of drink full upon him. When he heard his wife's story, penurious sorrow over the loss occasioned through her liberality and cowardly fear of what might happen, added to the physical effects of the debauch, so weakened an abused and enfeebled constitution that his death occurred ten days later.

**A Decree of God.** The Lord smote Nabal and he died. It required no direct and miraculous penalty such as attended the sin of Nadab and Abihu. God rules through natural law. A rebellious stomach inflamed by alcohol; the hob-nailed liver of the regular drinker; weakened arteries, fatty and degenerate muscles of a heart continually spurred to action by drink; exhausted granules that represent the nerve force of an alcoholized brain—any or all of these may have caused Nabal's death, as they cause the death of the chronic drunkard today. It is God's way to punish man for his misdeeds through the body he has offended and abused.

**Quiz.** 1. What king had David befriended only to receive evil for good? 2. What is Christ's command concerning requital for evil? 3. What other woman of the Bible appeared before a king and by her tact and wisdom secured the recall of his decree for the destruction of her people? 4. What was the Mosaic law in regard to strangers? 5. Name some of the penalties (physical) for drunkenness.

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Changing customs in favor of total abstinence mark the progress of the temperance reform. 2. Parsimony "withholdeth more than is meet and it tendeth to poverty"—of soul, if not of fortune. 3. Human law is a short yardstick. 4. He who fills the requirements of the law only falls short of the law as summed up by Christ in the two great commandments. 5. A poor excuse is worse than none. 6. Selfishness and prodigality oft go hand in hand. 7. The drunkard's punishment is in his own excess. 8. We may trust God to right our wrongs; vengeance belongs to Him.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# DEFEAT THROUGH DRUNKENNESS.

And, behold, there came a prophet unto Ahab king of Israel, saying, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. Then he numbered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty-two: and after them he numbered all the people, even all the children of Israel, being seven thousand. And they went out at noon: but Benhadad was



himself drunk in the pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him. So these young men of the princes of the provinces came out of the city, and the



which followed them. And they



every one his man: and the Syrians



and Israel



them: and Benhadad the king of Syria



with the horsemen. And the king of Israel went out, and smote the



and slew the Syrians with a great slaughter.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 KINGS 20:1-21.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we ever remember that wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise. In Christ's name. Amen.

Where there's drink, there's danger.  
Write it on the school boy's slate,  
Write it on the prison gate,  
Write it on the halls of state,  
Where there's drink, there's danger.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 901. Places, Samaria and its environs. **Persons,** Benhadad II., king of Syria; Ahab, king of Israel; the thirty-two kings and vassals and allies of Benhadad, the elders of Israel, prophets of the Lord and the armies of Syria and Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** Drunkenness. Elah's drunkenness, 1 Kings 8:9. Belshazzar's feast, Dan. 5. Warnings against drink, Prov. 23:20; 31:4, 5; Isa. 5:11; Luke 21:34; 1 Cor. 6:10. Results of drunkenness, Prov. 21:17; 23:21; 29:32; Hab. 2:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this story are: 1. Benhadad's boastful and arrogant tyranny. 2. Ahab's cowardly surrender to his demands, and final resistance. 3. The Syrian king's drunken confidence. 4. The wise advice of the elders. 5. The appearance of a prophet of the Lord. One admires the splendid dash and courage of the young men with their small army which wholly routs the Syrian hosts and causes the vaunting, drunken and dismantled king Benhadad to flee.

### HOW THIRTY-THREE KINGS LOST A BATTLE.

**The King.** Benhadad was the title given the kings of Syria. It meant the Sun-god, for this king claimed that his father, Hadad, was a god, and he himself the god of the sun. Now, the real truth was that this Benhadad was the grandson of a petty king and the whole of Benhadad's kingdom was a part of the dominion once ruled by the great king Solomon, Ahab's own great-grandfather. Sin always makes big claims, but it has no real authority, and any power it may claim over your life or mine is a lie. Strong drink and the saloon are Benhadads, making many presumptuous claims; but the brain enslaved by drink, the saloon-ridden city, are a part of God's dominion, and should acknowledge His rule.

**His Army.** Benhadad had thirty-three kings with him to fight his battles and do his bidding. He had also horses and chariots and many soldiers. We are told elsewhere that this Syrian king had over one hundred and forty thousand men, two hundred and thirty-two generals, four thousand chariots and twelve hundred horsemen, and one thousand burden-bearing camels. What an imposing array! Sin is often imposing in appearance. Every great sin has other sins tributary to it—small sins and vices that make it easy for those who yield to them to fall into greater sins. The cigaret, bad books, bad words and thoughts are the allies of strong drink, and the boy who yields to them courts defeat in life. In its onward march against the homes of our country, which are the nation's real seat of government, the saloon boasts of the strength of its army; of the numbers employed; the millions of capital invested and of the petty politicians ready to do its bidding. Let us never forget that our God can overthrow the wicked king Alcohol as He did Benhadad.

**Insolent Demands.** A trumpeter and messengers were sent into the city to tell king Ahab that his riches, his children and all his possessions were Benhadad's, and if Ahab would give him leave to take all he pleased, Benhadad would withdraw his army. Sin makes frightful demands. The first demand may be only a dime for cigarettes, but when the boy grows to manhood, Habit and Appetite, two allies of Strong Drink, have been formed and the saloon now demands all his wages, while wife and children starve. The liquor traffic demands not only two billion dollars annually from the American people, but our boys and girls as well.

**Submission.** Faithless king Ahab had disobeyed God. Temptation and trouble always come to those who seek evil companions and ignore God's law. Ahab forgot that all Benhadad's kingdom was his, as the great-grandson of king Solomon, whose dominion included all of Syria. Benhadad should have paid tribute to Ahab, not Ahab to Benhadad. Good people should not cringe before evil, but should make evil fear them. Sin has no ownership of the allurements it offers, for this world is a part of God's kingdom, and ours, as His sons and daughters. No good thing will He withhold from them who walk uprightly. Ahab bowed before Benhadad's claim. A rebel to God is a slave to all beside. The boy who is afraid to say "No," becomes the poor, enslaved drunkard. Too long the American people have obeyed the demands of the saloon, paying annual tribute of one hundred thousand boys to recruit the ranks depleted by the hundred thousand slain each year by strong drink.

**Greater Exaction.** Ahab's submission encouraged Benhadad to send again, claiming the right to have his servants search not

only Ahab's palace, but the homes of his kindred and subjects, for whatever they might desire, leaving only what did not please Benhadad's servants, for Ahab and his friends. Benhadad must have it in his hands. It is not enough that Ahab should say it is his; he will not go till he has possession. The saloon-keeper demands cash, leaving the grocer, butcher and merchant the credit trade. Compromise and submission increase the demands of sin.

**Wise Counsellors.** Ahab had wise counsellors. The best counsellors are the Word of God and our parents. "Hear the instruction of thy father and forsake not the law of thy mother." A boy is never too big to mind his mother. Washington, Lincoln and Garfield are only a few of the great men who acknowledge that success and honor were won through obedience to a mother's wise counsel.

**Declaration of Independence.** Ahab was not wholly a coward. His own silver and gold, his own wives and children, he had given to Benhadad, but he would not bargain away the lives, property and families of others. His people must be protected from the unjust demands of Benhadad. Should the voters of this republic be less true to their obligation as rulers than Ahab? Yet men who would not squander their own money for drink make it easy for others to impoverish themselves. Few are willing to furnish the boys for the saloon, but many consent to the destruction of their neighbor's boys. Let us say with Ahab, "This thing I may not do."

**A Drunken Commander.** Benhadad rages and foams. He will destroy this people. He will even carry away the ground on which the city stands. He gives orders that cannot be executed. Drink destroys the judgment. For this reason, our business firms, factories and railroads demand total abstinence from those in charge. As one manufacturer expresses it, "A drunken foreman is too expensive an experiment." The brain is commander-in-chief of an army of muscles, nerves and brain or thought cells. Sight, hearing, smell, touch and taste keep the brain informed, just as war generals keep the wires burning with messages from the seat of war to their chief. Experiments made by noted scientists prove that even so small an amount of alcohol as is contained in a mug of beer, half a glass of whisky, or a glass of wine, has a stupefying effect on the action of the brain, the five senses and the muscles, thus weakening the brain and its

army corps, just as Benhadad and his generals were unfitted for command by drink.

The armies of Benhadad and Belshazzar are not the only ones defeated because of drunkenness. The wonderful endurance of the Boer army was largely due to their total abstinence from liquor. The drinking of the Spanish officers and sailors on the eve of battle made the American victory easier, while it is said the Russo-Japanese war was a fight of water drinkers against vodka drinkers.

**A Wise Answer.** So wise was Ahab's reply to Benhadad that it has become a proverb. The boy who smokes, drinks and gambles may laugh at the clean boy as a "sissy," but he soon finds himself a failure, while the boy he ridiculed has outdistanced him. It is not well to be too sure of one's self; even good men fall through over-confidence. "God is a very present help in time of trouble." Ahab had ignored God. He did not ask God for help, but God sent His prophet to him. How like the loving Father! We love Him because He first loved us.

**The Battle.** How small in number!—only two hundred and thirty-two—and they were young men who had never seen battle. There were but seven thousand in the entire army that went up against Benhadad. It is worth while to note that the number is the same as those who had not bowed to Baal. Success does not depend on numbers, but on loyalty to God. Benhadad and his kings at headquarters were drinking instead of leading the army on to battle. Benhadad loudly orders that the young men be taken prisoners, even though they say they came on an errand of truce. He who drinks, defies law and ignores justice. The king and his staff drink on, for Benhadad despises these boys, but when they have routed the Syrian army, drunk as he is, the proud king dare not face them, but flees. So Goliath despised David. The greatest confidence often ends in the greatest cowardice. It was a hand-to-hand encounter. They slew every one his man. The Christian warfare is not a fight with long-range guns, but a daily, hourly, personal struggle. Each must meet his own temptation and slay his own besetting sin.

**Victory Won by Youth.** John, the beloved disciple, was a fiery youth, and in his old age wrote: "I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong." At twelve years of age, the boy Jesus declared it was time He was about His Father's business. God has a work for the boys and girls. The nation needs its young men. The struggle against strong drink and a legalized liquor traffic, which the American people have entered upon, though peaceful, is a call to the young manhood and womanhood of the nation—yes, for every boy and girl.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other Bible kings fell through drunkenness? 2. Did the government ever provide for the sale of alcoholic drinks to its soldiers? 3. Does it do so now? Why not? 4. Does the saloon rule in your town? 5. Will you try to overcome it?

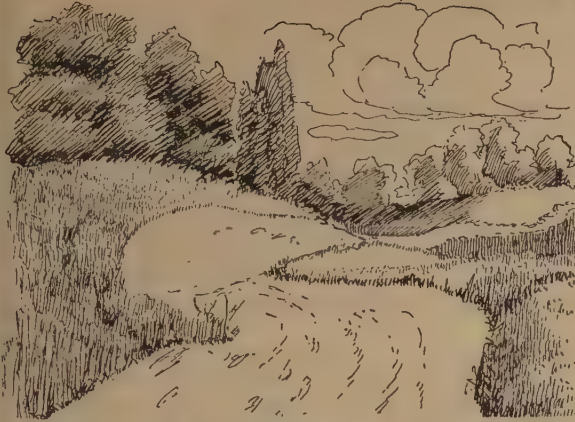
**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The battle is not to the strong. 2. An unjust demand should ever be rejected. 3. We should never submit to the demands of Satan. 4. The braggart is a coward. 5. Who chooses sin, chooses defeat. 6. Strong drink weakens and destroys the greatest general. 7. He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city. 8. God does not demand age or experience of his soldiers, only loyalty. 9. He who threatens most, accomplishes least. 10. God gives the victory.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# EVIL COMPANIONS.

Enter not into the



of the  
wicked,  
and  
go not  
in the  
way of



Avoid it, pass not by it,



and pass away. For they sleep not, except



they  
have  
done

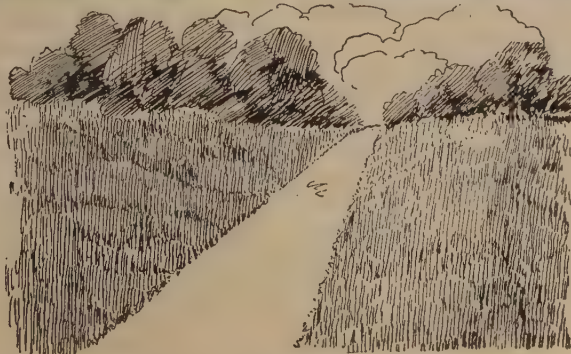
and their



is  
taken  
away,  
unless  
they  
cause  
some to



For they  
eat the bread  
of wickedness,  
and drink the  
wine of violence  
But the



of the just is  
as the shining  
light, that shineth  
more and  
more unto the  
perfect day.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PROVERBS 4:14-27.

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us avoid the companionship of those who would lead us from Thee, and guide our feet in the paths of righteousness, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Be Thou my friend and guide,  
Let me with Thee abide;  
Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1000. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Solomon, or one of the wise men of his time.

**Scripture Setting:** The Straight and Narrow Path, or the Broad Road? A blessing and a curse, Deut. 11:26-28. The wise choice, Deut. 30:19-20. The path of life, Psa. 16:11. The guiding light, Psa. 119; 105. Old and tried path, Jer. 6:16. The two ways, Matt. 7:13-14. The true way, John 14:6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features

of the lesson are: 1. A prohibition against an alliance with the wicked, and evil companionship. 2. The activity of the wicked. 3. Sin through excessive love of pleasure. 4. The contrast between the path of the just and of the wicked. 5. The importance of reading and hearkening to the Word of God. 6. The necessity of a clean heart. 7. Evil speech to be shunned. 8. Action to be studied and considered. 9. A straight course commanded.

### THE TWO ROADS.

**The King's Highway.** In ancient times, broad, winding highways were built at great expense and care from all parts of the kingdom to the capital, and these roads were called the king's highway. Civil engineers of the present time admire and wonder at the smooth, enduring hardness of some of these roads still extant. Treasure was lavishly expended to make them beautiful. Costly statues, exquisite flowers and spreading trees made these highways most inviting to the traveler. But, alas! there was never any period when these mountain roads, even within a few miles of the capital, were not haunted by thieves, bold highwaymen, who lurked behind rocks and trees, to rob and even murder the passing travelers. Travelers with a knowledge of the lurking places of these robber bands would avoid the king's highway and go across country. Such a course was always more difficult, with frequent obstacles to overcome, but they not only evaded danger but arrived at their destination by a more direct route. Even up to the eighteenth century travelers upon English public highways were subject to preying bands of robbers.

**The Narrow Path.** In this way paths were finally worn, chosen by the discreet traveler, who saw, behind the beauty and smoothness of the king's highway, its lurking dangers. Owing to its smoothness and breadth, royalty traveled the king's highway, and the king and his roistering train of followers were frequent victims of the highwaymen. Merchants, with their camel-laden trains, risked meeting the robber-bands sometimes once too often. The gay and thoughtless chose the king's highway because of its beauty and the apparent ease with which one might travel it. It was always thronged with a merry, careless tide of people and the straight path was narrow and laborious; oftentimes, instead of going around some steep place, the travelers were

compelled to climb straight up and on. Though there were beauties there, such as the king's highway might not boast, they were unseen by the casual passerby. Few people traveled that way.

**The Two Different Ways.** In that wonderful sermon on the Mount, Christ likens the passage through life to these roads, since the illustration would be familiar to his hearers. In the parable of the straight gate and narrow path that leads to the King in His Heaven, and the broad gate opening upon the broad and much traveled road, whose end is destruction, we have the choice of good and evil; for it is plainly written that it is open to everyone to choose which road he shall travel.

**A Danger Sign.** In our lesson the simile is used to show the temptations to which all who journey through life are exposed. The lesson is a danger sign set up by the wisest man of his age for those of every age and clime. It opens as abruptly as when a traveler is startled by the red danger signal or comes suddenly upon a great sign-board.

**Dangerous, No Thoroughfare.** What could be more emphatic than those two opening verses? "Enter not into the path of the wicked and go not in the way of evil men." Many a boy consorts with evil associates and is flattered by the companionship of smoking, swearing and drinking comrades, who emulate the vices of their elders under the false impression that familiarity with evil is an indication of manliness. When approached with an offer of high wages for some questionable employment, the young man in search of a vocation may well halt a moment before this danger sign, "Enter not into the path of the wicked."

**C. Q. D.** "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away." This warning is so urgent that it becomes a C. Q. D. sign. The exploitation and notoriety gained by the



highway robber leads many a boy reader of the sensational dime novel to emulate his hero's wicked defiance of law. Many a foolish youth chafes under the quiet and restraint of the school and longs for the excitement of bandit life. "Avoid" the dime novel and those who read such books. Be assured that the highwaymen of fiction and the highwaymen of reality are very different men and the boy who seeks such companionship chooses danger. It may be the rollicking, drunken revellers of the highway who invite the youth to join their revel. "Pass not by."

Choose the other side of the street; do not voluntarily go in the neighborhood of the saloon and gambling place, and avoid the company of those who frequent evil places, lest temptation assail you. Familiarity with evil weakens one's powers of resistance. On the highway are those who boast of dishonest gain and tainted wealth, until a steady job and regular wage seem "too slow" to an ambitious youth who risks his all on some gambling chance whose only certainty is loss. "Turn from" business associates and advisers whose methods savor of dishonesty or fraud. The votaries of impurity may lure with evil picture, music or song. "Pass away" and listen not to the siren song of those who would lure to ruin.

**They Sleep Not.** The emissaries of evil are tireless. The saloonkeeper, remembering that his present patrons must die, tries to win the boys and courts their patronage. The eighty tons of impure literature destroyed by the Society for the Prevention of Vice, show the strenuous effort of evil men and women to corrupt the youth. Safety lies in obedience to the command, "Be vigilant."

**The Straight and Narrow Path.** Having pictured the path of evil and its attendant dangers, we come to one of those contrasts with which the book of Proverbs abounds. "The path of the just is as a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The writer has pictured a sunrise! One sees the triumphant progress of a steadfast, righteous soul through life. The dawn of youth with all its rosy hopes unclouded by any presage of evil habits, the steady rising from the darkness of adversity to the bright high noon of a perfect life, the afternoon brightness of a life well spent. No clouds of dishonor and disgrace gather to foretell a rueful sunset, but straight on in all its shining brightness of honest endeavor, purity and transcendent principle to a full day, when in the glowing splendor of a triumphant and joyous death it passes

over to eternity's blest tomorrow. More than half a century did Frances E. Willard, the great temperance reformer, travel the path of the just, when in her dying moments, with the light of the eternal day upon her face, she exclaimed, "How beautiful to be with God!"

**The Way of the Wicked.** It is said that few save those who are sightless know what is absolute darkness. Even when covered with thick cloud, the moon and stars relieve the darkness of the night; while so few things are utterly impervious to light that it is well nigh impossible to shut out the vibrating waves of sunlight, on even the darkest day. In the time of the Inquisition, and the later days of prison horror, men would choose torture rather than undergo the terrors of the "dark cell." Indeed many emerged from it with reason dethroned. Imagination peopled its darkness with unknown horrors. The prisoner feared to grope along its walls, not knowing what his hands might touch. He dare not move a foot, not knowing what he might stumble upon. So is the way of the wicked. The drunkard must suffer delirium tremens; the criminal, fear of detection; the impure, an enfeebled body. It is not strange that sin makes cowards of its devotees. "They know not at what they stumble."

**The Only Safety.** Having presented the vivid contrast between good and evil; having set up the danger signal, the writer points us to the guide post that leads to safety, and from the remainder of the chapter we learn that the only security is in the diligent keeping of ears, eyes, heart, lips, feet and hands from evil. Companionship extends not only to persons. The ear should not keep company with coarse jest; impure pictures are imaged by the eye, until they become a man's lifelong companions. Unclean thoughts may be entertained by the heart until they gain permanent dwelling; the lips are soiled by association with lewd and profane words; the feet make acquaintance with the public dance hall and are lured to destruction, while the hands touch many an unclean thing until familiarity with the evil makes them close companions.

**Quiz.** 1. What great prophet and leader set a blessing and a curse before the children of Israel? 2. When did Christ picture two ways of life to His hearers? 3. Have you read how Christian sought the Wicket Gate in Pilgrim's Progress? 4. What false guide set him upon the wrong path? 5. Have we any choice between good and evil?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. There is always a beginning to sin; shun the first disobedient act. 2. Evil companions and sinful associates are to be avoided. 3. Temptation demands active resistance and conquest. 4. The activity of the wicked should spur the good to greater endeavor. 5. A just man is a beacon light to others. 6. The good are not left in darkness. 7. Life has no place for indecision. 8. He who hesitates is lost. 9. A straight course is always the best course.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of

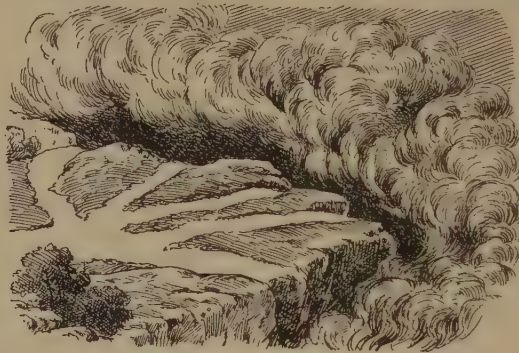


An  
ungodly  
man



A froward  
man soweth

up evil: and  
in his lips  
there is as  
a burning



and a  
whisperer



chief friends. A violent man enticeth his



and



into the way that is not good.





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS PROV. 16:25-33.

**Prayer:** Lord help us to see evil as Thou seest it, and may our lives abound in the fruits of the Spirit. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Our Heavenly Father, hear us now,  
And help us keep this sacred vow;  
Tho' we are young, oh, make us strong,  
Always to fight against the wrong.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1000. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Solomon.

**Scripture Setting:** A study of sins that spoil a life. Folly of self-will, Prov. 12:15. The end of a selfish life, Luke 12:18-20. The way of the ungodly, Psa. 1:6. The froward man, Prov. 3:32. Tattlers and busybodies, 1 Tim. 5:13. Devices of the wicked condemned, Prov. 12:2.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We have brought before us, 1. The sin and folly of self-will. 2. The folly of greed and selfishness. 3. The evil of ungodliness. 4. The mischief-maker as a source of evil. 5. Gossip and talebearing. 6. The man of evil. The lesson is a warning against vices prevalent at all times.

### CHARACTER SKETCHES.

**Self Will.** When seeking the Wicket Gate which would give him an entrance to eternal life, Christian meets Mr. Worldly Wiseman, who does not like that a man should be serious or read his Bible, or be troubled about sin, and who almost persuades Bunyan's hero that he may attain his desire without strict observance of the rules Evangelists had laid down for his guidance. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man." There are people who oppose their own will to the Divine will and claim the right to frame the laws which shall govern their own conduct. Those who attend Sunday games and theatre see "no harm in it." The advocates of so-called personal liberty say "a man has a right to drink or let it alone, as he pleases." Disobedient children think their parents "old-fashioned"; and every wrongdoer justifies himself, but "the end thereof are the ways of death." The Bible tells us, "The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walketh to direct his steps." We are not only to obey, but we are to delight in the law of the Lord. "He that laboureth, laboureth for himself."

**Selfishness and Greed.** In that wonderful tale of Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan introduces us to Mr. Hold-the-world, Mr. Money-lover, and Mr. Save-all, who, he tells us, "were school-fellows and were taught by one Mr. Gripe-man, a school-master in Love-gain, which is a market town in the county of Coveting, in the North." He also tells us of the silver mine located in Lucere Hill, over which the ground was so thin that it was dangerous for any to venture that way. The ground broke under them, and cost many their lives, while others were maimed and "could not to their dying day be their own men again." It is one thing to own wealth, another to be owned by wealth. The fever of money getting, the desire to get rich at the expense of others, to live for one's self, and

seek one's own good, are vices which destroy the soul. "I make shoes for a livelihood, but my employment is to do my Master's bidding," was the reply of a poor shoemaker when asked what was his employment. He labored not for himself.

**Ungodliness.** A heathen convert who came to the United States to become better fitted for missionary work among her own people, was asked what most impressed her in this country, and she replied, "The lack of reverence for God. In my country we have many gods, and we serve them all; here, you have but one God, and you do not serve Him. We reverence the gods we have made; your people fail to reverence the one great God who made them. My poor people pray and give thanks to gods who do nothing for them; yours seldom pray or give thanks to the God who has given you all this beautiful country, with its many benefits." Ingratitude is ignoble. An ungodly man is like a mariner who sails upon an uncharted sea without rudder or compass. His life-bark is bound to be grounded on the shoals of temptation—wrecked on the danger rocks of sin. Nothing can stay his destruction. "An ungodly man diggeth up evil; and in his lips there is a burning fire."

**Mischief Making.** "A froward man soweth strife." The blessing of Heaven descends on the peace-maker, but condemnation rests upon the one who sows discord. One person with an ungovernable, ugly temper, will destroy the happiness of the home, the peace of a whole community, and even bring dire results upon a nation. Give such a character a wide berth. An unhappy, quarrelsome disposition is a frequent cause of ill-health to its owner. Scientists tell us the bodily secretions of an angry person are poisonous. There is a legend that either thorns or heartsease spring up from the footsteps of each traveller through life. We

may not receive the world-wide acclaim accorded former President Roosevelt, when through his efforts as peacemaker the cruel and disastrous war between Russia and Japan was ended, but we can lessen friction and cause strife to cease between our friends and neighbors. We may never meet with the great Peace Tribunal at the Hague for the settlement of difficulties between nations, but we may carry with us an atmosphere of peace which shall cause wrath to subside, and evil to flee.

**Tale Bearing.** With one stroke does our great word-artist picture a character that has caused trouble through all the ages—"a whisperer separateth chief friends." Tattle and gossip is not dispensed upon the public street by those who loudly call their wares, but is retailed from house to house in whispers. The gossip is full of hint, suggestion and innuendo. No open charge or indictment is made, a few whispers, a significant nod, a shrug of the shoulders, and the reputation of an innocent person is torn to shreds. The talebearer has been called "the Judas of every society of which he is a member." The whisperer adds coal to the fire of distrust that has been created between friends; no confidence is esteemed sacred, no secret is regarded by him, and he becomes the most despicable of beings.

**Scheming.** There are negative people who accomplish little good or evil in the world, but not so the one set before us. "He enticeth his neighbor and leadeth him into a way that is not good; devises froward things, and bringeth evil to pass." The world is full of schemes which work evil to others. Get-rich-quick schemes, in which both parties are dishonest, since those who fall victims seek to get something without giving a just equivalent in exchange; speculative ventures which are often hazardous as gambling. Political trickery of those who hold the people's confidence. Alas! that a youth can scarcely walk the streets of a city or town without enticement to evil. The saloon, the slot machine and the gambling hall, and the house of evil are all peopled by those who are plotting and devising means for the downfall of our youth. We may take no active part in it, but are we not consenting to their destruction? As long as a part of the revenue therefrom flows into city, county, state and national coffers, have not each of us a part in these works of violence?

**The Crown of Old Age.** What a contrast is presented in the picture of a righteous old

age! "The hoary head is a crown of glory if it be found in the way of righteousness." The other characters depicted may live to be old. Indeed, one may picture the unlovable old age of each. The morose, stormy, obstinate old man, feared and endured only because of his advanced years; the selfish, greedy miser, guarding his hoard and with cowardly fear awaiting the separation from his gold, which death must bring. What more distressing than an ungodly old age, without comfort and without hope! The mischief maker, always a divisive factor, at last alienated from all friends, to spend an unloved, lonely old age; the doting gossip with garrulous wagging tongue; the wicked old Fagin depicted by Dickens.—In striking contrast is the white-haired servant of the Lord, with staff in hand, facing death with joyous confidence. "Though I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." Nowadays one hears much about keeping young. There are beauty doctors to massage away wrinkles; hair dyes to cover tell-tale gray hairs, but all these efforts to hide the signs of advancing years are futile. It were wiser to learn how to grow old. Character is the greatest beautifier; gray hair, a crown of glory if worn by a "child of the King."

**The Greatest Ruler.** "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty." Anger perverts judgment and is the cause of many misfortunes. It is the sign of a weak character, the mark of a weak brain. "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly." It is said that Abraham Lincoln was never known to be angry. The enduring patience of years enabled him to be the calm, dispassionate pilot who should hold steady the Ship of State during the stormy period of the Civil War. "He that ruleth his spirit, than he taketh a city." The real hero is the one who gains a victory over self.

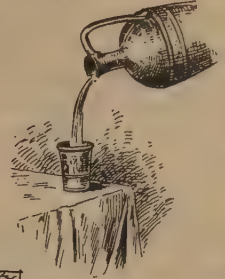
**Quiz.** 1. What prophet of the Bible opposed his will to God's will for him, refusing to take the journey God commanded, and what was his punishment? 2. Name those commandments most frequently violated by ungodly men. 3. What is the Hague Peace Tribunal? 4. What disciple of Christ was the victim of talebearers and false witnesses and was stoned to death. 5. What plotter was hanged on the gallows he had prepared for another?

**Seed Truths.** 1. The self-willed are weak of will, since they do not have the reinforcement of the Divine will with which to withstand temptation. 2. The man who is a law unto himself, is the most lawless of men. 3. Greed impoverishes the heart and starves the soul. 4. Selfishness and loneliness are close companions. 5. A man's possessions often gain possession of the man. 6. He who labors for himself has a hard task master.





is a mocker, strong



is



and whosoever is  
deceived thereby  
is not wise.  
Be not among  
winebibbers; among  
riotous eaters of  
flesh: For the



and



shall  
come  
to



and



shall clothe



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS PROVERBS 20:1; 23:20-21.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we beware of the tempter and not be deceived by evil. Make us wise to shun strong drink. Help us not only to avoid the evil ourselves but do thou help us in saving others from the curse. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Alcohol's a hard and cruel master,  
And he pays in wretched coin,  
Of rags, and blame and crime and shame,  
Come every one and join,  
From all nations, of all ages.  
Come! we want you one and all  
In our strike against the wages  
Of old tyrant, Alcohol.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about 1000 B. C. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Solomon.

**Scripture Setting:** Some of the causes of Poverty. The sluggard, Prov. 6:6-11. Slackness in dealings, Prov. 10:4. Indolence, Prov. 20:13; 24:33-34. Gluttony, Prov. 23:1-3. Bad company, Prov. 28:19. Better than riches and trouble, Prov. 15:16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The writer gives us a vivid word picture of the train of evils which

follow strong drink, and emphasizes, 1. The mockery of resorting to wine for strength, happiness or riches. 2. The violence committed through strong drink. 3. That a lack of wisdom is shown by those who use intoxicating liquors. 4. The evil of associating with drunken companions. 5. The sin of self-indulgence. 6. Drunkenness and wastefulness as a cause of poverty. 7. The abject condition of the drunkard.

### MOCKED AND DECEIVED.

**Wine.** Wine is one of the oldest of beverages. Its use dates so far back that it is not known when men first began to drink the fruit of the vine. It is now generally accepted that two kinds of wine were in use. The one was harmless, being the fresh juice of the grape, often pressed from the grapes by the royal cup-bearer before the king's eyes, or by the waiting servants in the presence of the guests. Such was the wine referred to by Jacob in his blessing to Judah; in Moses' song it is named the "pure blood of the grape." It may be likened to the unfermented juice of the grape which is fast displacing the fermented wine in sickness. If we keep this harmless drink in mind it will make it easier to understand some of the biblical references to wine. Then there was the fermented wine, also in frequent use and working evil then as it does today.

**Bible Attitude Toward Wine.** All other writers and writings of ancient times commend the moderate use of intoxicants, and even approve occasional drunkenness. Intoxication is only condemned when it is habitual. A tablet excavated from the ruins of ancient Babylon tells us that "Wine drunk in season and to satisfy is joy to the soul." The Bible contains no such passages as this. Instead, we find throughout its pages, warning instances of the power of wine to deceive and destroy, condemnation and even prohibition of its use, Divinely appointed orders of men, such as the Nazarites and Rechabites, with a pledge stronger than that of any teetotaler of the present day.

**A Mockery.** "Wine is a mocker." It approaches under the garb of a friend. It seeks to win the invalid through the promise of health, when it really weakens the en-

feebled organs so as to retard recovery. Though science has shattered the claim, it comes to the poor man with a claim that it is a food, and through the money expended for drink it robs himself and family of food. It mocks the weak of will with the belief that they are strong-willed enough to drink or let it alone, until will power is dethroned. It makes men boast of and fight for personal liberty when they are slaves of alcohol. It seeks recognition under the plea that the Bible countenances the use of wine, until its victim falls under the ban, "No drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God." "I know enough to let drink alone when it harms me," said a young man to John B. Gough. "Ah, yes, but the trouble is, when the thing has gone that far, drink will not let you alone," was Gough's reply.

**A Cause of Crime.** "Strong drink is raging," or a brawler. It rouses and stirs evil passions. Under its influence, even pure men and women become impure. The drinker becomes crafty, deceitful and untrustworthy. It tends to the destruction of every God-given faculty of man. Judge Coleridge, the great English jurist, declares that in the course of his judicial life, "There is scarcely a crime before me that is not directly or indirectly caused by drink." Scientific experiments made with the most delicate and susceptible instruments prove that an ordinary glass of whiskey will produce a loss of self-control and lowering of the will power. At a chapel meeting in the Ohio States Prison, the 2,500 convicts in attendance were asked how many were there because of crimes committed through strong drink, and over 2,300 hands were uplifted. When asked how many of the 2,500 present



had always been total abstainers, only two hands went up.

**The Drunkard's Folly.** Our writer has told us the deceptive powers of strong drink and now he assures us that "Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." To listen to an imposter is always a sign of folly, and alcohol is the greatest of imposters. To risk health, character and fortune for that which ruins the first, destroys the second, and wrecks the third, shows a lack of wisdom. Strong drink has ruined many illustrious men, but never a man wholly wise. It is said in a certain English insane asylum the following test of sanity is used: The water plug is turned on in a water-tight compartment and the patient is given the task of drying the flooded floor. If he makes an unsuccessful effort to dry the floor with the large mop given him, he is held for treatment. If he shuts off the water by closing the plug, he has proven his sanity. For a man to attempt to attain success against the inroads of strong drink is as great a sign of folly.

**Temperance in All Things.** Not only are we counselled against intoxication, but against excess in eating. We are not to be among immoderate, "riotous" eaters of flesh. The prohibition related to banquets which were orgies of gluttony and drunkenness, of which the Bible contains many instances. Temperance has been defined as moderation in the use of all things helpful, and abstinence from all things harmful. An excessive meat diet leads to a desire for alcoholic liquors.

**A Source of Poverty.** "For the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty." The money annually spent for drink, if rightly expended, would give to each of the three million families affected by drink, the following articles: Four barrels of flour, sixty dozen eggs, sixty pounds of butter, two hundred pounds of beef, sixty-five pounds of chicken, two barrels of apples and a goodly supply of other fruit. Yes, and instead of the poor receiving their Christmas turkey as a charity, there would still be enough money left to enable every drinking man to buy a turkey for his own family every Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Truly, temperance means "Coal in the cellar, potatoes in the bin, flour in the barrel, a piano in the parlor, beefsteak for breakfast, a roast for dinner, hats for the head, coats for the back, and shoes for the feet."

"**The Raggedy Man.**" "Drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags." Love of drink

makes a man a useless and unproductive member of society. He becomes incapable; his money is poured into the saloonkeeper's till. His brain becomes dull, his muscles grow flabby, hard and honest work becomes distasteful, and soon his place in labor's ranks is filled by a soberer man. The hours are spent in tippling; the one degrading habit has transformed a man into a dull, sodden loafer clothed in rags. Drunkenness is always marked by a disregard for personal appearance.

**An Unfortunate Trio.** We hear much discussion nowadays of the cause of poverty and find many remedies advocated. Solomon made a study of the social conditions of his time, and throughout Proverbs ascribes poverty to three causes which are usually treated as one, and there is an increasing tendency on the part of present day students of the social problem to recognize the same three great causes of poverty. Drunkenness, indolence and sensuality are closely allied. Just as in the old-time riddle, Elizabeth, Betsy and Bess were one, so the drunkard, glutton and sluggard are too often one and the same person. "What is it makes the rich man richer and the poor man poorer?" shouted an orator. He waited for someone to add the climax to his efforts, by replying, "Monopolies and trusts," but the answer, when it came, held more of truth than demagoguery, for some clear-headed listener shouted "Beer!" "He who does not plow, will not reap." Strong drink and the saloon are a baleful cause of indolence and inertness. Self-denial and self-control are handmaids of success.

**Quiz.** 1. What two orders of total abstainers are mentioned in the Bible? 2. What is the difference between the attitude of the Bible and that of other ancient writings in regard to strong drink? 3. What Judge of Israel was a Nazarite and what can you say of his strength? 4. What can you say of John the Baptist? 5. What person in the Bible, yielding to appetite, sold his birthright for a mess of pottage? 6. What example of industry and thrift is commended to the sluggard?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The devil is the father of lies; wine, the deceiver, is therefore one of his progeny. 2. "Fools make a mock at sin." 3. Strong drink is the fool's trap. 4. The drunkard, glutton and sluggard often wear the same hat, and use the same pair of feet. 5. Self-indulgence gains a master; self-denial gains the mastery. 6. Drunkenness and poverty are close companions. 7. The glutton pays the debt to his stomach through a mortgage on his future expectations. 8. Fast Asleep snores when Opportunity calls. Wide Awake jumps at the first call and gets first place. 9. The true Christian is "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



not thou upon the



when it is red, when it  
giveth his colour in the



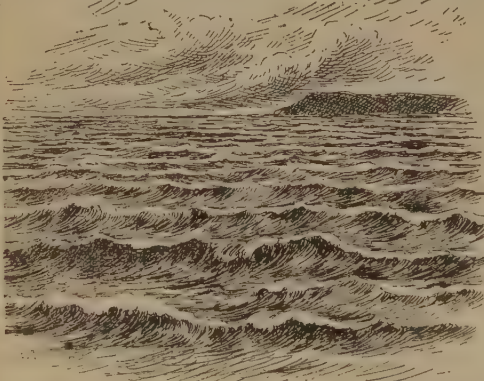
when it  
moveth  
itself  
aright.  
At the  
last it  
biteth  
like a



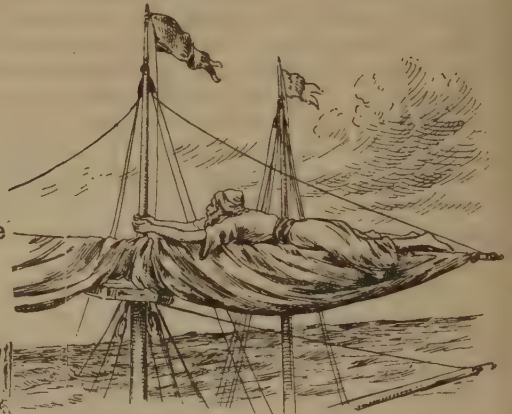
and  
stingeth  
like  
an



Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the



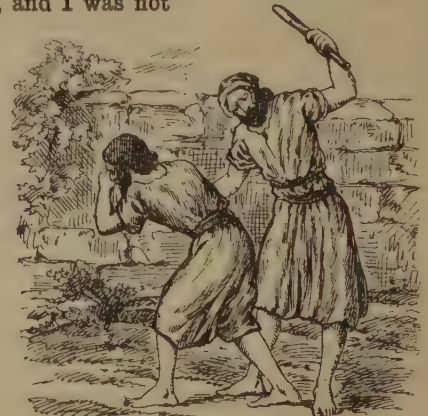
or as he that  
lieth upon the



They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not



they have



me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS PROV. 23:29-35.

**Prayer.** Lord, May we ever remember Thy warnings against strong drink and be preserved from the sin of intemperance. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"At home, abroad, by day or night,  
In company or in town,  
If asked to drink, we'll smile and turn  
Our glasses upside down."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 1000. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Solomon.

**Scripture Setting:** Drunkenness and its consequences. The arrogance of the drinker, Hab. 2:5. Counsel against drunkenness, Rom. 13:13. The drunkard unprepared for death, Luke 21:34. The fancied security of the drunkard, Deut. 29:19-20. The drunkard lost, Gal. 5:21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Again we are warned against intemperance. In a query of startling com-

prehensiveness and its answer, the attention is called to, 1. The remorse that follows a misspent life. 2. The sorrows that attend the drunkard. 3. The evil effect of wine upon the disposition and temper. 4. The untrustworthiness of the testimony of the drinking man. 5. The unnecessary ills a drinker brings upon himself. 6. The changed appearance of the drunkard. 7. The evils chargeable to strong drink. 8. The command of total abstinence and avoidance of temptation.

### A PERTINENT QUERY ANSWERED.

**The Question.** "Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes?" It is said that Lorenzo Dow, an itinerant preacher of early days, was once appealed to, to discover a criminal who was supposed to be in his audience. The shrewd preacher prefaced his sermon with a graphic account of the crime, ending with the words, "The man who committed this crime is before me, and I will now expose him by throwing a stone at him." The threat was accompanied by an appropriate gesture of the hand and the guilty man disclosed himself by dodging. Through the subdivisions of his question the Wise Man has thrown a handful of stones at his congregation; thrown them with such unerring aim that every drinking man dodges.

**Who Hath Woe?** The drunkard's lamentation over his weakness, over promises unredeemed and pledges broken, over the return to the wallow, the pitiless, agonized cry of remorse when returning reason brings to the man the realization of some awful crimes committed when crazed by drink; belated regret for wasted opportunities and a life misspent, these are some of the woes of the drunkard. Who has not seen the sign, "Damaged by Fire! For Sale Cheap!" above a window-display of smoke-stained articles? There is not a converted man whose life has been blackened by the fires of sinful lust and appetite who would not part gladly with the remembrance of those misspent years. "Damaged by Fire, For Sale Cheap!" is the placard every reformed man would put over the wasted years of his life.

**Who Hath Sorrow.** A man drinks for pleasure, to have enjoyment, and for a "good time with the fellows." He drinks in public

and in private, simply because it is pleasant. There are many excuses for drunkenness. One man drinks because his doctor prescribes it for a month, another drinks beer because it is a food, when he knows full well by indisputable scientific evidence beer has been proven not a food. The infinitesimal amount of nutriment contained in beer could be obtained in greater quantity from hops and grain before they are malted and brewed, but the man who drinks beer for its food properties, does not resort to grain and hops in their natural state twenty or thirty times a day, nor frequent the stores where they are sold till late hours of the night. Men drink for self-gratification, but how often self-gratification gives way to self-loathing. Said a man recently, "As I stood before the open grave of my mother whose heart I had broken by my evil ways, the whole world seemed black, the skies were laden with a weight of sorrow that will never be lifted from me."

**Who Hath Contentions?** How often has the world been startled by some violent crime committed by the most peaceable of men as a result of drink? How many mothers plead before the police court for the wayward boy who was a "good son and would never have disgraced himself by striking his mother had he not been drunk"? The number of men who are loving husbands and fond fathers except when under the influence of liquor! The people who live in an atmosphere of strife and loud quarreling and brawls because of strong drink! One of the first and most marked improvements noted under local option is the diminished number of brawls and police trials, while in Prohibition States there is marked decrease in the number of murders.

**Who Hath Babbling?** By weakening self-control, alcohol loosens the tongue. The intoxicated man will blab family details and business secrets to the shame of his family and detriment of his business. It has been scientifically demonstrated that within thirty minutes after taking an ordinary glass of spirits, memory, thought, reason and discrimination are all weakened; the flow of speech has been started, but the speaker is in an unsafe condition of mind, unable to judge whether his remarks are foolish or brilliant. What seems eloquent to him is foolish babbling to his hearer. The testimony of a drinking man is always untrustworthy.

**Wounds Without Cause.** Not always the battered face, the broken arm, gashes, bruises and other marks of the saloon brawl. These were enough, but the drunkard must face a wounded conscience, the thought of what might have been, the remembrance of former happiness and prosperity; yes, and the thought of wife and little ones—the real sufferers from his weakness and sin. Like the small-pox patient, the drunkard must carry lifelong scars.

**Redness of Eyes.** Look at the banquet table when the wine has made its rounds and the laughter and gaiety are at their highest. How the eyes of the young men darken and the orbs of beautiful women glow and sparkle! But it is not long before the eyes wear a lack-lustre look, and become dull and bleary. During five years Prof. Kraepelin, of Heidelberg, Germany, made a series of two thousand experiments, lasting for several months, with instruments of precision, to determine the effect of alcohol on the five special senses. As a result of these experiments he found that where a person of normal vision could read letters of fair size thirty feet away, half an hour after using half a small glass of whiskey he had to be brought within eighteen to twenty-five feet of the letters. Typesetters could not work so rapidly. Colors like crimson and violet that could be seen before were obscured and could no longer be distinguished; this fact first led the railroad companies to impose total abstinence upon those employees whose work in any way related to the signal lights. In the Swedish army it was found that a single glass of wine diminishes accuracy of aim and that all soldiers were more or less unqualified for accurate marksmanship after using wine or beer.

**The Answer.** Lo, the writer of our lesson has aimed his query so straight that the culprit is discovered! Wine and mixed drink are the cause of all the evils enumerated. Long the liquor traffic has dodged the issue. Ever since the days of Solomon champions of drink have tried to defend the use of intoxicants. At first they refused to acknowledge that drunkenness was more than a harmless lapse from the tedium of life. But drunkenness could not be justified in face of the

Bible edict which placed drunkards with those who could not enter Heaven, and the liquor adherents condemned excess, but defended moderation. Then came science with irrefutable proof that alcohol in the smallest quantity is injurious to body and mind, until now the fight is in the open and the entire liquor system is condemned by God's people.

**A Broad Ultimatum.** "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color to the cup, when it moveth itself aright." This means nothing less than total abstinence from all intoxicants; the prohibition is even stronger, "Look not!" Temptation is to be shunned, there must be no dalliance with an evil so baleful in its results. The power of appetite is so strong that even to look upon wine is the undoing of many a young man. The wine glass should be banished from the social board. The fashionable lady or young woman who proffers wine to her guests becomes a temptress. A compassionate woman once offered a few coins to a drunken beggar and was outraged and startled to have them thrown back in her face. "Take back your coins," said the drunkard. "If I had returned my first glass of wine which I received from your hands as unceremoniously, I would never have become the drunken, poverty-stricken creature you see today."

**"At the Last."** What a pathos in those three short words! A once honest youth seeks the saloon and evil associates, and a promising career ends in the prison cell. To the convict's number upon the cell door affix his plea, "Drink Did It." The life of the young man who started out with such bright promise only to disappoint the expectation of parent and friends, is ended; a suicide in the morgue of the city where temptations have been his undoing. His name may be unknown, but it is safe to inscribe upon the coffin plate, "Drink Did It." The gay girl who was so happy in her young wifehood and motherhood and idolized her babe, lies in a drunken sleep while the little one toddles to its death. Write over the brow of the poor creature crazed by the awful awakening to the result of her sinful carelessness, "Drink Did It." The marriage bond of the young couple who plighted troth at the altar has been severed. The once happy bride lies at the feet of her drunken husband, who has slain her. Publish over the gallows from which the poor wretch swings out into eternity, "Drink Did It." "For at last it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder."



# WOES OF THE DRUNKARD.

Woe unto them that rise up



that they  
may follow  
strong  
drink; that  
continue  
until



till wine inflame them! And the



and  
the



the



and



and wine,  
are in their



but they regard  
not the work of the

Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands. Woe unto them that are mighty to



wine, and



of strength to mingle strong drink. Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteous-  
ness of the righteous from him!



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ISAIAH 5:1-23

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May I as an individual, and we as a nation fulfill Thy purpose and exalt Thy righteousness, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

"For a cap and bells our lives we pay;  
Bubbles we buy with a whole soul's tasking;  
'Tis Heaven alone that is given away,  
'Tis only God may be had for the asking."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 760. Place, Jerusalem. Person, Isaiah.

**Scripture Setting:** Evil consequences of sin. Ill-gotten wealth, Jer. 17:11. Drunkenness rebuked, Joel 1:5. Deceit shortens life, Ps. 55:23. The tempter's punishment, Matthew 18:7. The drink seller's woe, Hab. 2:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of the lesson are: 1. The woes of drunkenness as depicted by Isaiah. 2. The prophet's clear-sighted vision of the resultant evils from national debauchery. 3. The fearless arraignment of mighty men. 4. The insecurity of the sinner. 5. The penalties which follow national excesses.

### WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

**Isaiah, The Gospel Prophet.** Because of his prophecies of Christ, the atonement and spread of the gospel throughout the world, Isaiah has been called the gospel prophet. He saw sin in its far-reaching consequences, and in the parable of the vineyard tries to bring Israel to a sense of its ingratitude to the God who had chosen them, delivered them from bondage, destroyed their enemies, given them a good and fertile land and showered blessings upon them. God had bestowed this wonderful care upon Israel that a nation might arise to serve Him in righteousness; and forgetful of all their benefits, His laws were disobeyed, His prophets mocked and heathen abominations committed. They had failed of the purpose for which God had chosen them. The history of our great republic is one of a chosen people, led to a wonderful land of plenty, delivered from enemies without and within by manifold providences. We may well ask, "Are we as a nation fulfilling God's purpose for us?"

**The Chief Criminal.** What a surgeon Isaiah would have made! With marvelous insight he discerns the inciting cause and in words quick as a flash of steel lays it bare. Lo, the love of money is the root of the matter. "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place." Remove the profits that accrue to the government, and how long would the nation hand its fairest and best over to the saloon? How long would the state build prisons and reformatories for its victims? How long would city or town endure its evil influence if it were not for the license money? Who would rent his property for such purpose, if it were not that the profits of the business enable them to pay higher rents than the others? Because it means easy work and money, men degrade their manhood and over the counter sell death-dealing, soul-destroying poison to their fellows. "That they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." The liquor traffic is the most gigan-

tic trust of today, seeking to own the earth. The choicest corners in the business sections of our cities must be reserved "for the trade;" every other business must accede to its demands. It is trade's fiercest competitor and labor's hardest taskmaster.

**Evil Cannot Endure.** In the woe pronounced the prophet tells us that the houses of those who seek ill-gotten wealth shall be desolate and that evil gains shall cease. A painting of "Liberty Welcoming the Oppressed of All Nations" adorns the reception hall of a great St. Louis brewery. It cost \$25,000. With broken shackles at her feet and while a former slave sings in gratitude for the emancipation of her race, Liberty extends a welcoming hand to the oppressed from other lands. The guide asked a temperance sightseer if the millions of capital invested, the enormous output of the brewery, and the magnitude of the business did not discourage her. The reply was, "I remember that a generation ago St. Louis was a slave mart; today there is neither slaveholder nor slave in all the land. The liberty wrought in one generation may be extended in the next; a generation hence there will be neither drink seller nor drunkard. Then your picture of Liberty will have to be remodeled; broken beer barrels will be beside the broken shackles at Liberty's feet, while those emancipated from strong drink will join the former slave in a song of gratitude." The discrimination of business firms, railroad and insurance companies against drinking men; the extension of local option and increasing prohibition territory all tend toward the fulfillment of this prediction.

**His Own Worst Enemy.** "Woe unto them who rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them." Music and gaiety abound and God is wholly disregarded. In no uncertain tones the prophet pictures the fate of individual and nation through luxury, sensuality and drunkenness. The drunkard has always a hard luck tale. Fortune has been against him, his employer is prejudiced, friends misjudged him, when the truth is, the drinking man is his own worst enemy; his misfortunes may be traced to drink; he loses his position because his habits unfit him for continuous labor.

**The Mockers.** The next woe is pronounced



upon "them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin with a cart rope; that say, Let him make speed and hasten his work that we may see it; and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come that we may know it." There are persons that mock at righteousness and make a jest of sin. There are people that treat the temperance question as a joke and laugh at the warnings of their elders and the teachings of science. They demand to be shown proof but refuse to accept proof when it is adduced.

**Moody and the Bible.** A young college student once approached Mr. Moody with the remark, "There is so much in the Bible I cannot understand; give me a Bible that I can understand, Mr. Moody, and I will believe it." The great evangelist looked the callow youth over searchingly and said, "Bless your soul, my dear boy, if you could understand it all I would not believe the Bible."

**The Sophist.** As some thieves seek first to blind their intended victims by throwing a dangerous acid in their eyes, so Satan blinds the conscience and confuses the spiritual vision. Beware of "them who call evil good and good evil; that put darkness for light and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter." The one who assures you that it is all right to disobey a father's commands, or ignore a mother's advice; the one who sees "no harm" in smoking, drinking and other evils, is an unsafe companion. The arguments in favor of personal liberty and the regulation and license of evil are sophistry and they may be classed under this third woe.

**The Prudent Man.** According to all God's teachings, His servants are to make no terms or compromise with evil. His first commandment to the first man was a prohibition with death penalty attached. "Look not behind thee" was the command laid upon Lot and his family, but Lot's wife disregarded the prohibition to her own destruction. Achan's purpose to share in the spoils of evil and disregard of God's command to in no wise touch the unclean thing, brought defeat upon his people. Saul thought to consecrate the proceeds of his disobedience to the Lord, but Samuel's stern edict was "To obey is better than sacrifice" and the kingdom passed from Saul's house forever. Those statesmen and parties who would bargain for evil may seem "wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight" but it were wiser to follow the example of the Chinese Emperor who refused to legalize the sale of opium, declaring, "I cannot receive any revenue from that which

causes misery and suffering to my people."

**The Final Woe.** So many parties are included in Isaiah's final woe that it might be termed a "blanket" indictment. If we adapt it to modern times, it covers the drinker, the drink seller and the licenser of drink. "Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine"—not mighty in valor, strength and true manliness, but mighty to drink wine. The woe may not be through the Divine wrath; drink fixes its own penalty; it may be loss of health, a wrecked mind or dulled ambition that doom the drinking man to failure.

**Men of Strength to Mingle Strong Drink.** May we not depart from the prophet's original meaning and apply this description to the manufacturers and dispensers of strong drink? There are three quarters of a million persons engaged in the manufacture and sale of liquor in the United States. More dangerous than any foreign foe who may attack the nation's coast line; a greater drain upon the people's money than the largest standing army we could possibly recruit; more deadly in its destructive work than the most costly navy—is this great army, with one out of every hundred and twenty impressed in its service. It is an army enlisted under the seal and with the consent of our government. Above every one of the saloon bars in this country are two documents, the one bearing the seal of the United States, and the other, the sanction of the commonwealth; they are the enlistment papers under which these soldiers of evil serve—the federal tax receipt and the municipal license, which state that for the payment of a stated sum of money, the wretched business has been made as lawful as the sale of food and other necessities of life. For revenue, "We, the people," permit this great army to attack the home of the nation, despoil our daughters and ruin our sons. Truly, "woe is unto them which justify the wicked for a reward."

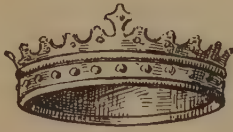
**Quiz.** 1. What is Isaiah's rank as a prophet? 2. What king was Isaiah's friend? 3. What can you tell of the parable of the vineyard? 4. What nations of ancient times passed into decay through drunkenness? 5. Are any of the woes pronounced by Isaiah applicable to our times?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The money in the business is the liquor traffic's tower of strength. 2. Money wrongly gotten carries its own curse. 3. Right is ever right and wrong is always wrong. 4. Sophistry is the devil's ablest lieutenant. 5. The wisdom of the world is folly and abomination to God. 6. Many a young man has started out in life to make a name for himself only to gain a reputation as a drunkard.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



Woe to the



of  
pride,  
to  
the



of  
Eph-  
raim,  
whose  
glo-  
rious  
beauty  
is a



which  
are  
on the  
head  
of the  
fat.



of them that  
are overcome  
with wine!  
Behold, the  
Lord hath a  
mighty and  
strong one,  
which, as a  
tempest of hail,  
and a destroying



as a



of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand. The crown of pride, the



of Ephraim,  
shall be





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ISAIAH 28:1-18; READ ALSO MATTHEW 7:24-29.

**Prayer:** Lord, Help me to build my life on nothing less than the rock of Thy righteousness, with Christ as the cornerstone of every endeavor, for Christ's sake. Amen.

"Thy Kingdom come, O Savior great,  
In hearts and homes, in church and state;  
But ere it comes, full well we know,  
Saloons, saloons, saloons must go."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 712. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Isaiah, the priests and prophets.

**Scripture Setting:** Duties of those who direct the affairs of state. Temperance commended, Eccl. 10:16. Why rulers should be sober, Prov. 31:4. Character required, Dan. 6:3. A rewarder of good, Prov. 14:35. The friend of the people, Ps. 72:4. Should be just, Jer. 22:3.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The prophet shows that, 1. Neither wealth, architecture nor com-

manding position make a city. 2. Drunkenness in high places causes the overthrow of municipality and nation. 3. The security of the righteous, "He that believeth shall not make haste." 4. That a drunken official is always a faithless public servant. 5. That God is not mocked. 6. The danger of an unholy alliance. 7. The futility of falsehood and dishonest diplomacy. 8. That God requires righteousness of public officials. 9. The sure foundation whose cornerstone is Christ.

### THE FALSE AND THE TRUE.

**A City on a Hill.** King Omri could have chosen no better site for the capital of Israel than Samaria. Built on a hill and surrounded on every side by hills clothed with olive and vine; the rich, fertile valleys and a view of the Mediterranean disclosed by the lower hills to the west, added to the charm of position. Isaiah likens Samaria to the glorious crown of this marvelously rich and fertile country. Many kings had added to the grandeur and beauty of its adornment. It was not only the residence but the burial place of Israel's kings, marked by costly mausoleums and sepulchres. But, alas, a great temple of Baal stood in Israel's capital, while in every grove and under wide-spreading trees were altars and images of false gods. Religion was scorned, righteousness no longer the rule of life and drunkenness so wide-spread and common as to be a national sin and woe upon the proud city and nation.

**Storm Swept.** Isaiah is using no strange picture when he likens God's judgment to the bursting of a tropical storm. His hearers are familiar with such scenes of sudden devastation. Lightning flashes, clouds gather with amazing rapidity, hail and rain drive down the valleys, and violent streams flow from every gorge and carry destruction with them, where a moment before sunny skies and balmy air promised perpetual summer. Such is the fancied security of the sinner. The over-taxed stomach, the poisoned brain of the alcohol drinker suddenly revolt and lifelong pain and torture result. God's judgments may or may not come with rapid force, but they are ever unerring and final. Within five years after Isaiah's prophecy was delivered there was no longer a kingdom of Israel. Samaria was many times rebuilt and demolished, but the woe of its crimes rested upon it and its ruins alone remain. The city

was "overcome with wine." Samaria and Jerusalem, Nineveh and Babylon have fallen. Will not the great cities of today which imitate their vices meet with a like fate?

**The Survivors.** But there is a saving remnant who face this whirlwind unmoved. Isaiah tells us they are those who sought Divine wisdom and strength to perform the daily duties of life and fulfill the obligation of office. By "them that turn the battle at the gate" was meant either to drive back the enemy through the fortified gates by which he had entered the city or even to the enemy's own gate, the greatest of all bravery, since it meant to wrest victory from defeat. The true servant of God has nothing to fear. There are men whom the outbursts of popular indignation against public graft and immorality leave unscathed; they are like the giant sequoias of California, that, having withstood the storms of centuries, still tower above their fellows.

**Priest, Prophet and Judge.** It was the priest's sacred office to act between Jehovah and man, to offer sacrifice and oblation for the people. To the prophet was given sacred moments when the spirit of God rested upon him with such power as to enable him to give timely warning of disaster and evil. The priestly judges sat in a commission with the most difficult and important cases to decide. Surely, priest, prophet and judge should have been men of clear brain and unerring wisdom. In the choice of our rulers and judges are we guided by the warning of Solomon, "It is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink; lest they drink and forget the law and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted."

**Overcome Through Wine.** Jerusalem is no better than Samaria; so widespread is the vice of drunkenness, that even priests and prophets are addicted to drink. Judges are

so overcome with wine that they decide against the innocent and shield the guilty. Alas, that even since Isaiah's time, the church has not always been free from drunkenness.

**Better Things.** Less than a hundred years ago an old preacher used to so time his visits as to remain over Sunday with a godly family in a certain Connecticut village. The old man would preach to the little community, and Monday morning adjust his saddle bag, mount his horse and drive off on his regular business, which was to sell liquors to the country tavern keepers; neither preacher nor congregation saw any inconsistency. Today, not only the ministry, but all the forces of the church are arrayed against the traffic in intoxicating drinks.

**In the Wallow.** If any one disbelieves Isaiah's charges, let him visit the tables where these dignitaries sit; all the tables are full of filthy vomit. Music, light, flowers and tinsel show give allurements to vice, but the glamour aside, and the wallow in all its filth is revealed. Many a stage-struck girl learns too late the awful realities behind the footlights; and many a boy learns to his ruin that gambling is attended by the swift certainty of loss. The painted beauty shows her brazen hideousness when her prey has been drawn to destruction. Drunkenness has been called a bestial sin, but

"Who has ever heard of a poor old horse,  
That had to go reeling home?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Who ever heard of a drunken cow?  
Or even a tipsy cat?"

**Jest Turned to Earnest.** The prophetic warning is derided. "Who is this preacher talking to? Does he think we are babies just weaned, or little children taking our first lesson in words, that precept must be upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little?" In drunken mimicry, they call Isaiah's reiteration, stammering. It is a remarkable fact that the language of the Assyrians, to whom their nation later fell a prey, bore a marvelous resemblance to the stammering jargon with which these drunken scoffers derided God's prophet. The sins of their own youth confront parents in their children. The sensual seeker after pleasure loses all sense of enjoyment. The drunkard is swallowed up of wine until he loses all likeness to his former self, and resembles nothing so much as an animated whisky or beer keg.

**Character Building.** Unconsciously these scoffers enunciated a great truth. All great reforms have

small beginnings. When the W. C. T. U. conceived the idea of securing a generation of total abstainers through the teaching of the evil effects of alcohol and other narcotics in the public schools, the liquor interests scoffed at these teachers of babies. Today twenty-five millions of school children in the United States receive temperance education and practically all of the civilized nations pay some attention to temperance teaching in the schools, and recently a liquor organ stated that the most dangerous menace to the liquor business is the temperance teaching in the schools.

**A Covenant with Death.** The politicians of Jerusalem scorned Isaiah's threat of destruction. Instead of making the Lord their helper, they had formed a secret alliance with Egypt while in open alliance with Assyria. It was a refuge of lies with falsehood for its foundation. No wonder our prophet calls it a covenant with death and with hell. "I pray you read the 28th of Isaiah from the 5th to the 15th verses," Oliver Cromwell wrote to the politicians of his time. May we not refer those politicians of today who for revenue and gain would have our government continue its covenant with the saloon, to the same message? Falsehood, cunning and diplomacy are an insecure foundation for individual or national security.

**The True Foundation and Its Cornerstone.** Having shown the judgment which must follow upon such evil conduct, and upon how false a foundation they are building their hopes of security, he points them to righteousness and truth as the sure foundation and prophecies of Christ as the precious cornerstone, and of the confidence, peace and security of those who trust the Everlasting Savior. "I tried every cure for drunkenness," testified a reformed man, "and all failed; then I sought the Christ cure, and it has kept me sober."

**Quiz.** 1. Of what nation was Samaria the capital? 2. Who built Jerusalem and of what people was it the capital? 3. To what fruit does Isaiah liken Samaria? 4. In what parable does Christ warn us to build on a rock? 5. To whom did Christ declare himself the rock?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Drunkenness can undermine the greatest prosperity. 2. Any craft can stand fair weather, but to weather a nor'easter proclaims its seaworthiness. 3. God is not only a source of honor, but of wisdom and strength to those who rely upon him. 4. Former goodness cannot save a man from present sin. 5. Wine swallows them who swallow it. 6. Many a jest is turned to earnest. 7. A lie never saves a situation. 8. He who hides behind a falsehood, hides like the ostrich. 9. Christ is the cornerstone of every real success.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ISAIAH 61:1-9.

**Prayer:** Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, in whose Hand is the destiny of the nations and the welfare of the world, accept, we beseech Thee, the gratitude of our hearts for the measure of success attending the work of Thy people in quickening the conscience of the nations to the evil and destructiveness of strong drink. Make our hearts strong within us to maintain and extend this work until the whole round world is delivered from the tyranny of its cruel and ruthless rule and all the sons of men are free from its defiling and debasing power. Then the victory which is Thine shall go forth like the bright-

ness of the dawn and Thy deliverance like a lamp that is lighted; nations shall see Thy victory and all kings thy glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In holy league, O Lord, we seek  
To guard the tempted and the weak  
From that fell sin whose fatal reign  
Brings crime and madness in its train,  
Ourselves we would deny, to save  
Our brethren from the drunkard's grave.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Between 600 and 500 B. C. Place, Palestine soon after the return from Exile. Persons, the Prophet speaking for God and the people of Israel.

**Scripture Setting:** Warning from Scripture. Israel's dread of Drunkenness, Deut. 21:20. Warnings Against Drunkenness, Prov. 23:20-35. Drunken Rulers, Isa. 5:11-22; Isa. 28:1-7. The Devilishness of Drunkenness, Joel 3:3; Amos 6:6. The Penalty of Drunkenness, Nahum 1:10; Matt. 24:49, 50; I Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21. The Joy of a Sober People, Isa. 61:1-9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The world has always had its drink problem. The lesson indicates the solution of this problem and our relation to it. 1. We can all testify against it. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. 2. We may offer the testimony of our own abstinence. 3. We can join with others in promoting temperance sentiment and legislation. Many a man has been made and kept sober by sheer

force of the statute book. 4. We are proclaiming liberty to the captives when we help people to break away from the slavery of strong drink. 5. We are opening the eyes of the blind when we show society the ravages of the drink traffic. There is no other blindness comparable to that of self-indulgent passion. 6. We comfort mourners when we banish the temptation of drink from the home and social circles. 7. We anoint a community with the oil of joy and adorn it with a garment of praise when we rid it of the blight and sorrow of the drink curse. 8. There is ample and convincing evidence that under prohibition old wastes have been remedied, the ruins of former generations have been restored and desolate places have been made to flourish again. 9. We can renew heart for future campaigns by a grateful recollection of past victories. Ten years ago no one would have predicted constitutional prohibition for the United States; the history of this country may be repeated in all countries.

### A WORD OF HOPE.

**"To Preach Good Tidings."** Israel in exile was heavy hearted. "By the rivers of Babylon" says one of their singers, "there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion." "Yes," says another singer, "if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, then our captors had swallowed us up alive when their wrath was kindled against us." But good tidings came to them. A new ruler had arisen in Babylon, and to him the word of Jehovah had come that Israel should go free, return to the old home and renew there the old time worship in a temple of their own rebuilding. The effect of this upon captive Israel is suggested in one of their most beautiful songs.

When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion,  
It was as though we dreamed!  
Then our mouths were filled with laughter  
And our tongues with shouts of joy.

One who has lived through the scenes in this country when the Armistice was signed and when announcement was made that national prohibition had become a part of the national constitution can easily imagine the tide of triumphant joy which swept over Israel on receipt of their "good tidings."

**The New Day and the New World.** The prophet sketches conditions of life when God's rule and will are accepted by Israel. This lesson is only one of a series of pictures drawn by our prophet to make clear and emphatic the glory of Messiah's sway. In that day the afflicted shall be made glad, the broken hearted shall be comforted, liberty shall be proclaimed to the captives and opening of the prison to them that are in fetters; to all mourners there will be a coronet instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, a festal robe instead of depression. Men will speak of them as "the children of righteousness," the "planting of Jehovah with which he adorns himself," and "ministers of God." All things will be theirs,—"the riches of the nations will ye eat and their splendor will be your adornment." In another picture (chapter 55) there is a challenge to the favored nation: "Behold, I will give you an everlasting covenant the sure promises of loving kindness to David: Thou, too, wilt call people whom thou knowest not, and people who know thee not will run to thee, because of Jehovah thy God and for Israel's Holy One, since He has glorified thee."

**Our Gift and Our Obligation.** Some years ago the cry was raised for our own country, "A stainless flag and a saloonless country." This has been measurably realized. At least our constitution has put the saloon under ban. What was at the time and for long a national concern is now a world-wide concern. We must make it so if only for the nation's sake.

**A Great Deliverance.** The General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at its session in Des Moines, Ia., May, 1920, made this deliverance in the Episcopal Address: We did not drive the saloon infamy out of America expecting it to take up its abode in China or Africa or anywhere else. We regard it therefore as clearly within our duty to unite with all moral forces that exist in every land, and to create such forces where they do not exist that we may bring in a world without drunkenness and destroy the liquor business on the round earth.

**How Prohibition Works.** So far from prohibition creating unrest among our working classes in these days of industrial upheaval, of gigantic strikes and organized discontent, on the contrary the almost total lack of violence, of crimes against person or property growing out of the industrial unrest, the remarkable restraint and obedience to law have been matters of wonderment to our nation, of sincere gratification to the authorities and of unbounded credit to the working man. To all thinking men in America the chief cause of this new development has been the absence of the open drink shop, the removal of the inflaming intoxicant, the presence of national prohibition.—Ralph B. Urmey, of New Jersey.

**Auxiliaries in the Orient.** A veteran missionary from India declares it to be an "unquestioned fact" that "not only Christian leaders, but also Hindu and Mohammedan leaders in India are heartily in sympathy with the movement now well under way to free India from the liquor traffic." As England has made the excise a matter of Home Rule administration, there is every reason to believe that prohibition in that vast empire will be realized before long. It is worthy of notice also that prohibition

has been the occasion of bringing Christian, Mohammedan and Hindu leaders together for the first time. Whatever their religious differences, on this matter they stand upon a common platform to meet a common foe.

**Quiz and Study.** Bring together the war measures dealing with intoxicants. Why was this done? If necessary as a war measure, would it not have value as a peace measure? What do you know of the plans of American manufacturers of intoxicants to establish headquarters in Cuba and Porto Rico, in Japan and China and South America? Are we not under obligations to help other lands in their fight against the drink evil? Find out some of the direct advantages of prohibition in such matters as saving grain for food, in the reduction of civic expense in police, prison and almshouse maintenance and in the increase of business for banks and investment houses.

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The great war forced Lloyd George to say, "We are fighting Germany, Austria and Drink, and as far as I can see the greatest of the three deadly foes is Drink." It also forced Marshal Joffre to say, "Alcohol by diminishing the moral and material strength of the army is a crime against the national defense in the face of the enemy. Drink is the world's enemy." 2. If the destruction of the drink traffic throughout the world will not bring in the Millennium it will do more than any one thing to give the Gospel an easy and early chance at every man, woman and child on the globe. 3. The work of world wide reform calls for the last ounce of devotion and enthusiasm on the part of every disciple:

On! Let all the soul within you for the truth's sake go abroad!

Strike! Let every nerve and sinew tell on ages; tell for God.

4. The success of the prohibition movement in this country is a warrant for believing in its success in all countries. Let us not abate hope; let us keep at work. 5. "The liquor evil is a world problem and as such requires a world wide remedy."

7 DR. CHARLES M. STUART.



But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the



meat,  
nor  
with  
the



which  
he  
drank:  
there-  
fore  
he re-  
quested  
of the



of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Then said Daniel to Melzar, whom the prince of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, Prove thy servants, I beseech thee, ten days; and let them give us



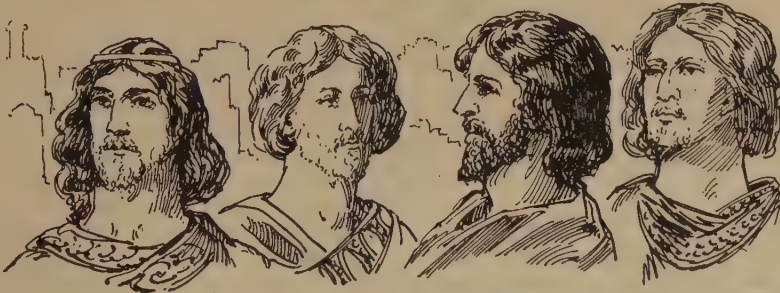
to



and  
water  
to



Then let our



be looked  
upon before  
thee, and the  
countenance  
of the  
children that  
eat of the  
portion of  
the king's



and as  
thou  
seest,  
deal  
with thy



So he consented to them in this matter, and proved them ten days. And at the end of ten days their countenances appeared fairer and fatter in flesh than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS DANIEL 1:3-21. READ ALSO CHAPTERS 3 AND 6.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we follow the process of Divine growth, growing strong in spirit as we increase in physical stature, and placing the favor of God before that of man, knowing that then will our bodies be fit temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

“When I was young I never did apply  
Hot and rebellious liquors to my blood,  
Nor did with unblushful forehead woo  
The means of weakness and debility;  
Therefore mine age is as a lusty winter—  
Frosty yet kindly.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 606. Place, Babylon. Persons, Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon; Ashpenaz, prince of the eunuchs; Melzar, the steward; Daniel and his three companions, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah (known later as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego), Jewish youths of noble lineage.

**Scripture setting: Young Men of Clean Life.** Joseph in the house of Potiphar, Gen. 39:7-23; Moses preferring the people of God to the treasures of Egypt, Heb. 11:24-27. Samuel's innocence beside the corrupting example of Eli's sons, 1 Sam. 3:1-13. David's boyhood as a shepherd lad, 1 Sam. 16:11-13. The boy Christ, subject to His parents in Nazareth. Luke 2:40-52. Timothy, beloved by Paul, 2 Tim. 1:2-5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This story is as modern as if just from the press, and should be presented in the present tense. Its special features are the statesmanship of king Nebuchadnezzar in his provision for the training of the captive Jewish youths; his shrewd foresight in the rigid requirements regarding physical and intellectual endowment. The courage manifested by Daniel, the hero of the story, and his three companions. The successful test, proving then as now, that alcohol is not necessary to health, and detrimental to intellectual growth. The necessity of a purpose in life. The final triumph and success of the four youths who trusted and obeyed God in all the emergencies of life.

### A SCHOOL IN THE KING'S PALACE.

King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, establishes a school of civic instruction for those Jewish lads of noble descent who are captives through the defeat of king Jehoiakim and the fall of Jerusalem. Competent instructors are chosen and the school is the king's own palace, the vast palace whose ruins are now called Kasr. A position awaits each fortunate lad, since the school is to train the pages of the royal court. The king's own personal attendants are to be chosen from among them. Youth is a school, boyhood a period of training, and every boy of brawn, brain and character has a position and promotion awaiting him, in factory, workshop, farm, business or professional life.

**Boys Wanted.** Though friendless captives and in exile, opportunity depends only on the ability of these Jewish lads to meet the requirements of the king. They must be of perfect physical development, high intellectual attainment and unusual ability. It is the world-wide demand of today. Boys Wanted! Friendlessness, adversity, misfortune, never have been and are not now a barrier to opportunity and preferment. The standard is even higher and more stringent than in Daniel's time. The lad who would win will find strength, character and ability of more importance than powerful friends, influence or wealth.

**Temptation.** Temptations await these boys—the temptation to cowardice, conformity and coarser sins. Heathen customs pre-

vail in the king's palace. Even the meat which is a part of the king's daily provisions has been killed with blood contrary to Mosaic law, and offered to idols. Will these lads have the courage to stand by their early training and observe the Jewish religious rites, or will they disobey God and conform to the heathen practices about them? How many boys smoke just because their associates do, and how many accept the first glass through the desire to be like others! Even the luxury in which they were placed, leads to the grosser temptation of drunkenness. Let no boy whine over poverty and privation as a handicap. Franklin, Lincoln, Garfield, Edison, Westinghouse and many great men have risen from poverty. Luxury, self-indulgence and excess lead to failure.

**The Hero.** Among these boys was a hero, with a purpose in life and courage to declare it. It was the purpose of the young Washington, who, at a public banquet given at Ft. Duquesne, refused to drink the health of General Braddock, under whom he had served, in deference to the promise made his mother; the purpose of Lincoln whose promise to a dying mother was confirmed in later youth by the signing of a temperance pledge. All his comrades might drink the king's wine and eat the king's meat with no desire above self-indulgent pleasure, but Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank. Three companions are of the same





## BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST

BY JOHN MARTIN

The Persian king, Belshazzar, made a great feast, for a thousand of his lords, and commanded to be brought out the costly vessels of gold and silver which had been stolen from the temple at Jerusalem, by his father Nebuchadnezzar. As this was an insult to the God of Israel, for whose worship these vessels existed, the Lord was wroth.

Suddenly, in the midst of the feast, a hand appeared and wrote on the wall a sentence, the multitude not knowing from whence the hand came. The king was startled and his knees smote together in fear. He called on the astrologers of Caldea, that they might explain the writing, but they could not, though promised clothing of scarlet and a chain of gold. At this moment the queen came into the banquet hall and told the king of Daniel and his miraculous wisdom. Daniel, when called, read the writing: "Mene, Mene," God has finished thy kingdom; "Tekel," Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting; "Peres," Thy kingdom is divided; "Upharsan" is another word for Peres and means the same thing. So Daniel was clothed in scarlet and a golden chain was placed about his neck (much against his will) and he was made the third ruler in the kingdom. The king was slain that night.

In the picture, by Martin, an Englishman, we see the open court of an enormous palace of elaborate architecture, and its lines of multitudinous lamps. On the right parapet stands the candelabrum of the seven lights, stolen from the temple of Jerusalem, also the sacred vessels. Below these on a raised platform is a group of the king and his officers and women, showing terror and confusion. At the right on the opposite wall is a blast of light where the writing was made. Upon a raised platform in the center there are people by a table that is also laden with the stolen vessels, and in the center stands a figure, in dark clothing, addressing the king. This is Daniel translating the wording of the inscription. The people seem to be in great terror and on every side we see prostrate forms. Down below in the center of the court people are prostrating themselves before a heathen image where sacrificial fires are blazing. Overhead the sky is disturbed with writhing clouds suggesting atmospheric disturbances, and the young moon glimmers amid them. We see many statues and pedestals, and beyond them the mysterious forms of great buildings.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.





mind. These four princely boys determined to observe the religion of their fathers and abstain from all luxuries in which lurked pollution. Thrice daily does Daniel pray to his God, who will with the temptation also make a way to escape. Dependence on God breeds true independence.

**The Request.** They beg to live on pulse and water rather than the luxuries of the king's table. An unheard-of request in Babylon! Like some who still ascribe food qualities to alcohol, Ashpenaz fears his young charges will become so thin and haggard that when Nebuchadnezzar compares their appearance with that of their fellows, his own head will pay the forfeit, and he refuses the request.

**Illustration:** As late as 1840, a Quaker, Robert Warner, in London applied for life insurance and was told by all the London insurance companies he would have to pay an extra premium because he was a total abstainer. Today insurance companies accept the total abstainer at a lower rate because statistics prove his greater longevity.

**The Test.** The boy of correct habits is always esteemed by men, so it is not surprising to learn that Daniel is the favorite of the steward in charge; so when he begs Melzar to try the experiment for ten days the request is granted. They use water instead of wine and eat vegetables, dates, raisins, and other fruits, generally called pulse. Nor, in the light of recent experiments, are we surprised that, at the end of the ten days, they are fairer and fleshier than all their comrades. Food builds bone, muscle, flesh and nerves, gives heat to the body and power to work and think. Alcohol does none of these. Even the fattening which sometimes attends its use is often a fatty degeneration of the vital organs. Indeed that alcohol has no real food value is now so well known that all members of football, baseball and other athletic teams must undergo Daniel's test, foregoing the use of all intoxicating drinks during the athletic season and often throughout the entire year.

**The Final Examination.** After several years Ashpenaz presents his young pages to Nebuchadnezzar for the final examination tests, which are personally conducted by the king. The four Jewish lads who have a purpose in life, not only excel all the other boys, but are ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers, who are the statesmen and scholars of their day. Daniel has understanding of visions and dreams, to

which the Chaldeans attach supreme importance. Each succeeding generation should improve upon the one before it. The opportunities of the American boy of today are ten times greater than that of his father, and the boy who fails to profit by them has decreed his own failure in life. The knowledge of chemistry, steam and electricity now demanded of the intelligent workman would have been deemed magic in the days of Babylon. The nation demands a higher citizenship than ever before. It requires greater statesmanship to be mayor of New York today than to be president of the United States a generation ago.

**The Reward.** God recognizes the constancy of these four lads. Because these boyish heroes remain clean and pure, Babylon learns a lesson of simplicity and of the beauty of holiness which later leads king Nebuchadnezzar to acknowledge the superiority of Daniel's God. A pure life is the Christian's strongest testimony to a sinful world. Through Divine favor they are advanced to the highest honors. At seventeen Daniel is made a satrap, at twenty-two Nebuchadnezzar places him over the whole province of Babylon, at thirty-four he is Prime Minister of Babylon and Persia. Under three different nationalities and dynasties he holds a position of authority among the haughtiest aristocracies of the world. Through the insanity of one king and the murder of two of his successors, Daniel continued, surviving the exile, to see God's restoration of His people to Jerusalem, and at a great age hears the "Well done" of the Master. "Them that honor Me will I honor, and they that despise Me shall be lightly esteemed." Washington praying at Valley Forge, Lincoln in prayer during the Civil war, Gladstone praying beside a friendless boy, were like Daniel, godly men who honored God through pure lives, and served their country with clear brains.

**Quiz.** What great test of obedience and trial of his constancy did Daniel meet? How did his three companions afterward manifest their courage and devotion to God? How were they delivered? What other boys of the Bible maintained their purity amid temptation? How do the lives of these Bible heroes conform to the childhood and boyhood of Christ? How can you make your life conform to His? How find help in time of temptation?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Opportunity comes to all. 2. Follow the law of God rather than the law of social usage. 3. Alcohol never helped anyone and has harmed many. 4. Temperance leads to success. 5. Never be afraid to be alone in the right. 6. In the midst of every temptation live as in God's sight. 7. Prayer defeats temptation. 8. The men whom the world honors are those who honor God.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

Belshazzar  
the king  
made  
a great

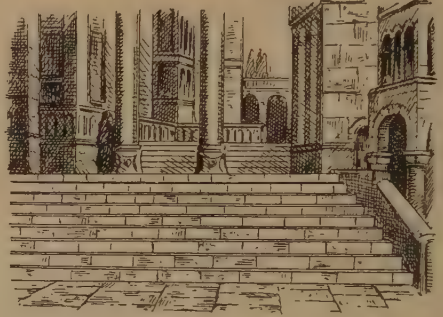


to a thousand  
of his lords,  
and drank  
wine before

the thousand. Belshazzar, while he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver



which his  
father  
Nebuchad-  
nezzar  
had taken  
out of the



which was in Jerusalem; that the



and  
his



his



and his  
concubines,  
might drink  
therein. Then  
brought they  
the golden vessels  
that were taken  
out of the  
temple of the  
house of God,  
which was at



and the  
king, and  
his princes,  
his wives,  
and his  
concubines,  
drank in them.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS DANIEL 5. READ ALSO ESTHER 1, AND 5:8-14.

**Prayer:** The Lord help us to ever pray, Lead us not into temptation. May we be temperate in all things, eschewing that which is evil. For Christ's sake. Amen.

Shall the record be "Found wanting," or shall it be "Found trusting" while the hand is writing on the wall?

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 570. Place, Babylon. Persons, Belshazzar, his wives, courtiers and attendants, the queen mother, and Daniel.

**Scripture Setting:** Banquets of Wine, and Results. Ahasuerus' banquet, Esth. 1. Herod's banquet, Mark 6:14-28. Wine a mocker, Prov. 20:1. Warning against, Prov. 23:20-21. A time to do evil, 2 Sam. 13:28. Elah's death, 1 Kings 16:9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this story are: 1. The drunken revelry of Belshazzar and his court. 2. Their impious profanation

of the sacred vessels of God's holy temple. 3. The fearful apparition, showing how Divine mercy would not cut off even the most impious ruler without a warning which might awaken a sinner to repentance. 4. Belshazzar's transformation from the proud king to the trembling, tottering, shrinking coward. 5. The impotency of the diviners. 6. The devotion and wise counsel of the queen mother. 7. Daniel's reappearance at court and superiority over all the soothsayers and astrologers. 8. The king's doom is foretold by the interpretation of the handwriting.

### A FEAST THAT COST A KING HIS KINGDOM.

**Belshazzar.** Since the term "Father," as applied in the story to Nebuchadnezzar, signifies only royal predecessor, historians are in doubt as to the identity of Belshazzar, some seeing a likeness to the sinful revelry and tragic end of the wicked, half-maddened king, Antiochus Epiphanes. But we may accept the assumption that Belshazzar was the son of king Nabonidus, one of the successors of king Nebuchadnezzar. The father, a shy man, avoided Babylon, permitting Belshazzar to carry on the work of government as prince regent, a king in all save name only. According to numerous Babylonian contract tablets, Belshazzar was a man of great wealth, transacting business on legal principles. So we have not the picture of an effeminate spendthrift, but of a ruler of executive ability, a hard-headed man of business, defying God, using his wealth in profligacy and evil living.

**A Gorgeous Scene.** Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand. The banqueting hall in that palace was a wonder to the world, with its winged statues and splendid spacious halls. The walls were rich with images of gorgeous coloring. Belshazzar's princes were there. There were women in gay attire, music and dancers. Wine flowed freely. Intoxication was no disgrace in that circle. Alas that at the present day such scenes are re-enacted.

**Profane Reveling.** Now Belshazzar must have known of the majesty of the God of Israel and of the sacredness of the vessels which had been carried from His holy temple, and he must have known of Daniel, a man of the same age as his father. It may have been a knowledge of the clean lives of those four Jewish youths in his predecess-

sor's court which inspired the prayer that has been found on one of the Babylonian tablets, still extant, the prayer of king Nabonidus for his son, "Cause Thy great Divinity to exist in his heart; may Thy great love help him not to give way to sin; may he be satisfied with life's abundance." Alas for the son who forgets the prayers of his father and disappoints a father's wishes. Only a short time before, Nebuchadnezzar, restored from the humiliation which had befallen his sinful and arrogant pride, had publicly acknowledged and honored the true God, yet in the flush of his pride and drunkenness, despite Nebuchadnezzar's warning—"Those that walk in pride He is able to abase"—while he tasted the wine, Belshazzar ordered the sacred vessels to be brought that he and his fellow revelers might drink wine from them. To add insult to the most High, they praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood and of stone; but The God who held all life in His hand, they praised or glorified not. Intemperance leads to irreligion, Sabbath desecration, profanity and disobedience of every law of God. The saloon and its followers hold nothing sacred, not only trampling on God's laws, but disregarding all law.

**The Spectral Hand.** It is characteristic of the Divine mercy that even sinners must have a last warning with opportunity for repentance. Seated on his jeweled throne, Belshazzar's eye caught something vividly pictured on the white stucco of the wall. He saw it over the lights which crowned the huge golden chandelier. The fingers of a dark and bodiless hand were writing letters on the wall. No young man ever becomes a drunkard without a warning hand being held out to him. It may be God's Holy

Word, a father's prayer, a mother's entreaties, the awful example of the drunkard. At the present time the warning is given through the teaching of the evil effects of alcohol, tobacco and other narcotics, on the human system, in our public schools. Conscience is a warning monitor that God has given each of us.

**The King Undone.** The former proud and boastful king becomes a poor, abject, terror-stricken creature. He cannot read the handwriting on the wall, but his thoughts trouble him; the sins of a lifetime confront him; he trembles visibly; so great is his agitation that the jeweled bands of his attire are loosed; his knees smite one against the other in very weakness. He cries out in a loud voice. What loathsome, terrible things are seen by the poor victim of delirium tremens! Alas for the man before whom conscience holds a life made hideous by sin! What a contrast is Belshazzar's cowardice to the courage of those three Jewish youths thrust into the fiery furnace, or of Daniel in the lion's den. Alcohol is a tyrant who makes slaves and cowards of his devotees. Strong drink transforms many a princely youth into a miserable abject creature, piteous in his weakness.

**Soothsayers Helpless.** Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego knew to whom to appeal when in trouble, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us." Belshazzar cries aloud to the astrologers and soothsayers. Vain indeed in the help of men. These dream interpreters are as helpless and impotent as those in Moses' time, or as those fortune-tellers and clairvoyants of our time who claim to read the future to credulous patrons. Not one is able to divine the meaning of those portentous words which still blaze in letters of fire. Those who seek earthly help in trouble are often disappointed.

**Behold a Man.** Some rumor, therefore, of this confusion must have reached the queen mother who was not present at the banquet. It is conjectured that she did not approve of the sinful revel, but how like a mother, to come to her son in his distress, forgiving and forgetting all his misdeeds. It reminds us of that beautiful promise of God, "As one whom his mother comforteth, I will comfort you." Be assured that your mother is your truest friend, tenderest comforter, and wisest counselor. She enters and bids Belshazzar to be no longer troubled, for "There is a man who will be able to read this fearful augury as he has done others before." When in distress even the most wicked men turn from their evil associates to some good man whose worth is recognized. The vile and evil companions who are so engaging to the boy will prove poor friends in the time of his need.

**Daniel Before the King.** Glibly, Belshaz-

zar promises him those things which he deems of greatest value, a scarlet robe, a golden chain and office, but Daniel, who has ever rated earthly things at their true value, waves them aside—"The world offers nothing of value comparable with the rewards which God bestows upon His children."

**Pride Goeth Before a Fall.** Daniel remembers and reminds him of the powerful and mighty Nebuchadnezzar's punishment, and that in spite of all this, which was known unto Belshazzar, the latter, in his infatuated pride, had praised false gods which see not, nor hear, nor know; profaned the holy vessels of the temple with drunken revelry, insulting and disregarding the Most High God, "in whose hand thy breath is and whose are all thy ways." We may ignore God,—He is still the arbiter of our fate.

**Weighed and Found Wanting.** Not alone Belshazzar's, but every life is weighed in the balance. Our conduct and our character is measured by those about us. Sin leaves its handwriting on the face; the drunkard's bloated face, the brutalized countenance of the prize fighter, these are the handwriting on the wall, written not in mystic letters, but in coarse print, that all may read. Be assured that secret sins and impure thoughts are also recorded and discernible though written in fine script. Every deed and thought, even though unknown to man, is recorded, and the writing is the handwriting of God; the record the Book of Life, and by the works recorded we shall be known and judged, even as Belshazzar.

**Speedy Retribution.** "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain." Babylon was taken by night, while the drunken inhabitants were reveling. Under a drunken ruler the most powerful and mighty city in the world fell without a stroke, and two days later the Persian army entered Babylon without a sign of resistance. Such is the story of Belshazzar. Are we not all kings, living in a castle more wonderful than any royal palace built by man: a body created and formed by the King of kings. Every organ in these bodies of ours is as sacred as the sacred vessels of old. If we abuse them with wine, we profane and weaken them, and insult God by defiling the body which He has made to be a temple for the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. Retribution may not come so speedily, but science has demonstrated that alcohol is poisonous in its action upon the different parts of the body, weakens the will and ultimately enslaves. Strong as is our nation, it is doomed to fall like Babylon unless its laws are built upon righteousness, its rulers God-fearing men, and its citizens sober and clean.

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Wealth and position should be used as opportunity for good. 2. Wine is a mocker, mocking God. 3. Sin makes cowards of us all. 4. Perfect love casteth out fear. 5. A mother is a more loyal friend than any reveling companion. 6. A shining character can never be eclipsed: Daniel was great in obscurity as before the king's throne. 7. Thoughts and deeds are written on the countenance. Each face is but the outdoor sign of the heart within.



# SINFUL INDULGENCE.

Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came! Pass ye unto Calneh, and see; and from thence go ye to Hamath the great: then go down to Gath of the Philistines: be they better than these kingdoms? or their border greater than your border? Ye that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to come near; That



of

and

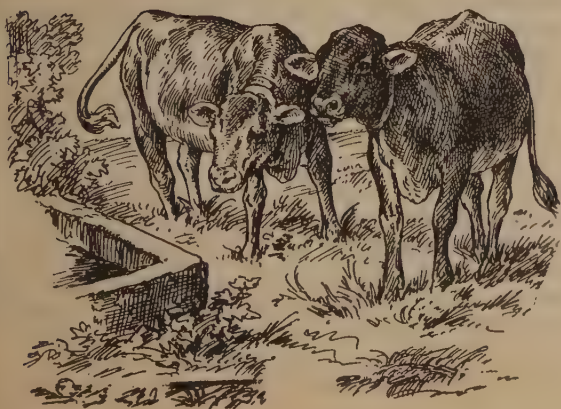


and eat the

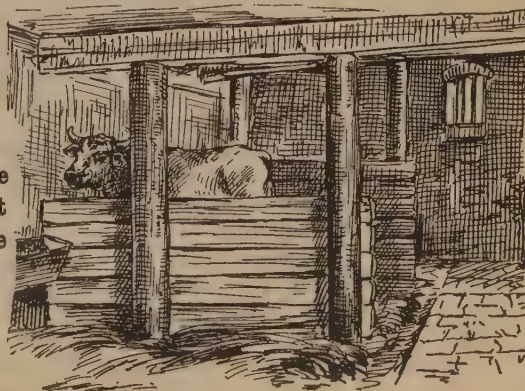


out  
of  
the

and the



out  
of the  
midst  
of the





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS AMOS 6:1-12.

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven and its righteousness, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Man's inhumanity to man  
Makes countless thousands mourn."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, B. C. 755. Place, Bethel. Persons, Amos, a prophet of God; Jeroboam II, his courtiers and men and women of fashion.

**Scripture Setting:** Sins of omission. Ingratitude, Gen. 40:21-23. Ignorance, Lev. 5:15-19. Unthankfulness, Num. 21:1-6. Acquiescence in evil, I Sam. 3:13-14. Irreligion, I Kings, 11:11. Rejection of God, Matt. 23:37. Lack of charity, Matt. 25:35-46. Lack of consideration for suffering, Luke 10:30-37. Indifference, Luke 7:44-47. Lukewarmness, Rev. 3:14-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. In our lesson, the prophet denounces the false security of professing followers of God. 2. Makes it plain it will not avail man simply to avow the true religion unless its truths are applied to conduct. 3. Shows that no one may hope to evade the penalties that have been imposed on others. 4. Gives a vivid description of sensuous luxury, which has a hardening influence on character. 5. Declares consideration for the sorrows of others and beneficence to the poor are a part of religion. 6. Portrays the judgments of God with startling vividness.

### THE CRIME OF INDIFFERENCE.

**The Shepherd of Tekoa.** A lonely, desolate place was Tekoa. The straggling village built on the site of an ancient camp looked out on a harsh, colorless and desolate world, almost surrounded by gray limestone hills and beyond the gray mountain lines, a faint suggestion of the gray towers of Jerusalem. The vegetation, the brown withered grass and shrub of the desert; a dreamy world whose only sound the howl of wild beasts by night and of a few lonely desert caravans by day. Here our hero lives, a peasant, tending sheep during the season and in the autumn earning a mere subsistence by cutting and dressing and purveying the sycamore fruit, a small, sweet, but watery fig, to the poor. But bits of blue sky could be seen between the ragged hills; at night the stars, and at sunset and sunrise, the gray mountains were bathed in glory. God was in the desert.

**Taken from the Flocks.** A lonely, solitary man is this herdsman, who hears the voice of the Lord as the "roar of a lion," "Go, prophesy unto my people, Israel." John the Baptist was also desert bred. There is no life so lonely as to be unknown to God, no solitude so great that it cannot be pierced by the voice of God. We may not say, "I live in such a remote place and am so insignificant and far from the great world that I have no mission, no call to service, no work to do for Christ and humanity."

**Bethel, the Seat of a New Cult.** Now, Jeroboam I served God for earthly reward only. He knew that the kingdom had been divided, and had passed from Solomon's house because that great king had permitted and even built altars to false gods, and a prophet of God had told Jeroboam that the length of his reign depended on obedience to God. In his heart, he cherished the gods of Egypt, and sought to unite the true and

the false religion by setting up two golden calves at Bethel and Dan as emblems of the great Jehovah. It was a masterstroke of diplomacy. He worshipped God, but bowed before his golden calves. Moreover, the new religion was popular. All Israel "as one man" resorted to it. A great temple was built at Bethel, where the kings worshiped. Here, public prayer was made to God amid heathen rites and sacrifices. Thus the world has ever tried to serve God and its own desires. New religions are constantly springing up which are man-made cults, uniting the false and the true. Even some Christians worship at Bethel, professing God's name and bowing before false images of wealth and position.

**The Prophet Appears.** Everywhere is marked prosperity and luxury. The king and his retinue are at the royal palace near the temple, flushed with conquest and drunk with wine. The real God who had loaded them with benefits is forgotten. There is no truth, no justice or mercy left in the land. Crime is on every hand. The army is debauched, judges corrupt, priests drunken, rulers impoverishing the people, and men grown rich by unjust gains, dishonesty and robbing the poor. Are not those evils present today?

But suddenly—it may have been on one of the numerous holidays of pagan worship—a mountaineer in rude peasant's dress appears before the temple and denounces the crimes and corruption of the great. Under the shadow of the palace the man prophesies the destruction of the kingdom. A few look in supercilious wonder at the rough garb of the herdsman, but others recognize the man; he is known to the king. It is Amos, the shepherd of Tekoa. There are men in every generation, usually lonely men with the vision of the desert, who, unawed



by wealth, and unafraid of corruption in high places, dare to call a spade a spade. We call them cranks and fanatics at first, but later we enroll them as patriots and men of God.

**At Ease in Zion.** The prophet's warning included the worshipers at the true temple in Jerusalem as well as those of Bethel; "Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, and trust to the mountains of Samaria." It matters not what your creed, or to what sect you belong; if the cause that needs assistance, and the wrongs that need resistance are ignored, our prophet is speaking to you. We are our brother's keeper, and we may not plead ignorance as did Cain.

**History Repeats Itself.** Other nations have fallen, other peoples have been taken captive. "Are you better than they?" demands the prophet. We speak of America as the chosen nation, and of our government as unexcelled, forgetting that no nation or people have been strong enough to defy the laws of God. May it not be well for us to ask if the growing evils of Sabbath-breaking, swearing, drunkenness, dishonesty and impurity are not signs of decay?

**Soul, Take Thine Ease.** Israel knew from bitter experience the weight of God's punishment for wrong-doing. They might not hope to escape but they would "put far away the evil day." There is always a day of reckoning. Every natural law has a penalty attached, and the laws of the spiritual world are strong. Sow the wind and reap the whirlwind. The young man who sows his wild oats, reaps a crop of tares that not only chokes out all hopes of worldly success, but destroys the soul.

**In the Lap of Luxury.** The shepherd of Tekoa has the clear vision of the desert; he sees in the elegance and luxury of the rich only plunder drawn from the poor, who are robbed even of their shoes and the single upper garment in which they sleep. He is filled with contempt for the courtiers that lie on ivory divans and sprawl on their couches in imitation of the worshipers at heathen feasts. The fine ladies of Samaria drinking wine remind him of stolid kine. The prophet knows that instead of their delicate meats they will some day eat shin bones. Would the prophet be more favorably impressed with the luxury of today? Would our society dudes command his respect, or the society ladies in their silly finery appear more fair to him? Would he

not see the same lack of true religion, the same grinding of the poor, the same shocking impurity, and as much drunkenness?

**Wine in Bowls.** Guests at the feasts drank until the most repulsive excesses prevailed. Even the women drank to intoxication. The term "Drunkards of Ephraim" was used to describe the worst drunkards. Yet they were a people proud of their culture. Strong drink is no respecter of persons; the rich and the poor, the cultured and the ignorant alike, become its victims and sink into folly and bestiality.

**How Sin Spoils.** A painter once painted a picture of innocence, with a beautiful young lad as his model. Years after he wished to paint a most repulsive evil face, and after much search found a man whose sin-scarred countenance filled his need. One day the model glanced at the painted "Innocence" and burst into tears. "I sat to you for that picture, sir," he said, "but drink has made me what I am."

**The Prophet's Warning.** The shepherd in peasant garb publishes God's judgment upon this wicked and luxurious people. God's favor does not rest upon these palaces. Their wealth will collapse as suddenly as it came. The city and its inhabitants will be taken captives. Terrible and awful is the retribution which Amos pictures, for pestilence shall follow war. The prophet spoke about 755 B. C.; in 724 there was a siege and blockade of the whole land, which lasted three years. The houses were overthrown, the rich men and delicately nurtured women were taken captive. Retribution is swift and sure. We must remember, too, that drunkenness in the Bible times was confined largely to the rich; that poisonous distilled liquors were unknown. If the drunkenness of the few caused the downfall of a prosperous nation, what will be the result of the intemperance among rich and poor, and where the sin of strong drink is almost universal?

**Quiz.** 1. What other prophets preached against luxury and self-indulgence? 2. What prophet of the New Testament was reared in the desert? 3. In what two parables does Christ impress upon His followers the duty of caring for the poor and those in distress? 4. What provision did the Mosaic law make for the poor?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The form of religion without the spirit is unavailing. 2. It is not the name we bear, but the One we serve that proclaims the Christian. 3. When the evil day is postponed the reckoning is always greater. 4. The Christian life has no place for self-indulgence. 5. Wealth has wings. 6. "Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three—himself, his hungering neighbor and Me."

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful



thou  
knewest  
that I



where I



not, and gather  
where I have  
not strawed:  
Thou oughtest  
therefore to  
have put my  
money to the



and then at  
my coming  
I should have  
received mine  
own with  
usury. Take  
therefore the



and give  
it unto



For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer



there  
shall be



and gnashing of teeth.



# THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 25:14-30. READ ALSO LUKE 19:12-26.**

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us to use Thine every gift for Thy glory; to labor for the Master's cause and in all things be found faithful. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Take my life and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

\* \* \* \* \*

Take myself, and I will be  
Ever, only, all for Thee."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 33. Place, Mount Olivet, near Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and His disciples. Characters, a rich land owner and his three servants.

**Scripture Setting:** The Use of Time. Learning to use time, Psa. 90:12. Diligence commanded, Eccles. 11:6. Work while it is day, John 9:4. Uncertainty of time, John 12:35. Time well spent, Rom. 13:11-13. Perseverance and well doing rewarded, Gal. 6:9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this parable Christ teaches. 1. That God has given every man talents to be used in His service. 2. The justice of God, who exacts service according to ability. 3. Diligence is always rewarded. 4. Faithfulness brings fellowship with God. 5. There is no excuse for slothfulness or unfaithfulness. 6. That reward comes to the evil as well as to the good.

## AN INVESTMENT AND ITS RETURNS.

**Memorable Days.** The Passover was at hand; the days were fraught with significance; the very air pregnant with foreboding. The destruction of Jerusalem and the temple had been foretold. As Christ left the temple for the last time, the bewildered disciples climbed Mount Olivet with Him and grouped themselves about Him. How many times afterward the scene must have recurred to them! The Master, as He sat enthroned on the everlasting rocks and in the presence of one of the most beautiful prospects the earth affords, spoke of the Kingdom of Heaven. And it was nearer than they knew. Calvary, the cross and the tomb were at hand. With illustration and parable Jesus sought to fortify His disciples against the time when He should be no longer with them.

**The Investment.** "For the Kingdom of Heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, who called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods." God gives no quit-claim deeds. Talents, riches, honors, intellect, ability all belong to Him. We simply hold these things in trust for Him. The world is beginning to recognize the great fact of stewardship.

**Good Stewards.** A multimillionaire who is now engaged in the distribution of his vast fortune by means of large gifts to many objects recently declared, "The world makes a mistake when it calls me a generous man. I know full well all this money is not mine; I did not bring any of it into the world with me; I cannot take it out of the world with me; I can only handle it while I am in the world." "My life is a vow," was the declaration of Frances E. Willard, who laid every gift upon the altar of humanity. God has invested heavily in us. Are we bringing in returns on the investment?

**According to Ability.** "Unto one he gave five talents; to another, two, and to another, one; to every man according to his ability." The Master knew His men. Are you dissatisfied with the gifts bestowed on you?

Just as the master mechanic knows to the very grain how much weight each iron beam that goes from the foundry can support, so God knows us. He reads the hearts of men and weighs their action. How we should guard our thoughts that they may be pure in His sight, for He tells us, I know the things that come into your mind, **every one** of them. God knows how much ability, power and prosperity each of His servants can use to advantage. Wealth and power are dangerous instruments unless God-given. It is said that a certain philanthropist always prayed that he and his family might be forever delivered from the temptation of riches; each generation of that family has contributed to the list of the world's benefactors, but none have sought wealth or position.

**The Five Talent Men.** There are few five talent men and women in the world. When we find them they disclaim any favoritism of fortune. Edison, the wizard of electricity, has defined genius as nine parts industry and application and one part brains. Helen Gould using her wealth to benefit humanity. Mrs. Lucy Webb Hayes throwing her influence as mistress of the White House on the side of total abstinence. Frances Havergal consecrating every talent of voice, mind, heart and hand to Christ, are instances of the investment of five talents yielding one hundredfold increase.

**Neither Poverty Nor Riches.** The world has need of two-talent people; persons of superior attainment who are not trying to emulate genius. The world's greatest work has been done by such men and women. Patrick Henry excelled Washington as an orator; Madison was a better scholar; Franklin more of a philosopher; Morris a greater financier and Arnold a more dashing soldier, but none invested their talents with such result to their country. There have been greater women writers than Harriet Beecher Stowe and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, but the one used her talents for

the slave, the other in behalf of childhood and both invested wisely.

**The Better Choice.** Friends expostulated and music lovers raved when a gifted young singer decided to lend her talents of youth and beauty to the pauper inmates of a great city almshouse. She went from ward to ward and under the sway of her magic voice, sickness, poverty, loneliness, failure and sorrow were forgotten on that Christmas Eve. She had traded her two talents and given happiness to hundreds of the world's neglected ones. Ere the next Christmas the sweet singer had entered the joy of her Lord and joined the Choir Invisible. How rich the reward! "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these."

**Only One Talent.** Abraham Lincoln, the great commoner, used to say, "God must love the common people or he would not have made so many of them." The world is filled with one talent people; they are the ones who do the world's work. By them the world is housed, fed and clothed. Let no one despise the one talent.

"Who doeth one thyng welle,  
He hathe fulfilled the Gospel,"  
sings an old poet.

Sightless, unhearing and voiceless, in a world without light or sound, the sense of touch her only point of contact with the world about her, Helen Keller has traded with the one talent, conquered every disadvantage and developed the highest womanhood.

**Opportunity Misused.** Only one talent, and it misused! In the parable of the pounds, one servant who received the one pound, wrapped it in a napkin and laid it away. That were bad enough, but the man who received one talent, buried it in the earth. Alas for the talent buried in the earth, not planted to bear fruit, but hidden in the muck of impurity and sunken in the mire of drunkenness. Defense and apology were so thin and false as to be futile. How many seek to excuse their own evil conduct by aspersing others just as this servant excuses his unfaithfulness by charging harshness upon his master. The husband who spent his time at the saloon pleads that his home is unhappy and his wife is ill-tempered.

**Commendation and Condemnation.** Let us note that the Master makes no distinction in His commendation of the faithful servants. He gave one five talents, the other two, but both receive the same praise and

the same reward. It was sufficient that the one who received the two talents invested as wisely as he who had five talents. Scant endowment and limited opportunity are not an excuse either for neglect or misuse of whatever talent may be ours. Had he used the one talent to the same advantage, the man with the one talent would have been just as highly commended as he who returned ten talents and the reward would have been the same. It was not because he had a little, but because he came to his Lord with a misused talent, a miserable excuse and a lie. An eminent brain specialist tells us that the average man only uses one-tenth of the brain power with which he is endowed. Have you developed your brain to its utmost capacity, or has it been misused and befogged with tobacco smoke or dulled by alcohol?

**The Power of Example.** A lady was one time at a Thanksgiving dinner, where wine sauce was served with dessert. All the other guests partook of the sauce. Should she be peculiar, perhaps offend her hostess by refusing? It was such a little thing, it hardly seemed worth while to distinguish herself from the others, but across the table a young man sat and watched her, and the dessert was untouched. Many months afterward a young man came to Sunday school and became a member of the class this lady taught. Later he professed faith in Christ. On the day he joined the church he asked his Sunday school teacher if she remembered leaving the wine sauce untouched at the Thanksgiving dinner. "I sat opposite you," he said. "I had come to this city for a chance to reform, for in the town I had formerly worked I had fallen into drinking through bad companions. That wine sauce roused all the old appetite and I would have fallen but for your example. I found out where you lived and joined your Sunday school class because I believed in you, and through your influence I have been led to Christ." It was a small opportunity to use one's talent, but it yielded an hundredfold.

**Quiz.** 1. What other parable did Christ use similar to the parable of the talents? 2. How do the two parables differ? 3. Give two instances of persons who have accomplished much under adverse conditions. 4. Is any one wholly without some talent which may be invested in the Master's service?

**Seed Truths.** 1. It was not the man of five talents, but the man with one talent whom his master condemned. Had it been the man of five talents all the one talent people in the world would have had an excuse for failure to invest the one talent. 2. God does not ask the impossible; He did not ask ten talents of a one talent man. 3. The man who thinks the world his enemy is usually an enemy to the world. 4. The pot does not whiten itself by calling the kettle black.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

And when a convenient day was come, that



on his  
birthday  
made a



to his lords, high captains, and chief  
estates of Galilee; And when the



of the  
said  
Herodias  
came in,  
and



and  
pleased



the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 6: 16-28. READ ALSO MATT. 14:1-11.

**Prayer:** Lord, May I dedicate my youth to Thee, and all through life be submissive to Thy will, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 32. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, John the Baptist, Herod, his wife Herodias, and Salome, daughter of Herodias.

**Scripture Setting:** A Woman's Influence for Good or Ill. The first temptress, Gen. 3:12. A scheming mother, Gen. 27:6-13. A traitress, Judges 19:4-5. A wife's wicked influence, I Kings 21:25. A suppliant for her people, Esther 7:3-4. Commended by Christ, Luke 10:42; 21:1-4. A wife's warning, Matt. 27:19. A mother and grandmother's influence, II Timothy 1:5.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

"My conscience had a thousand several tongues,  
And every tongue brings in a several tale  
And every tale condemns me for a villain."  
—Shakespeare.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this story are: 1. The vacillating character of Herod. 2. John's fearlessness in denouncing sin in high places. 3. The power of a wicked woman's influence. 4. Sensual pleasures lead to crime. 5. The indifference and callousness of the dancer. 6. Herod's false sense of honor which led him to do a most deadly wrong to a good man rather than acknowledge himself wrong to evil companions. 7. That the guilty conscience of Herod breeds superstition.

## THE TRAGEDY OF AN EVIL WOMAN'S INFLUENCE.

**A Heroic Character.** To have one's portrait and "write-up" appear in a popular periodical; to be eulogized by president or king; to be the recipient of praise from a great legislative body; all these are considered honors worth striving for. But none of the world's great men ever had their rank assigned by such an authoritative source as the hero of our lesson. "Among those born of woman there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." Thus Christ himself assigned the place which the preacher of the wilderness was to occupy among the Immortals. Christ's eulogy of John the Baptist was not given while the desert was peopled with throngs that hung upon his eloquence and the preacher was in the height of his popularity, but when deserted by all but a few followers, John languished in prison. It affords us an opportunity to study the Christ ideal of true greatness.

**Preacher and King Meet.** Wherever and however they met, we can readily imagine the meeting. They who wore the soft clothing of the king's house had not gone out to see a "man clothed in soft raiment," for the preacher was of the wilderness, clad in the coarsest garb and living on the poorest fare. He has a message for Herod, which he delivers unflinchingly and without apology, for Christ himself tells us John was not a "reed shaken by the wind," not a vacillating, man-pleasing time-servant. "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." In these few words the prophet rebuked Herod's sin. Crime in high places is too often condoned. John the Baptist would not have the great criminals escape through the many loop-holes in the law, leaving only the petty violator enfolded in its meshes.

**An Evil Woman.** Though weak of will, Herod was a man of good impulses, as is shown by the admiration and regard which mingled with his fear of the stern and fear-

less prophet; but Herodias was of a different type altogether. It is not necessary to dwell upon the disgraceful story of her life, the brief allusions to her in the accounts of John the Baptist's death reveal the woman in all her wickedness, plotting and scheming the death of the prophet.

**An Unstable Man.** Herod's better nature led him to frequently summon John from prison that he might learn more of the repentance unto righteousness which John preached. A dark crime was on his own conscience and many times his soul must have cried out for the remission of sins which John offered. Indeed, if the prophet had temporized Herod's sin, or even kept silence concerning it, he might have had a kingly convert and regained his liberty as well. But not in the darkest hour of the dungeon, not even in the times of doubt which made him send to Christ to know if his own testimony concerning Him was true, did John the Baptist ever offer to compromise with wrong. He might doubt his own calling, he might not know the Christ whose coming he himself had foretold, but he knew right from wrong, and never swerved from the right. No wonder that he exerted a fascination over the unstable Herod who one moment would have killed him but for the fear of the people and then would have released him but for fear of Herodias! What a wonderful opportunity was Herod's! It was in his power to prepare the way of the Lord, had he listened to the prophet; the Gospel of Christ might have been preached in his court and have spread throughout his realm. Instead of being execrated, his name might have been forever blessed. There are wrongs to be righted, great reforms to be inaugurated in the world today, but those who are wavering and unstable, swayed by the multitude, fearing the forces of evil, will miss their opportunity as Herod did.



**A Birthday Feast.** "Herod, on his birthday, made a supper to his lords, high captains and chief estates of Galilee." It was such a feast as might have been expected in a court of such sensual luxury and wicked self-indulgence. There was levity, wine and dancing. Not one of the gay pleasure seekers had the faintest intimation of the dark tragedy that loomed so near. In how many dance halls are revellers as careless and absorbed in the merrymaking until, under the flush of sinful excitement and sensual desire, tragedy comes and death enters. How foul a record of murders conceived in the excitement of wine and lust; the tragic and untimely ending of such mad revelry comes alike to the low concert hall and the courts of fashion. What a relief to think of that other feast pictured in the same chapter, which contains our lesson. At the one a king presides; here Christ is the central figure and His blessing makes the homely place and homely fare, a few barley loaves and two small fishes, abundant for the multitude, while His presence brings peace and surcease from sorrow, labor and care. The two feasts are typical of the pleasures which the world has to offer and of the abundance which Christ gives.

**The Temptress.** "The daughter of the said Herodias came in and danced and pleased Herod and them that sat with him." Who can measure a young girl's influence? Salome danced and won the gross admiration of her audience. Often with immodest attire, the flush of wine and sensuous dance, the belles of the ball-room exact the same tribute, and fancy they have won real admiration. Alas, that some still use their youth and beauty to tempt rather than to uplift. A young girl "just loves the smell of tobacco," giggles over an insinuating jest, challenges admiration in ways that lower her womanliness, proffers the wine and passes the cards; little dreaming of the disastrous effect of her influence.

**A Rash Vow.** The king said unto the damsel, "Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt and I will give it thee," and Herod even confirmed his offer with an oath. What will Salome ask? Once before a radiantly beautiful young woman appeared before a king and received the same royal favor. Esther asked for the salvation of her people, and saved a race from destruction. Will the young woman dancer use her influence in behalf of mercy? Ah, there is a difference between the two. Through three days and nights of fasting and prayer Esther had prepared herself for the royal audience, while Salome sought to please the king with the latest dancing step. She has no vital interest, no engrossing mission, no real object to attain; she has not brains enough to proffer a request.

**An Unnatural Mother.** "And she went forth and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? and she said The head of John the Baptist." Unfortunate daughter of an unnatural mother! Herodias' daughter is not the only girl who owes her downfall to the mother. Children quickly learn lessons of deception from a mother's false and unmeaning society gossip; become adepts in untruth through the ridiculously false threats used to enjoin obedience in early childhood; are trained in cruelty and even crime. "Mothers are wingless guardian angels," says an old proverb. The girl who finds in her mother a wise and true counsellor and is guided by that counsel is safeguarded from all evil.

**A Cowardly Crime.** Not with reluctant step, but with hastening feet the girl returns and proffers her hideous request to the king. The girl has out-Heroded Herod, for the king "was exceedingly sorry." "Yet for his oath's sake and for their sakes which sat with him," Herod yields to this outrageous demand. It is a false sense of honor which leads a person to persist in an evil course through fear of ridicule of others more evil than themselves. Just as some men call gaming debts, debts of honor, and rob their employers and falsify their accounts in order to meet them; while others pay their saloon bills and let their children starve. There was nothing about Herod to betoken the dangerous criminal, save his weakness and double mindedness. Yet through cowardice he became a murderer. The young man who starts out in life without any fixed principles becomes the victim of every temptation which assails him.

**Mother and Daughter.** The king gives his order to the executioner, John the Baptist is beheaded, and with her bloody trophy the pretty damsel trips off to her mother. Mother and daughter are of the same mold and the pair do not form an attractive picture. Rather would we look back thirteen centuries and see the spiritual bond which knit two women into closer relationship than the mere tie of blood, and hear sweet Ruth say to the older woman, "Whither thou goest, I will go, and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." And these two became mother and daughter in the highest sense of the term. Relationship may be but a brute bond unless sanctified by Christ.

**Retribution.** The martyr's death only brought John abundant life, but Herod must pay the penalty. Despite his fascination for the prophet, he wanted to be rid of him, but when a greater than John the Baptist appears and is working miracles, swift dread comes upon the conscience-smitten, craven king. "It is John whom I beheaded; he is risen from the dead." With the death of John the Baptist, Herod's career began to wane. Defeat and banishment came each in their turn, with a lonely death as a political exile. But Herod had exiled himself from God and from the Kingdom of Heaven so near at hand, of which John the Baptist preached.

**Seed Truths:**—1. True greatness consists not in measure, but in the spirit. Christ pronounced the woman who gave her two mites the greatest philanthropist and the prophet who declared his own decrease and the rise of another the greatest man. 2. Messages that come straight from God are not always phrased to please the ear. 3. The vices of the fashionable set are too often imitated rather than rebuked. 4. Youth and beauty are talents for which God will require an account.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to



and



and to



and  
to be  
drunken;  
The  
lord  
of that  
servant  
will  
come  
in a



when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant which knew his lord's will, and

prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be



with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 12:37-48. READ ALSO MATT. 24:42-51.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May I be found faithful at thy coming. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

"Sooner or later, ah, sooner or later, Heaven will show us the false and the true. Sooner or later, ah, sooner or later, God will reward us for all that we do."

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 33. Place, Mt. of Olives. Persons, Christ and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Necessity for Watchfulness. "Watchman, what of the night?" Isa. 21:11-12. A warning for others, Ezek. 3:17. Watching for God's message, Hab. 2:1. Watchfulness commended, Matt. 25:13. A safeguard against temptation, 1 Cor. 10:12. A Christian duty, Eph. 6:18. A condition of safety, 1 Peter 5:8. As a

means of growth, Rev. 3:2. Awaiting the coming of Christ, Rev. 16:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of the parable are: 1. That Christ commends watchfulness on the part of His servants. 2. The importance of being in readiness for His coming. 3. The inclusiveness of Christ's gospel. 4. The contrast between the faithful and the unfaithful servant. 5. The justice of God's judgment and punishment.

**EXPECTING A HEAVENLY VISITOR.**

**A Timely Lesson.** Christ has been preaching to his disciples that they should avoid hypocrisy and timidity, covetousness and worldly care, and as He speaks to them of the importance of seeking first the Kingdom of God, He thinks of the time when He shall no longer be with His little chosen circle. He knows of what material each is made; sees the boastfulness of one, the impetuous temper of another, the doubt and pessimism of a third, the ambition of others and is even aware of the covetousness in the heart of that one who shall betray Him. The twelve whom he has chosen are just common men; persecution and suffering have not yet graven strength into their characters. Will they be faithful in the absence of their Lord? When He returns to His own will they be found in readiness for His coming?

**When He Cometh.** "Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching." The lord himself shall minister to their needs and give them refreshment. "And if he comes in the second watch or the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants." Whatever the hour, whatever the crisis, those who are found at the post of duty have their reward. The Christ who so readily reads their thoughts sees that the disciples fail to catch the significance of the lesson. With a startling directness He declares "Be ye, therefore, ready also; for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

**A Momentous Question and Its Answer.** Now the disciples catch a measure of its meaning, and though they can comprehend only a small part of the great truth embodied in the lesson, what they do absorb is of such enormous import that they wonder if they are to appropriate it all to themselves. Impetuous Peter throws the question straight at the Master, "Lord, speaketh thou this parable unto us, or even to all?" Is Christ

speaking to the little group about him or to the great world? Ah, you and I have an interest in that question and its answer. Through all the ages and centuries since, the Lord's reply has incited every child of His to purer, holier living and a more faithful performance of duty. There is not a life so humble that, be it well lived, not a duty so menial or commonplace, that be it well done, but it shall be honored by the Master. "Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

**The Reward.** "Of a truth I say unto you that he will make him ruler over all that he hath." The world of today is troubled with a great spirit of unrest and discontent. People are longing for greater opportunity, for enlarged fields of usefulness, for more wealth and honors. Reliability is a magic talisman that works marvels for its possessor. Said an employer of many men recently, "I have ceased to ask concerning a boy's ability, experience or fitness. 'Can he be trusted' is all I want to know, for I can make a man out of any boy who meets that requirement." The faithful servant of the Lord shall reign with Christ.

**In His Heart.** "But and if that servant say in his heart." Solomon, the wise man, dwelt upon the importance of having a perfect heart. "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Sir Galahad's strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure. The heart may be called the citadel of character; if it is once surrendered to evil then the enemy has possession of the entire man. Even temptations assume a different aspect. The way in which each meets a fall shows a marked distinction between the lamb and the hog. When a lamb stumbles and falls into the mire, it cries out for help and is not happy until it has shaken from its fleece every trace of defilement, while the hog will

roll in and enjoy the wallow into which it has fallen.

**Eye Service.** "My lord delayeth his coming." Mother is out of sight and will never know of the cigaret that is so boastfully smoked; a momentary absence has called the teacher from the school room, so the scholars may play—at any rate she will not discover that the book so intently read is a sensational novel instead of the lesson book; the employer's back is turned, so the employe may pilfer from the till, or the head of the firm is abroad, and the trusted bookkeeper juggles his accounts. The customer does not know of the false weight; the product will taste as good and the consumer will not know of its adulteration. The public is easily fooled and therefore the public official need not render honest service to his constituency.

**Man's Inhumanity to Man.** The steward, himself a servant, begins to beat his fellow servants who are under him. It has been said that the real test of character is the treatment accorded a subordinate. The boy who mistreats and domineers over his smaller companions grows into the big bully. The employer who works those under him as though they were mere human machines to be replaced by others when worn out, fails to get as good results in the end as where there is allowance and provision made for the wear and tear and strain upon human nerve and muscle.

**The Golden Rule Working.** A great factory whose output is sent to the uttermost parts of the earth has engraved over its main entrance, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." There are dining rooms for young women employes, baths for all, a circulating library, free medical attendance and every need of the enlightened workman receives consideration, while each employe has a share in the profits. The profits have increased several hundredfold since the business has been brought into conformity with the Golden Rule of Christ.

"We shall be happy  
In our work and play,  
If the law of kindness we obey."

**An Evil Course.** It is not surprising that the untrustworthy servant was also a drunk-en servant. The most harmful action of alcohol on the mind is its tendency to affect the moral principles. The fine fiber of character undergoes degeneration. The confirmed drinker loses all sense of truth, and broken promises strew his pathway. Right and wrong are not distinguished, and good influences lose their power to move the drinker to worthy action. We read in the daily papers of men of previous good character who have become bank defaulters, forgers, swindlers and even more odious criminals, and investigate the cause only to find that they are open or secret drinkers. When the effects of alcohol on the highest functions of the brain are thoroughly known it is easily understood why prohibition reduces crime and empties jails and prisons.

**Cigarets and Culprits.** The late John V. Farwell, founder of the great firm of Farwell & Co.,

used to say that though he employed 5,000 men and boys, there was not a cigaret smoker among them. He declared he would as leave employ a man who stole sheep as a boy who used cigarettes, for he said that wherever a case of dishonesty had been discovered the culprit had invariably been a cigaret smoker.

**The Day of Reckoning.** "The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware." There is always a day of reckoning and it may not be put off. The boy may keep the knowledge of the cigaret from his mother, but through an enfeebled constitution, a weakened heart and possibly a commitment to an asylum, the secret sin will be published to the world. Lowered scholarship and a flunk at the final "exams" will proclaim the student's wasted hours and misused opportunity. The cash in the till must be accounted for, and the petty pilferer is discovered; some day an expert accountant appears and the bookkeeper's guilt is known.

Sometimes the culprits are like the native servant of a British government official, who was sent by his master to a missionary with a note accompanied by a gift of money and fruit. The native stole the rupees and ate the fruit, but ignorant of the writing, delivered the note, thus exposing his own sin.

**God, the Just Judge.** The lesson has a deeper significance, whether or not exposure or earthly punishment come. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven," and when He comes He will bring His rewards with Him. "Unto whomsoever much is given of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him men shall ask the more." Sins of ignorance cannot be made immune from penalty, but wilful sin will receive the deepest condemnation and greatest punishment.

**Quiz.** 1. Whom does the Lord in this parable typify? 2. Who is meant by the Son of man? 3. What Old Testament prophets commended watchfulness? 4. What provision was made for sins committed through ignorance in the Mosaic law? 5. What does this lesson teach concerning the justice of God?

**Seed Truths.** 1. He who watches is never surprised. 2. Faithfulness is the golden key which unlocks the door of opportunity. 3. Truthfulness masters every combination of difficulties and hindrance. 4. No action in life is too small or insignificant to be recorded in the debit or credit column of Heaven's life record. 5. Eye service and lip service are often paid in counterfeit coin. 6. Unkindness to others brutalizes the one guilty of offense. 7. Drink is one of the chief causes of poor service. 8. God has a Divine sense of proportion.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# CHRIST FREEING FROM SIN.

Then said



to those  
Jews  
which  
believed  
on him,  
If ye  
continue  
in my  
word,  
then are  
ye my



indeed:  
And ye  
shall  
know  
the



and the  
truth  
shall  
make  
you



They  
answered  
him,  
We be  
Abra-  
ham's  
seed,  
and were  
never in



to any man:  
how sayest  
thou, Ye shall  
be made free?  
Jesus answered  
them, Verily,  
verily, I say  
unto you,  
Whosoever  
committeth  
sin is the



And the servant abideth not in the



for ever:  
but the  
Son  
abideth  
ever. If  
the Son  
therefore  
shall



ye shall be free indeed.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 8:31-36.

**Prayer:** Lord, Have mercy on me; free me from sin and make me Thine own child. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

"He opens wide the prison doors,  
And breaks the chains that bind us  
And bids us onward press and leave  
The world and sin behind us."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 32. Place, The temple, Jerusalem. Person, Christ.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ the Emancipator. Introduced by John the Baptist, John 1:29. Redemption through His blood, Eph. 1:7. Frees from sin and death, Rom. 8:2. Liberty through Christ, Isa. 61:1, Luke 4:18. Giver of eternal life, Rom. 6:23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In the lesson Christ

teaches: 1. That the supreme test of service is continuance in well doing. 2. Truth frees from superstition and error. 3. Conduct and profession must harmonize. 4. The bondage of sin. 5. The wide difference between the slavery of sin and the liberty of the true child of God. 6. The only true, efficient cure for sin. 7. The Christian is the true free man.

### THE FREEMAN AND THE SLAVE.

**A Portentous Proclamation.** Napoleon proclaimed his right to the title of Emperor with much spectacular display. Magnificent pomp and the glittering blaze of pseudo royalty attended the coronation when with his own impatient hands he crowned himself. But here is One who announces His own pre-eminence over the whole world and Heaven itself. The very simplicity which attends the declaration makes the scene more extraordinary. Not a single blazing rocket; not a voice crying "Vive le roi"; no thundering of cannon or pealing of cathedral chimes; no jewel crowned aspirant for royalty, or claimant to a throne presents himself to the public, but a man of humble, modest and even sorrowful mien stands in the treasury of the temple and declares to a few hearers, "I am the Light of the world."

**His Followers.** "As he spoke these words many believed on Him." We fancy then was enacted one of the popular outbursts of enthusiasm which the writers of the Gospels sometimes record. Palms may have been strewn across His pathway, some perhaps threw their own garments before Him to carpet His way, and "Hosanna to the Son of David" may have come from many throats. In moments of public excitement and when the very air is rife with faith, doubts pass away. It is easy to follow the multitude either for good or evil.

**The Real Test.** There must have been some public demonstration of faith in Him, for "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." That was to be the test of their profession of Christ. This world is a great testing place and every day a testing time.

**The Test Applied.** The machinist stands in the shed awaiting the incoming train and before the cars have been emptied of their passengers, he is at the wheels tapping each with his hammer, and his experienced ear

knows if they ring true. Farming is no longer haphazard and indiscriminate sowing of untried seed. Corn, oats and barley, wheat and rye are first tested to know what returns they may yield. Jesus looks at His new followers whose hosannas may be ringing still in His ears, and puts the test of continuance in well doing, which is the test of a Christian today. A theological student once asked an ignorant young colored girl if she had ever "experienced entire regeneration." "No sah, but I'se had spasms," was the reply. The true follower of Christ is not a spasmodic Christian.

**The Office of Truth.** "And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." "What is truth?" was the problem propounded by one of the world's greatest philosophers. For centuries the world had been seeking after truth when Christ came with the immortal declaration, "I am the Truth." No need to cower in doubt or cringe before falsehood and sophistry." "As Christ would do" frees from every perplexing doubt in regard to conduct. Could one imagine the Holy One walking the streets of Jerusalem with pipe or cigar between his teeth, or would a cheap politician dare to buttonhole him with argument concerning financial gain to accrue from governmental complicity with sin? The bare suggestion is a startling sacrilege to those who know Christ. A knowledge of truth regarding alcohol and tobacco is freeing the world from its slavery to a terrible and degrading sin. It is hard to convince a sinner of his need of a Saviour. The drunkard is always the last one to realize his own repulsive degradation. The opium fiend fancies he is hiding his vice from all eyes, when by every sign of nature, his secret is known to all.

**Who is Master?** In the very face of their scorn, Jesus hurls the declaration, "Who-soever committeth sin is the servant of sin." The statement is so logical, so irrefutable



that it needs no elaboration. No man can serve two masters. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Not only because God is a jealous God but because of natural law; two objects can not occupy the same given space at the same time. "Either he will hate the one and hold to the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." If one's time is devoted to sinful pleasure, if the voice is uplifted in blasphemy, and the example is on the side of evil habit and custom, if the influence and the vote help to perpetuate the wrong, not all the prayers and tithes and offerings can free from the Mastership of Satan.

The late Sam Jones used to aptly say, "When you see a measly yaller cur following at the heels of two men, you never can tell who owns him till the men separate at a corner. Then you know who he belongs to, for he will follow his master." Temptations are the crises and corners of life—turning points which proclaim who is Master.

**Servant or Son.** Again and again Christ emphasizes the security of the righteous and the insecurity of the sinner. Now he uses the figure of servant and son, "The servant abideth not in the house forever." Through a false sense of security Satan lulls the conscience and judgment of the sinner. The moderate drinker is perfectly sure he will know enough to stop before he gets too much and is not warned by the example of those who have gone over the precipice of drink before him. One cannot forever go in sin without meeting the consequences. The drunkard and drink-seller must meet the "Without are drunkards and murderers," and the "Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink."

"But the son abideth ever." Christ's reign shall not only be unending but shall increase until every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess His name, and the one who is a son of God through Him is not moved by every temptation nor shaken by every trial of faith. He is stable in all his ways, and established in all his goings; he has a mansion eternal in Heaven. How foolish he who becomes a servant by choice when he may have the privilege of sonship!

**The Great Emancipator.** With a few strokes of the pen, Abraham Lincoln struck the shackles from off 4,000,000 slaves and his name shall live in history as the emancipator of a race. By the shedding of His own blood as a sacrifice for our sins, Christ became the emancipator of the human race. It is popular at the present time to treat sin as a disease and the papers are filled with advertisements of much vaunted cures for drunkenness, all

of which may be well enough in their way, but if sin is a disease it is a disease of the soul which needs the Great Physician. Some years ago a poor wretched drunkard, recovering from a prolonged debauch, starving and miserable, found his way to the Chicago river and stood upon its banks ready for the final plunge. He had fought against the curse of an inherited appetite and had been worsted in the battle. Thrice he had been to the gold cure for drunkenness and pronounced cured, only to fall again. Sanitariums innumerable had studied his case and sent him out into the world again only to drink the more. Death seemed preferable to life, but before he could leap into the icy water, a policeman pulled him backward and took the rescued wreck to one of the city missions, where the Christ cure was applied, and freed from the slavery of appetite the man is sober today.

**The Larger Liberty.** "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Prolonged and hard struggle may enable one to hold appetite in check and one may be able by rigorous self-control to gain many victories over one's besetting sin, but in an evil moment desire sweeps away the guards of a life time, sin enters and the last state is worse than the first. Too many pledges are broken because the first clause "Trusting in God to help me, I solemnly promise," has been a meaningless phrase. A trust in God is the drunkard's greatest safeguard. John B. Gough repented and reformed many times, only to fall again until led to accept Christ as a Saviour from his besetting sin. John G. Woolley tells us that for seven years after his reclamation he fought appetite often to the verge of defeat, until led to lay his case before Christ and to pray for perfect victory over sin. After a night spent in prayer, he walked up and down the streets of Chicago the next morning to find that for the first time in his life he could pass the city's gin-shops without the slightest desire to drink. He was free indeed.

**Quiz.** 1. Whom is Christ addressing? 2. What disclosure of Himself has He made? 3. What character in Pilgrim's Progress was faithful unto death? 4. How were the Pharisees able to say, "Abraham is our father"? 5. How did John the Baptist rebuke their pride? 6. What is the greatest freedom?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. It is easy to believe with the multitude, but hard to continue with the minority. 2. He who continueth to the end gains the final victory. 3. Truth makes no slaves and forges no shackles. 4. Ascent is better than descent from the oldest family tree. 5. That which bears the trade mark is the property of the one who holds the copyright. 6. Error must die, but truth shall live forever. 7. Christ is the giver of all liberty. 8. He is only free who wears the yoke of Christ.

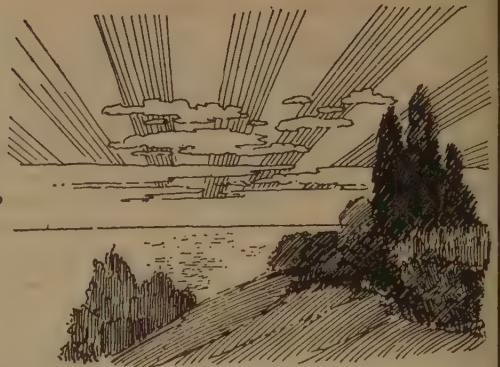
MARGARET WINTRINGER.



The



is far  
spent,  
the



is at hand: let us therefore



the works of  
darkness, and let  
us put on the



of light. Let us



honestly,  
as in  
the day;  
not in



and



not in  
chamber-  
ing and  
wanton-  
ness,  
not in



and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROMANS 13:11-14.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we so spend the days of our life that when the night cometh we shall be ready for Thine appearing. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

We build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And mount to its summit round by round.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 58. Place, written by Paul from Corinth and sent by Phoebe to the church at Rome.

**Scripture Setting:** **A Clean Life.** Commanded by God, Isa. 1:16-19; 2 Cor. 7:1. A requisite of Christian service, Isa. 52:11. Impossible without help, Psa. 19:12. God, the Creator of a clean heart, Psa. 51:10. Christ, the cleanser, Mark 1:40-41;

John 15:3. Cleansed through the blood, 1 John 1:7. Citizens of Heaven, Psa. 24:3-4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul would emphasize: 1. The call for Christian service. 2. The necessity for repentance. 3. The Christian life an armor of protection. 4. Heart and life purity. 5. Christ as the great example of a perfect life. 6. Sin should have no part in Christian reckoning.

### THE NEW CITIZENSHIP.

**A Letter and Its Carrier.** That was a masterly letter which Phoebe carried from Corinth to Rome. The Government mails have borne many precious messages and important documents, but it is doubtful if fast mail service or Royal Mail packet ever carried a letter which meant so much as the one which Paul entrusted to a woman. Eighteen and a half centuries have passed, but the name of that early Christian woman has gained world-wide fame, has been printed in more than four hundred languages and has gone wherever the bible has been carried. Doubtless it would have seemed a trifling commission to any of the world's great ones of her day, but while their adventures and victories are forgotten, Phoebe's errand has become momentous. Let no one deny to woman a part in the spread of God's message to a sin-sick world.

**Night.** "There are nights and nights," as the old lady declared. At the close of each hard working day do we always remember to thank God for the kindly night with its rest, sleep and refreshment? Then there is the night of heavy sorrow, when a loved one has gone from the home; but even when the absence is for a season what a sense of loss and loneliness when the boy leaves the home roof. How dark the night to those who had seen Christ's departure: So eagerly they remembered His promise to return, so ardently they longed for His second coming, so unending the days without the Master, it seemed as though the hour must be at hand. Paul had been with these disciples and caught their expectation. He would have the Romans, as it behooves every Christian, to watch for that glorious day. All may not hope to see that last great day. There is a final night that comes to all, and the great Apostle would remind us that our little day is so short, that the Christian should be up and doing, lest the shades of that final night close on a life-long, illspent day.

**The Coming Day.** Christ's reappearance having been foretold in such a supernatural manner, there was danger that those who heard the angel's announcement should dream and dwell over-much on the glorious coming which they awaited, and live in that future rather than work for the present. With a broader and more logical vision, Paul saw that present opportunity. There were wrongs to be righted; burdens to be lifted that would hasten Christ's coming. "For now is our salvation nearer than we believed." No need to wait the millennium, we may hasten the Lord's coming to some heart now; no need to grieve that the way is blocked to the foreign mission field when a foreigner lives next door. There are temperance people who will not trouble to enforce a law because they are awaiting the glorious dawn of prohibition. Salvation from a legalized liquor traffic is nearer than we had dared believe.

**A Call to Action.** Who has not felt the temptation to sleep on through the morning hours? Paul's words are like the oft repeated morning call of father or mother: "Now it is high time to awake out of sleep." It is a call to do today's duties, to resist today's temptations; it is a call to repentance. "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness." How well Paul understood the encumbrance of sin. He had not watched the Olympian games for nothing. He knew that when men raced, swam or wrestled, they ought to have as little impedimenta as possible. Every muscle must have utmost play, there must be liberty of limb and motion. Therefore to the church at Jerusalem he pictures sin as a weight to be laid aside; to the Romans he describes sin as a garment. Secret sins and vices ruin health, sap the vital energy and destroy ambition. They are to be discarded as one would an infected robe.

**An Armour of Light.** What a fighter is Paul and how he glories in using the figures

of earthly warfare and changing their significance into a spiritual meaning. Four years before he had written to the Thessalonians and four years later he wrote to the Ephesians of the proper accoutrement of the Christian in the spiritual warfare. A girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, gospel sandals, a shield of faith and helmet of salvation shall Paul's soldier wear; it is a panoply of defense, for the Christian warfare is largely a battle against the assaults of temptation. It is also aggressive with the drawn sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

**Honest Living.** "Let us walk honestly as in the day." Live in the open, look men in the eye, walk erect! The man who lives in the broad daylight, his word as good as his bond; his character at par with his reputation; conduct tallying with profession; and a soul as straight as his straightforward gaze: this is the man whom Paul commends. The world stands in need of such citizens today.

**The Enemies' Forces:** Paul has given the call to arms, invested his Christian soldier with armor and now he points to the enemy with such directness that we seem to see Satan's phalanx: rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife and envying. The Christian should have no part in those revels of sinful folly which are inconsistent with clean living. Drunkenness has charged on many a citadel of character and leveled it to the ground. Wherever liquor is served is no place for the Christian. The secret sins of impurity or more open profligacy are alike destructive to character, while strife and envy are unbecoming the follower of the Prince of Peace.

**A Glorious Panoply.** "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." On the eve of a desperate battle, Æneas' mother, anxious for her son's safety, brought down from Olympus an invulnerable panoply and laid it at Æneas' feet. The son puts on the panoply and becomes invulnerable to all the thrusts of the enemy. The Heavenly Father, more careful for the safety of His children than any goddess-mother of heathendom, has committed to us a pattern of life so perfect that it saves from all unrighteousness all those who put on the Lord Jesus Christ. At our feet lies the robe of His righteousness. Do sinful pleasures entice? Put on the Lord Jesus Christ who pleased not Himself. Does an uncontrollable appetite for strong drink strive for mastery? Put on the Lord Jesus Christ who was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin. Does impurity spread like a contagion to tempt and de-

stroy? Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, "For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted."

**The Enlistment Banner.** "No compromise" is to be inscribed on the banner of the New Citizenship. When we license the sale of intoxicating liquors because there has always been drunkenness in the world and always will be, and it is better to regulate a vice you cannot hope to eradicate, do we not make "provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lust thereof?" St. Augustine tells how this verse came to him, changing the entire current of his life. When walking in a garden at Milan, his attention was caught by a voice, perhaps the call of children at play, "Take and read, Take and read."

He opened again a copy of the Epistles he had but lain down and writes: "I read in silence the first place on which my eyes fell. 'Not in reveling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts!' At the close of the sentence, as if a ray of certainty had poured into my heart, the clouds of hesitation fled at once." He had "put on the Lord Jesus Christ."

**The Knight of the New Chivalry.** He stands six feet tall in moral dimensions, his feet solidly planted on the rock Truth; his shoulders squared against evil, with a chest girth broadened and deepened by aspiration and high endeavor, with eyes so pure that the mother will find her own soul reflected in their clear depths. His hands in readiness for the work that lies nearest and on his breast the stamp of the conquering Christ. There is a call for him from factory and workshop, from business and professional life, from the judge's bench and the capitol. He is a soldier without bayonet or rifle, fighting every entrenched wrong in the name of God and humanity. But a short time ago the world thought him a Don Quixote, fighting windmills; today they call him a Christian citizen.

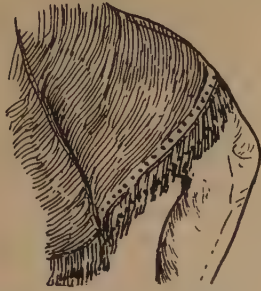
**Quiz.** 1. What great event did the early Christians await? 2. Where does Paul describe the accoutrement of the Christian soldier? 3. Did Paul refer to military warfare or spiritual struggle? 4. To whom did he send this call? 5. When did Paul go to Rome and what happened to him there?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. No errand is trifling in the sight of the Master. 2. Each life is one of the days in eternity's calendar. 3. Sin is a weight to the soul. 4. Purity of life means strength of purpose. 5. Compromise and conquest do not go together. 7. Christ is our robe of righteousness.



# PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY.

For it is written, As I  
live, saith the Lord, every

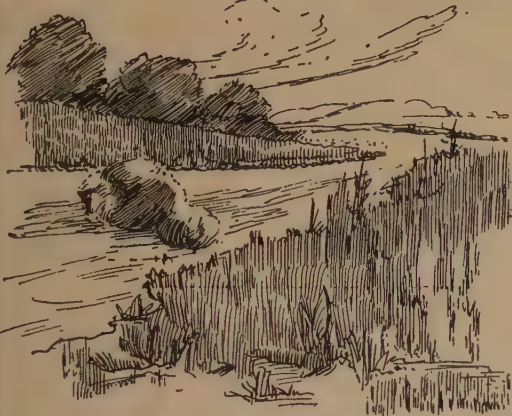


shall bow  
to me,  
and  
every



shall confess to God.  
So then every  
one of us shall give  
account of himself

to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a



or an  
occasion  
to



in his brother's way. It is good neither to



nor to



nor any thing whereby thy brother



or is



or is made weak.

# THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ROMANS 14: 11-21.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we follow the example of Jesus Christ, our Elder Brother, toward the weak and sinful. For His name's sake, Amen.

"Each man shall bear his neighbor's burden,  
Each care for all;  
Love's light shall shine in every cottage,  
Love's words fill every hall."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, 58 A. D. Written by Paul from Corinth to the Christian church at Rome.

**Scripture Setting:** Duty to Others. To share temporal benefits, Lev. 19:9-10. To relieve want, Lev. 25:35. To bear infirmities of the weak, Rom. 15:1. To bear another's burdens, Gal. 6:2. The duty of sympathy, Rom. 12:15. Exercise of patience, Thess. 5:14. To love, I John 4:7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul would have these early Christians: 1. Exercise charity toward the weaknesses of others. 2. Refrain from judging their brethren. 3. Sacrifice their own pleasure for the greater good. 4. Gain a higher conception of the kingdom of God. 5. Abstain from self-indulgence. 6. Consider the weakness of others.

## THE MISSION OF THE STRONG.

**The Greatest of These is Charity.** While the earliest of the Roman Christians were Jews by birth, the Roman church contained also a large element who were of Gentile origin. It was not strange that the two elements should have a different view point. The Jewish contingent while accepting Christ, still clung not only to the Mosaic code, but to the rabbinical traditions concerning fast and feast and proscribed food, and sought to urge their views and ceremonies upon the others; while with little forbearance and small consideration for their scruples the Gentile portion of the church scoffed their narrowness and turned the criticism of themselves into ridicule. Paul has made it plain that these differences are immaterial, that the Jew has no reason to boast over his brother. In practices which are so non-essential each has a right to his own views; for to God only are they accountable.

**The Final Account.** Paul has given a terse but striking picture of that great day when "every one of us shall give an account of himself to God." Of himself he must give an account and not of another.

**Whose Stick Is Notched?** An old legend tells of a man of harsh and unforgiving spirit who recorded every ill of his neighbors and every injury and wrong perpetrated by them by cutting a notch on a stick which he kept for that purpose. One day he appeared before Heaven's gate, the notched stick his only staff and support. "Good St. Peter, pray open to one who has lived so long among evil people that he longs to dwell forever with the good. The notches on this stick will tell you of the wrongs and injuries done by those I have left behind." To his surprise St. Peter broke the stick into a thousand pieces and began to flay him with another twice as long and twice as deeply indented, while he warned him to be gone, with the words, "By a man's own deeds is he beaten or blessed. The stick that is your scourge is notched by the wrongs and injuries you have done to others."

**Judge Not.** How tenderly persuasive is the admonition, "Let us not therefore judge one another any, more." Paul has caught the spirit of the Master. Reformers may

well study his example. He does not don ermine and mount the judicial bench to talk down to the sinner but enters the prisoner's dock and identifies himself with the culprit by the use of the personal pronoun "us." When we rebuke and when we judge another, let us, like Paul, remember ourselves as the chief of sinners. The "holier than thou" spirit should have no place in reform. Who art thou that thou judgest another? Why dost thou judge thy brother? The poor drunkard in the gutter may have fought a harder battle and won more victories over self than his sober accuser who is not tempted to drink. The world only knows of the defeats when it sees him drunk but is ignorant of the times when he fought and conquered. Too often

"We atone for the sins we are inclined to  
By damning those we have no mind to."

**Thy Brother's Keeper.** The apostle makes it plain that no one is responsible nor will anyone be held accountable for the folly, mistakes or sins of others. To his own Master each must stand or fall. "But judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Every person will be held responsible who by act or example puts temptation in another's way. He is responsible who risks the safety of others. Paul was only stating a fact of common law. A man may not keep a dog unchained that is a menace to the passer by; he must keep his premises in sanitary condition lest poison germs be bred, and may not weaken the health of the community by mingling freely with his fellows if he has an infectious disease or has been exposed to contagion. Though he owns the land, the realty owner may not dig a pit in his own ground and leave it uncovered lest another's safety be exposed. But what of the moral pitfalls; of the contagion of the brothel; of the saloon, that breeding place of vice; of the unleashed gamblers and gambling places? What of the innumerable evil



places that threaten the moral safety of youth, too oft sanctioned by the ballots of Christian men, and their existence ever due to the torpitude and indifference of professed servants of Christ?

**For Whom Christ Died.** Paul has the training of a lawyer and he is of too logical a mind to argue whether Jew or Gentile is right in regard to these traditions. The main argument is, destroy not him "for whom Christ died." With what majesty the apostle has clothed weakness! That weak chin, the irresolute lips, those wavering eyes have all come under the blood and they are sacred.

**For His Sake.** In the early years of Frances E. Willard's temperance itinerary she spoke in a certain church in a mining city. After an ardent but vain appeal for signers to the pledge she left her place in the pulpit and canvassed the audience, going to a half-intoxicated young miner, who refused with an oath. "For your mother's sake," Miss Willard urged, and the lad replied with such language as no sober man would have used in regard to his mother. "For your sweetheart's sake, for the sake of the girl who will some day be your wife," Miss Willard again urged, only to be more rudely repulsed. "For your own sake." The lad was bound for perdition and plainly told Miss Willard so. Then the saintly reformer put a small white hand on the miner's grimy coat sleeve, "My brother, won't you sign the pledge for the sake of the Christ that is in you?" "Ah," said the man long years afterward, "that broke me all up. Many a time I had been told I had the devil in me, but no one had ever seen Christ in me before." He signed the pledge and surrendered to Christ.

**Protect Your Good Name.** A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches. A man's Christian reputation is his best capital as a religious worker; whenever that reputation suffers, his influence goes below par and when it is lost he is a bankrupt as far as Christian influence in the community is concerned. Does not the Christian who indulges in questionable amusements pay too dearly for the doubtful pleasures? Paul spoke not as a lawyer but as a solid business man might of the conservation of capital when he urged, "Let not then your good be evil spoken of."

**The Kingdom of God.** A decision for the right never incurs sacrifice, it only means a change of values and the substitution of the real for the false. The pleasures of sin are always coarse, often bestial and ever unsatisfying; the bubbles gone, champagne palls upon the taste; a night's frolic means a morning's headache. Self-indulgence suffers

the pangs of gout, dyspepsia and a train of other ills, while Self-Control has as her attendants, health, wholesomeness, happiness, success and honor. The Heavenly Father knoweth how to give good things to those who come to Him. "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

**Things Worth Striving For.** Paul may have been a man of insignificant stature and halting, stammering speech, but what far-reaching vision was his, what sublime appreciation of the false and the real! What after all has the world to give but meat and drink, a little more or less highly seasoned, more or less delicately served, but only meat and drink. The only things worth seeking are those which are a training for better service to humanity.

**The Work of God.** There is a great work of God going on in the world: the spiritual, moral and physical regeneration of the individual, the nation and the governments of the world. Every saloon that is voted out; every evil resort closed; every sin that is overcome; every soul brought nearer to Christ; every good that is ushered into the world; every disease overthrown: all are a part of the work of God. For meat destroy not His work. For earthly advantage, gain or comfort, do not thwart God's will.

**The Ultimate Good.** "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended or is made weak." The greatest good for the greatest number; this is the larger liberty which towers above the so-called personal liberty. We have no liberty which conflicts with another's good. It has been well said that Robinson Crusoe was the only character who could claim the right of personal liberty, since no other's safety or welfare was endangered by anything Defoe's stranded hero might do so long as he lived alone on his island. But the moment the man Friday appeared on the scene, Crusoe's personal liberty ended; there were now two to be considered instead of one. Christian liberty by liberating us from the law of self, brings freedom to live for others.

**Quiz.** 1. What two divisions in the church at Rome? 2. State some of the traditions for which the Jewish members stood. 3. What Christian virtue did Paul commend to them? 4. What gives value to every soul? 5. What is the duty of the strong? 6. Which is the greater, Christian liberty or larger liberty?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. God is the real judge; man is only self-appointed. 2. It is ours to save, not condemn. 3. Every soul has been paid for in such precious coin that all the riches of the world are not equivalent to the value of the poorest soul. 4. "Personal liberty" is the autocratic demand of the tyrant; Christian liberty is loving solicitude for others. 5. One's pleasure is often another's destruction.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we



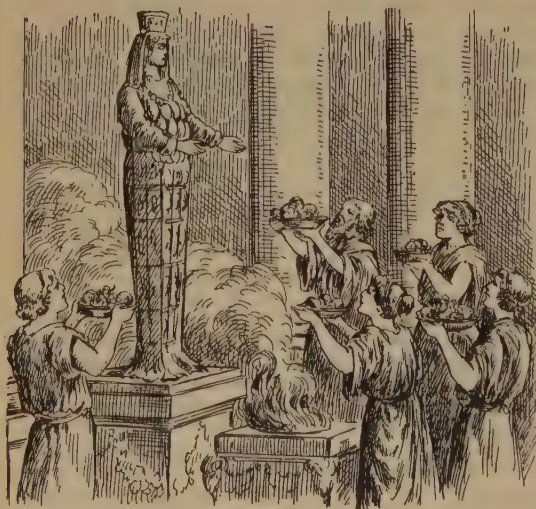
are we the better;  
neither, if we eat  
not, are we the  
worse. But  
take heed, lest by  
any means this  
liberty of your's  
become a



to them that  
are weak.  
For if any  
man see  
thee which  
hast  
knowledge



shall not the  
conscience  
of him  
which is  
weak be  
emboldened  
to eat  
those things  
which are



And  
through  
thy  
know-  
ledge  
shall  
the  
weak  
brother



for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS I COR. 8:8-13.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we ever be moved by Thy Divine compassion for our fellows; so teach us and guide us that our example may help others to follow Thee. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

I must the fair example set:  
From those that on my pleasure wait  
The stumbling block remove:  
Their duty by my life explain,  
And still in all my works maintain  
The dignity of love.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 50. Place, written from Ephesus by Paul to the church at Corinth. **Persons,** Paul and the Greek and Jewish converts at Corinth.

**Scripture Setting:** Duty to Our Brother. Responsibility toward our brother, Gen. 4:9-11. Forbidden to hate, Lev. 19:17-18. Brothers must not go to law, 1 Cor. 6:5-6. Forbearance enjoined, Col. 3:13. Wayward brother to be admonished, 2 Thess. 3:15. Weak brother to be exhorted, Heb. 3:13. Kindness enjoined, 2 Peter 1:7. Love commanded, Heb. 13:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul emphasizes:  
1. That custom is immaterial to salvation. 2. While the utmost liberty of conscience should be allowed, each should see that, his example does not offend the weak. 3. Liberty should never become a menace to the safety of others. 4. A sin against the weakest of God's children is a sin against the Christ who purchased their salvation. 5. The duty of sacrifice of both inclination and pleasure for the safety of others.

### THY BROTHER.

**A Question of Every-day Life.** Members of the church at Corinth had sent a letter to Paul submitting among other subjects, that of the lawfulness of their eating meat that had been offered to idols. When the gods and the priest had received their share of the flesh of the animals that had been sacrificed to the false gods at the various heathen temples, it was the custom to sell at least a part of the remainder to the butchers. It was not always easy for the consumer to know whether his purchase belonged to that particular class of meat or not, since it was for sale at every stall in the market. Moreover its cheapness and excellent quality rendered it especially desirable to the poorer classes to whom the Christians mostly belonged. Indeed such meat was considered so choice that it was frequently sent by the offerers to friends and relatives or used at dinners to which those who had offered the sacrifice would invite their neighbors. These feasts often accompanied with Greek choruses, athletic contests and other recreations were the chief source of social enjoyment, and the Christian who attended must have idol flesh set before him, or by refusing to attend cause his own exclusion from the social life of his heathen neighbors, friends and relations. What course would Paul recommend?

**Worldly Conformity.** Looking backward through the centuries the question seems so puerile and childish that we wonder that Paul gave it serious consideration. Yet it involved much. Heathenism was so universal that the question confronted the Corinthian Christian on every side. Where every house had its special protecting god, to appease whom some portion of every meal was laid

upon the family altar; when one member of that family became a Christian he would at once become confronted by the question as to whether conformity with his family custom was not compromise with idolatry. A birthday, perhaps, of a beloved father or mother; the marriage of a brother or sister; the safe return from the sea of a dear friend, were all the occasion of a celebration, with its customary sacrifice in some public temple of heathendom. Was the young convert justified in attending such a feast? There were national celebrations also; should the Christian bring his patriotism and good citizenship into question, or should he be false to his new religion? Though under different conditions, the church is confronted by the same problem today. Christian consistency often involves self-exile from society and fashion, a sense of aloofness in the family circle and political excommunication.

**Harmless but Harmful.** Paul might have quoted Malachi's condemnation of such a practice or the action of the Council of Jerusalem which commanded Gentile converts to abstain from meats offered to idols, for Paul himself had obtained that deliverance, and commended it, but he would have them make a voluntary choice. Since the idols to which the meat was offered were false gods and they as Christians denied the sacredness of such an offering, such meat was in no wise different from any other animal flesh and might be eaten without sin. But there were temptations to be considered; wine was always served at such feasts and drunkenness so common that a drunkard and a Corinthian were held to be the same thing; greed for gain and shady practices for get-

ting it; knavery of all kinds had so lowered the whole moral fiber of the Corinthian people that the continued close intercourse which would result from conformity along other lines might seduce the new convert into other and real evils. While some might eat without the slightest idolatrous feeling, others, through hearing and seeing the ceremonial rites of their former worship, might become backsliders. A thing may be harmless of itself, but through evil associations and environment may work disastrous results. Some time ago a reformed drunkard, extremely ill in a sleeping car, was offered a dose of medicine by the occupant of the upper berth who had used the same remedy often and safely; but the alcohol in the compound so awakened the slumbering demon of appetite as to cause the fall of the other.

**The Power of Example.** "Neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither if we eat not are we the worse. But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to them that are weak." It is a question of others. A friendly game of cards with some small trophy as a prize and incentive to greater interest may never tempt one of the players to haunt the public gambling house and hazard his money, but to thy brother—to the man whose veins burn with the speculative mania, or to the boy too young to make the nice distinction between public and private games and between a "prize" and a "stake," the little social game may be a stumbling block to which later a confirmed gambler dates his fall. The cigar smoked by that good Christian man may never upset mental or nervous equilibrium, but the weak-willed, immature lad may stumble over it into a cigaret fiend's grave. An occasional glass of wine may seemingly work no harm to the moderate drinker but somewhere a drunkard lies in the gutter from his example.

**Thy Weak Brother.** Very earnestly Paul asks, "Through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?" Centuries before Robert Burns' immortal poem saw the light, Paul taught that "a man's a man for a' that." In Paul's eyes each of his fellow mortals wore a patent of nobility written in the indelible blood of a crucified Christ. Shall one man's strength cause another's destruction? We are under obligation as Christians to consider others. If Christ so loved that poor, stumbling drunkard; that weak, emasculated cigaret fiend as to shed His precious blood and give His life for him, shall we not give

up our petty inclinations and puerile pleasures to save him from destruction?

**Heroism.** A building is burning; the stronger ones fight their way through the flames to safety, but there is one imprisoned inmate of the burning building too weak to force his way and make his escape. Do the others leave him to be destroyed because he is weak? Thank God such selfish cowardice is not the rule of conduct. At the risk of their own lives and of forfeiting the safety for which they fought the flames, they return to the burning building and rescue the weak brother.

**Ye Did It Unto Me.** When your example leads another astray, or when you wound a weak conscience, "ye sin against Christ." It becomes no longer a question of sinning against the weak brother but of sinning against our Elder Brother. "Let whiskey alone and it will let you alone," said a professed Christian who intended to vote to license the saloon, but that night he had a strange dream. He saw poor old "Whiskey Jones" a corpse, and as the body was lowered into a drunkard's grave he saw the shadow of a cross fall athwart the coffin and heard a voice say, "Again ye have crucified me afresh!" and lo, a cross on which was the crucified Christ marked the grave. He awoke from sleep, but the question of "wet or dry" thereafter appeared in a new light to one voter.

**Love and Liberty.** How Paul towered above the pleasure-seeking Corinthians. "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Elsewhere the apostle tells us the world was crucified unto him and he unto the world through the cross of Christ. He bore in his body the marks of the Lord Jesus, and in his spirit, the stamp of the sacrificial Christ. Have we attained Paul's stature?

**Quiz.** 1. For what was the city of Corinth noted? 2. What can you say of the environment of the Corinthian Christians? 3. What was the course pursued by Daniel and his three companions under similar conditions? 4. What was Paul's attitude toward the question? 5. Upon what did he base his plea? 6. Whom should we consider in relation to our attitude toward un-Christian practices of today?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Though conditions have changed considerably, the problems of the first and twentieth centuries are much the same. 2. Every earnest soul is confronted by the question of conformity or consistency. 3. He who carries the banner of Christ high aloft and would not lower his colors finds himself with but a corporal's guard of followers. 4. Many sins are committed in the name of liberty. 5. Example is our most fearful responsibility. 6. Sacrifice and love for others are essential to Christian living. 7. "For thy brother's sake" is the most cogent argument against any evil. 8. The weakness of another should appeal to the strong.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE RACE AND THE PRIZE.

Know ye  
not that  
they which



run  
all,  
but



So



that ye may obtain. And every man that



is



in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT, 1 COR. 9:24-27. READ ALSO PHIL. 3:12-14.

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us to gain the mastery of self. May we sacrifice every inclination that is contrary to Thy will and ever hold before us the prize of the high calling of God through Christ Jesus, Amen.

Awake my soul, stretch every nerve,  
And press with vigor on;  
A Heavenly race demands thy zeal,  
And an immortal crown.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 59. Place, Ephesus, where the letter was written. Persons, Paul and Corinthian Christians.

**Scriptural Setting:** The Victorious Christian. Strength, courage and obedience requisites of victory, Josh. 1:7. Puts Christ first, Phil. 3:8. Overcomes sin, 1 John 2:13. Victory won through faith, 1 John 5:4. Sons of God, Rev. 21:7. Victorious over death, 1 Cor. 15:54-57. To reign with Christ, Rev. 3:21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features

of Paul's illustration are: 1. That not all who enter the Christian life continue therein. 2. Not all who cry, "Lord, Lord," shall gain a reward. 3. The Christian life must conform to Christ's rules. 4. Success depends upon the individual. 5. Temperance is one of the requisites of a Christian life. 6. The superiority of the Christian's hope. 7. Decision of character and earnestness of spirit are necessary. 8. The necessity of self-control. 9. No Christian may consider himself safe from temptation to fall.

### HOW THE PRIZE WAS WON.

**The Isthmian Games.** The games were one of the four great national festivals of the Greeks, held every second or third year. Seven miles from Corinth rose an amphitheater and stadium or race-course, each an enclosed oval and both built of white marble, where the games were held. None but Greek citizens of pure blood and irreproachable record were allowed to contend in them. So popular were they that even the hostilities of war were suspended during the celebrations of the games. Multitudes of spectators came to view these games, which included wrestling, foot races and other athletic sports, with horse and chariot racing. Paul would teach that life is a race, less spectacular and to most of us without the accompaniment and inspiration of cheering multitudes, but as earnest and as strenuous as any ever run in the stadium.

**Many Entries.** Scarcely a greater honor could be earned by a Greek citizen than that of prize winner at these games. Not an athlete in all Greece, not a charioteer of promise who failed to enter the field. All desired the prize. So today, it almost seems as though the men are many and the deeds are few; every profession crowded, every calling overdone. "All the world has entered for a prize and it is useless to strive," say the timid youth. In every human heart, it matters not how indifferent or debased, there is a chord that is responsive to the good. No one starts out in life intending crime or sin. All are striving, however indifferently, after the right; all desire to win Heaven.

**The Race.** "Know ye not that they which run the race run all, but one receives the prize?" The race is to begin, the line of contestants is already formed, so many of them that they fairly crowd each other for space in which to swing free arms and legs.

There are many favorites who receive the plaudits of their friends. At last all is ready, the signal is given and they are off. Some fall out early, discouraged. Others, their heads turned to catch the admiring huzzahs of the crowd, stumble and fall out by the way; many drop down exhausted to be carried off by sympathizing friends or attendants.

**One Winner.** But there is one whose firm flesh, clear complexion and far-seeing eyes marked him from the start as one prepared by a life of self-mastery and training for this supreme effort. He has endurance, his muscles are of iron, every tendon taut; he has a single purpose, with no eyes for the shouting multitude of onlookers, and his gaze fixed on the goal. He is not discouraged, does not stumble or fall, and at last the prize is his. Lucky? The prizes of life are not won by luck or chance.

**Picking a Boy.** Recently an employer advertised for a boy. Sixty answered the advertisement and each was ushered into the same great room and left to wait an hour. Finally the man of business entered. Each lad was scrutinized quickly and within ten minutes without any questions or parley the employer singled out a boy and engaged him for the place. A friend who had watched the procedure asked the man how he arrived at his choice. "First," said the employer, "I stood outside a few minutes before I entered. The door was ajar. I heard one boy swear in impatience, another whiled away the time by whistling a bar of music from a popular but improper song. I saw another take a lozenge to disguise the odor of liquor. When I entered I looked the boys over very closely and chose one whose fingers showed no cigaret stains, whose eyes were clear and who had been occupying his time with a study book."

**Striving for the Mastery.** It is useless to enter a race unless you adhere to the rules which govern the contest. "So run that ye may obtain." "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things." The athlete must submit to rules and restrictions



and months of training. He must forego indulgence in many things, and the world of sport is growing more rigid in its demands of total abstinence from alcohol and tobacco. All the prominent athletic clubs require total abstinence when preparing men for any meet. Those who use alcohol make a dash at first but cannot endure, and fall behind at the finish, in the foot races those who use alcohol are the first to drop out by the way. Total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks is required during the season of all football and baseball teams.

**Weston the Walker.** At seventy Weston, a total abstainer, was able to repeat the pedestrian feat he had accomplished forty years before by walking across the continent. In the race for business and professional success the rules against the use of alcohol and tobacco are rapidly becoming as stringent. The cigaret smoker is now barred from more than one hundred different lines of business and trades, while a temperance order prohibiting the use of intoxicants habitually or while on duty extends to over 1,000,000 railway employees.

**The Two Prizes.** Though Christ's promise to those who seek first the kingdom of Heaven includes an earthly reward, Paul is not inciting these Corinthian Christians to righteousness merely as a means to worldly attainment. That was gained by the victor of any Ithmian game, who not only won honor for himself and his family, but even for his town, where he was welcomed home with all the honors of a military hero, the very walls of the city being thrown down that he might enter as a conqueror; his statue was set up by his fellow citizens and a tablet built into the walls of the amphitheater to commemorate his deed. Gold was awarded him also from the city treasury, while the greatest poets celebrated his victory in song. To Paul the value of earthly honors and gain was signified by the pine wreath which was the avowed reward for which the contestants in these games strove. All was as transient as the wreath of pine, which withered within a short year. "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." Eternal life, eternal glory, eternal honor, eternal riches are the prize for which the Christian strives.

**A Straight Course.** There is no uncertainty in life's course. One always arrives at the point he is headed for. The cigaret fiend is headed for the insane asylum and

arrives all too soon. The young man who spends his earning at the pool table and for drink, runs his course as an embezzler and ends in a drunkard's grave or the prison. Garfield could run the race from the tow path to the White House, but Benedict Arnold, with youth, wealth and valor as a starting point, ran the race of profligacy to a traitor's grave. Then Paul urges, Be in earnest; do not fight as one beating the air. In the temperance warfare too much effort has been spent beating the air: high sounding resolutions and sonorous prayers when the occasion calls for Christian action and Christian ballots.

**Master or Servant.** Ah, Paul has found the real source of failure, the real cause of defeat—Self! "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection." What an exquisite piece of machinery is the body and how wonderful its mechanism, formed by the great Master Mechanic for His service and glory, but degraded and enfeebled by self-indulgence till it dishonors the Creator and destroys the soul that inhabits it. "I keep under" in Paul's time was a technical term of the games and meant to strike full in the face: the most damaging blow one boxer could give another. Against every unholy desire and evil appetite of the body Paul directed his hardest, most firmly planted blows. No one may hope to win whose body is master instead of servant.

**A Castaway.** Paul has seen many of the derelicts of life. Life's course is strewn with failures; youths who have started out bent upon winning one of life's prizes, but through strong drink have stumbled and lost; those of bright mind and high intellect, who, intoxicated by the plaudits of men and advances of evil, have lifted their eyes from the goal and fallen through impurity. A moment's temptation has ruined many a man who has failed to keep his body under and in subjection to Christ. Others have counted the prize not worth the sacrifice and exertion and have failed through lack of earnestness, while all too great a number, through lack of singleness of purpose, have missed the "prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

**Quiz.** 1. What athlete named in the Bible was a total abstainer? 2. To what may we liken the Christian life? 3. What does Paul emphasize as a requisite to success? 4. To what other church did Paul use the same figure of speech in an exhortation to earnestness of purpose?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Paul, the fisher after men, bated them with loving tenderness. 2. In the race for Heaven the prize is set before every one and all may win. 3. Character lasts through eternity; love never fails, and purity endures forever. 4. The man who does not know where he is at nor where he is going fails to achieve success. 5. When the devil fails to derail a Christian he tries to sidetrack him.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

## TWO KINDS OF FRUIT.

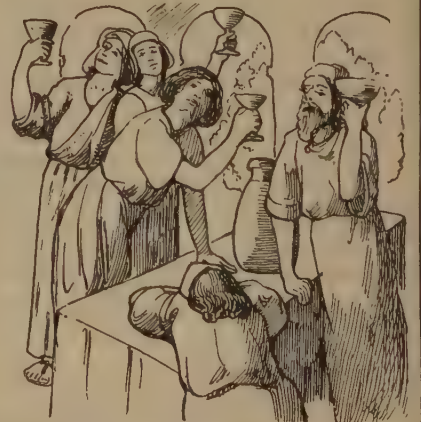
Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,



variance, emulations,



heresies, envyings.



and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS GAL. 5:19-23. READ JAMES 3:14-18.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Teach us to avoid the sins of the flesh and so chasten and instruct us in Thy word that we may bear the peaceable fruits of righteousness. For Jesus sake, Amen.

"Sorrow must crop each passion shoot,  
And pain each lust infernal,  
Or human life can bear no fruit  
To life eternal."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 55. Place, Antioch, whence Paul sent his letter to the churches of Galatia. Person, Paul.

**Scripture Setting:** Good and Evil Fruit. Deceitful fruit, Hos. 10:13. Punished according to fruit, Jer. 21:14. Reward according to fruit, Jer. 32:19. A test of character, Matt. 7:16-20. Fruit of eternal life, John 4:36. Good fruit lasting, John 15:16. Fruit of spirit, Eph. 5:9. Peaceable fruit of righteousness, James 3:17-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special lessons which Paul sought to impress through this illustration are: 1. That the heart is naturally evil and the flesh at enmity with God. 2. That the works of the natural man are evil. 3. Sins spring from the same cause. 4. Sin cannot enter the kingdom of God. 5. The fruits of the Spirit. 6. The walk and life of the regenerate man bear the fruits of righteousness. 7. The liberty of the righteous.

### A FOOLISH AND BEWITCHED PEOPLE.

**A Special Message.** Paul's letter to the Galatians is fraught with special interest to us, since it was written to a people who were in a sense our forbears. The term Galatian is equivalent to Gaul or Kelt, and the "foolish Galatians," whom he rebuked with equal tenderness and sternness, were a fragment of that great and virile race which spread over western Europe and from which the people of the western part of England Scotland, and of Ireland and France sprang. The Epistle to the Galatians is, therefore, a hand mirror which we may take up at our leisure and in it trace our resemblance to these early Christians of our race, seeing mirrored in the picture whose contrasting shades Paul has painted with the skill of a Rembrandt, our own weakness and strength, our own sins and virtues.

**Of the Same Family Tree.** These early Galatians belonged to a race which had even defeated the proud Romans with total overthrow and a subjugation so complete that the warlike Romans were forbidden the use of iron except for implements of husbandry. And though the shame of that defeat was wiped out by a final victory for the Romans, the Gallic intruders stubbornly held their ground and for more than a century and a half, maintained their own government in the face of the fact that they were a conquered people in the midst of the victor's territory, and even when brought under the rule of Rome they maintained their distinctive character and speech. The present day branch of their race are also empire builders, but have we the tenacity of character to endure under defeat? They were a generous, warm-hearted, enthusiastic people so hospitable and fond of a popular hero that when Paul came to them sick and won their hearts, they received him "as an angel from Heaven" and "would have given their eyes" for him, but within five years they

have deserted the religion they so gladly accepted, and Paul, once their idol, must needs defend himself from their aspersions. Have we the same national traits? Might not our national heroes recite a like tale of ingratitude and are the great religious awakenings which sweep our land more lasting? As we study we shall see a marked family resemblance in the fruits of our civilization and those which Paul attributes to these far off cousins of ours.

**A Rotten Crop.** "Every tree is known by his own fruit," and the fruits of the first century of the Christian era were poisonous indeed. What a noxious crop Paul arrays before us! Four chief sins of impurity, two of impiety and nine sins of enmity. Society in Paul's day was steeped in immorality. The fearful belief in a double standard of morals for the sexes, was in full force, with its results disastrous alike to home and state. Since brave sons are the issue of strong fathers, small wonder that Greece and Rome alike declined in military prowess and civic courage under the decay of manly virtue. But Paul declares not only against the most heinous and criminal forms of impurity; the terms of uncleanness and lasciviousness include whatever is contaminating in look or word, thought or gesture, in dress or costume, as well as the more open and shameless uncleanness of filthy jest, debauchery and sensuality. There are eyes that have grown so evil through the vile pictures and scenes that have left their evil image upon the retina, that to meet their ogling stare is "to look through the doors of hell." One evil word, one obscene picture, will inoculate a whole school with the awful contagion of impurity. Rotten to the core are the first four varieties of evil fruit Paul enumerates.

**Evil Fruits.** Next to the fruits of lust, Paul places idolatry. In those days, polytheism reigned. There were gods of the earth,

sea and sky, gods and goddesses of war, agriculture, handcraft, art and music; even gods who ministered to lust and sin. No longer in the civilized world do men make, for gods, images of men or four-footed and creeping things, but can we say that man does not still make gods with his own hands? One man's god is his business; to it he gives the time of the holy Sabbath; another's god is his political party, and on its altar he renounces and sacrifices principle, consistency and right. Others become the votaries of pleasure and discard the family altar for the theater or dance; many join in the drunken worship and revels of the worshippers of Bacchus. Then there is the man who denies the existence of the one true God and would have us believe that all the wonders of this beautiful world are due to some sorcery of nature instead of the Divine Creator.

**From the Same Branch.** "Hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders"—all fruits of the natural heart which is at enmity with God. What wretched consequences follow the absence of love. Paul knew the Galatians; like the Celt, the Briton and Teuton—the Gauls of today—they had high capability, reaching out after culture and intellectual attainment, so that Paul could write to them in classic Greek; they were generous, enthusiastic and open friends or open foes; he did not need to warn them of treachery or meanness. But they were high tempered and quarrelsome, a fighting people as are the Gallic nations today. What a bloody record of war is the history of every Gallic country. Those who boast of their high spirit and hold their quick temper as an evidence of strong character would do well to notice that Paul has catalogued the fruit of the natural heart with murder and sedition—crimes punishable with death.

**A Lost Man.** For more than fifty years a hundred pounds has lain in the Bank of England, ready for the claimant who can prove that he and his family have in nowise suffered from the effect of intemperance, but that man has never been found.

**The Husbandman.** The history of horticulture has been the history of magic genii, who with fairy wand have made the rod blossom and bear, and the wand has been the pruning hook. Every fruit has been domesticated and made appetizing through cultivation. That luscious apple had for its progenitor the wild crab. What wonders have been wrought through Luther Burbank, the wizard of horticulture, who has made the fruit of the wild cactus edible and palatable. But no triumph of horticulture has equaled that of the Di-

vine Husbandman, who has transformed the bitter fruits of the natural heart into the fruits of the Spirit.

**The Grafted Fruit.** With a sweep of the hand Paul has brushed away the untempting array of natural fruit which he set before the Galatians and in its place he brings us specimens from the grafted tree of the Holy Spirit. They are arranged in three groups—love, joy and peace. God's choicest fruit. Then the virtues toward others—long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith; and to one's self—meekness and temperance. Paul, the Christian philosopher, differs from the philosophers of heathendom, who placed wisdom first and righteousness last and who had no place for gentleness and humility. Love and joy go hand in hand. Selfishness and sensuous gratification may bring hilarity, but Joy and her twin sister, Peace, never abide with a troubled or outraged conscience.

**The Perfect Fruit of Righteousness.** "Meekness and temperance; against such there is no law." Beginning in love, ending in temperance, such is the Christian life. Paul would make it plain that the law does not curtail liberty or impose penalties upon those who do right. "Against such there is no law."

**Rejected and Chosen.** Paul has used his colors to produce the greatest light and shade. The fruits of evil are swallowed in darkness. "For they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." They have been condemned and are, therefore, to be destroyed. But those who bear the fruits of the Spirit enter into the larger liberty. Wise husbandman as he is, having held before our progenitors the beautiful fruits of righteousness, he closes with fit words of advice; "If you would bear such fruit, use the pruning knife; cut off every diseased branch, each infected twig. Crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts." Character is only gained by constant watchfulness, repression and sacrifice.

**Quiz.** 1. To whom was Paul writing? 2. What can you say of these Galatians? 3. Have we any of their national or individual traits? 4. What did Christ say to the barren fig tree? 5. Does the Bible command fruitfulness?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. There is no aristocracy of sin and crime. 2. There are no small sins in the eyes of God. 3. The kingdom of God is too fair an inheritance to be given to the children of darkness. 4. Evil fruit is condemned as a matter of public safety. 5. The fruits of the Spirit all bear the blue ribbon. 6. Law does not infringe on the rights of those who do right.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# WISE WALKING.

See then that ye



circum-  
spectly,  
not as  
fools,  
but as



Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not



with



wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;



to  
your-  
selves  
in  
psalms  
and  
hymns  
and  
spiritual  
songs,



and making melody  
in your heart to  
the Lord; Giving



always for all things  
unto God and the  
Father in the  
name of our Lord  
Jesus Christ.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS EPH. 5:15-20.**

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us to walk in Thy law and in Thy light; may we walk uprightly and worthily. Teach us the good way that we may walk therein. For Christ's sake, Amen.

When we walk with the Lord  
In the light of His Word,  
What a glory He sheds on our way!

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 64. Place, Rome. Person, Paul.

**Scripture Setting:** The Christian Walk. A covenant walk, Gen. 17:1, 2. Must be taught to walk, Ex. 18:20. In integrity, Psa. 26:1. Honestly, I Thess. 4:12. Uprightly, Psa. 84:11. Worthily, Eph. 4:1. Humbly, Mic. 6:8. In the fear of the Lord, Acts 9:31. By faith, 2 Cor. 5:7. In tried paths, Jer. 6:16. By rule, Gal. 6:16. Directed by God, Jer. 10:23. In the way, Isa. 30:21. At liberty, Psa. 119:45. In the midst of trouble, Psa. 138:7.

Through the valley of death, Psa. 23:4. The redeemed walk with God, Isa. 35:8-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul seeks to impress Christians with: 1. The importance of a consistent walk before unbelievers. 2. The need to distinguish between wisdom and folly. 3. The strenuousness of the Christian life. 4. A closer knowledge of God's will. 5. The sinfulness of drunkenness and other excesses. 6. He also advises: (1) The higher life of the Spirit. (2) Religious fellowship, song and praise. (3) Thankfulness to the Heavenly Father.

**WALKING IN THE LIGHT.**

**Walking Safely.** There is much in a man's walk. The boy who slouches along is not apt to impress others as an energetic youth; a halting step denotes indecision, and it is hard to trust one with a shambling walk while those who walk with firm tread, sure bearing and erect carriage inspire the onlooker with confidence in their ability and energy. Of insignificant stature himself, Paul had the admiration of all small men for perfect physical development. A prisoner in Rome, he must often have watched and admired the poise of the centurion and soldier, who walked not as slaves but as freemen, and with his usual habit of illustrating his teaching, he writes, "See, then, that ye walk circumspectly." After all, walking is a matter of eyesight; you must see where your feet are going or, as the old adage has it, "Look before you leap." If the one telling the first lie could see into what a tangled web of deception it would lead; if the youth who took the first step in impurity could see the black pit into which he must fall; if the boy taking the first glass could see the drunkard's grave at the end, all would see that they walked safely.

**Folly Versus Wisdom.** "Not as fools, but as wise." There are those who laugh at the Christian life and cherish the idea that worldliness and unbelief are a sign of superiority. The boy who smokes cigarets laughs at his wiser playmate as a "sissy," unaware that the cigaret has been aptly described as "a little roll of tobacco with a little fire at one end and a little fool at the other." The champagne drinking youth who squanders his money and ruins his brains has lots of fun at the expense of his sober fellow clerk, until some morning the two are called into the manager's office, the one to receive a discharge, the other for promotion.

**The Strenuous Life.** Verily, "There is nothing new under the sun!" More than eighteen centuries before the advent of Theodore Roosevelt, Paul was preaching the strenuous life to the early Christians, urging them to awake from their sleep, to arise from the dead apathy and indifference into which they had fallen, "redeeming the time because the days are evil." Evil days, indeed, when cruel Nero reigned as emperor! A prisoner of the Lord, himself, Paul foresaw the persecution of the church of Christ. Within a year after the epistle was written, Rome was burned, and ere its fires were allayed, the streets of the Imperial city began to flow with Christian blood. In four years St. Paul and St. Peter were martyred in Rome, and Nero, the tyrant, had fallen by an assassin's hand; only six years till the capture of Jerusalem, the destruction of the temple and the crushing out of the Jewish national life. It behooved these early Christians to redeem the time, but is not king alcohol as cruel and bloody a tyrant as the Roman emperor? Already the temperance cause has its martyrs in the persons of the brave Haddock, the daring Roderick Dhu Gambrel and poor Carl Etherington. The skies are portentous, the days are evil, and unless Christian people redeem the time, who can fail to foresee evils that mean the destruction of the church, and the overthrow of the principles on which our nation was founded? Shall we not stand for the Christian Sabbath, the abolition of the drink traffic and civic righteousness?

**The Will of the Lord.** "It is the will of Allah," says the Mohammedan, as he submits alike to good and evil, but the Apostle Paul is preaching not fatalism, but close communion with God. Enoch walked with God and pleased Him. "It is not in man who walketh to direct his steps," and he who



risers and enters upon the day's duties and pleasures without the quiet talk with God that is found in prayer, will stumble and fall. He will not walk wisely.

**Moody's Walk.** In the early days of D. L. Moody's evangelism he returned from a three weeks' service in a certain town much cast down because not a single conversion had resulted from his efforts. "Get closer to God, Brother Moody," said a wise old minister. "It has not yet been revealed to the world what He can accomplish through one who is wholly given to Him." The words bore fruit in Moody's entire consecration to God's will and soon thereafter followed that wonderful revival across the sea, where scores of thousands were led to take up the Christian walk through Moody's preaching.

**The Stumbling, Reeling Walk.** The cities of Asia Minor remind us of the woman who belonged to so many clubs that she was "club-footed." Certainly they were equipped with as many social clubs as any twentieth-century city. The club feasts in which wine was served were a favorite social diversion. Those advocates of moderation who advise the use of wine to stem the tide of intemperance might study with profit Paul's letters to the wine growing and wine drinking countries of his time. The eastern coast of the Mediterranean is the ancient home of the vine. The people, a sociable race, drank not for animal indulgence but for good fellowship. But what was the result? Their wit was ribald, music and song were debased and their chief citizens reeled through the streets, all under the influence of wine. Paul had another reason for the command, "Be not drunk with wine." The letter containing this warning was carried by Tychicus, who was accompanied by Onesimus, a fugitive pagan slave who had robbed his master, fled from Colosse and found his way to Rome, where he naturally gravitated to the most loathsome plague spots of that corrupt city. Out of the depths he had been converted to Christ through the preaching of Paul, who became surety for the amount he had stolen, and he was now returning to his master accompanied by Tychicus, who bore a letter from Paul recommending him to the mercy of Philemon, his master. The poor, twice-bound slave saved as a brand from the burning, needed the admonition, and for the sake of this weak brother, the other Christians needed to be reminded of the duty of total abstinence.

**The Spirit Filled Life.** Let them be filled with the Spirit. No need to resort to a false

stimulation in the pursuit of happiness when joy abounds and happiness reigns in the Christian life. No need to go about with a long face, and mournful step. "I wonder why that woman always looks so happy. She has had trouble enough to crush ten ordinary women," so spoke a worldly man of one of God's chastened saints. "True," said her pastor, "but she has the joy of the Spirit."

**Walking in Christian Fellowship.** Paul does not ask them to sacrifice their social instincts, nor would he deprive Christians of the pleasure of music. As in their heathen days they used to speak to each other on festive and religious occasions, so now let them speak to each other in the new language of Christ Jesus. If a history of the Christian hymns were written we would find they have ministered to the sick and soothed the dying when medical skill was helpless; have given courage to the faint-hearted and enabled the martyrs to endure the flames unflinchingly.

**A Life of Song.** Paul, a prisoner at Rome, awaiting a martyr's death, would make life a song. We may picture this marvelous apostle, worn and spent in the Master's service, a man who had three times endured shipwreck; whose life had been one of constant peril on land and sea, amid robbers and his own countrymen and among the heathen, in the city and in the wilderness; who must be constantly on the watch for lurking dangers, more acquainted with pain and weariness, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness, than any of the apostles. Even now, as a prisoner, he was chained by the wrist to a soldier guard and deserted by all save a few faithful converts. And still Paul writes of making melody in your heart to God!

**Thanksgiving.** He would have them give "thanks always for all things." If Paul facing death and martyrdom could give thanks for all things, should not we who live in this favored age count our blessings? The temperance cause may not yet be victorious, but there is cause for thanksgiving for the nine prohibition states; for a prohibition area that covers 40,000,000 people; for the scientific temperance teaching of the 30,000,000 children of the public schools, and for the growth of the temperance reform in every civilized nation.

**Quiz.** 1. Was the letter to the Ephesians a general letter or was it written to some special church? 2. To what church is it thought to have been written? 3. What special sin does Paul condemn? 4. How would he have Christians spend their time? 5. What special cause have you for thanksgiving?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. While folly dances, wisdom walks and wins the race. 2. A good carriage is often a great aid to success. 3. Folly and sin are duplicates. 4. Wine is as debasing as whisky. 5. Discouragement, discontent and ingratitude are open gateways through which Satan enters the heart.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the



be  
sober,  
grave,



sound in



in



in patience. The

likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh



holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine,



of good things.



# THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS TITUS 2:1-12.

**Prayer:** Lord, Impress us with the importance of the little things of life; help us to perform our daily tasks as unto Thee and may we glorify Thee in our daily life. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"Teach me, my God and King,  
In all things Thee to see,  
And what I do in anything,  
To do it as for Thee."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 64. Place, Nicopolis, whence letter was written. Persons, Paul, and Titus a Greek Christian.

**Scripture Setting:** Duties of Everyday Life. Requirements of Christian life, Deut. 10:12-13. Daily religious duties, 2 Chron. 8:14; Ezra 3:4. Duty of ministering to others, Rom. 15:27. Duty toward the needy, 1 John 3:17. Performance of duty a requirement of Christian life, Luke 17:10. The whole duty of man, Eccl. 12:13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul desires Titus

to impress: 1. The virtues of sobriety, seriousness and temperance, which are a crown of glory to the aged. 2. Their need of faith, charity and patience. 3. The dignity and poise which ennobles age is commended to older women. 4. The wholesome example of old age. 5. The homely duties of the everyday home life upon young wives. 6. The young man's need of a serious purpose. 7. The apostle also warns Titus that example and precept must be in harmony. 8. Praises a life of self-denial and Christian consistency.

## THE EVERY-DAY LIFE.

**A Difficult Field.** The letter to Titus was written from Nicopolis, the city of victory, founded by the Emperor Augustus in commemoration of a great victory and built on the field where his tents had been pitched during the battle of Actium. It was still a new city and like all new places, the center of a money-mad, pleasure loving people. Even while writing, Paul could see a large and a small open-air theater, a circus and a race course; but given over to pleasure as Nicopolis was, the apostle was sending written instructions to a preacher and teacher in charge of a still harder field of labor. Had not one of their own prophets said, "The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts and idle gluttons!" These islanders were profligate, riotous and bestial, possessing all the vices and very little of the culture of the Greeks and Romans. In such unfavorable soil the seed of the Gospel found lodgment, and churches had sprung into life, no one knows whence or how. When the Apostle Paul found them, the good seed was in danger of being choked by the greed for gain and the lusts and pleasures of life. There was also division and contention as in every church which is at a low spiritual ebb. Paul had set Titus to organize and officer these crude societies and to teach their membership the A. B. C. of Christian living.

**A Sound Old Age.** Paul would make the keynote of this teaching concerning everyday living to be sobriety or sober mindedness, "That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience." We must not imagine that Paul was a mournful, long-faced Christian or that he would have these Cretians become melancholy Christians. If ever there was an apostle of joy, Paul was that one, singing in prison, counting suffering that would have overwhelmed an ordinary man as "light affliction."

He could never have drawn such wholesome lessons from them if he had not been interested in the athletic sports of his times; moreover, he would not have exercised such a fascination over young men like Timothy, Titus, Mark and others had he taught or practised gloomy asceticism. But, like Longfellow, he would make a psalm of life. "Life is real, life is earnest." It should not be dawdled away in levity or wasted in drunkenness, therefore he paints the picture of sound and beautiful old age.

**Example and Precept.** Like the Master, some of Paul's closest friends were women. The art galleries of the world are filled with portraits of women painted by the world's masters, but when all these shall have faded from canvas and been lost to view, Paul's portraiture of the women he knew will still live. As long as children are born of one's children, so long shall the portrait Paul has etched in one masterly sentence inspire other grandmothers to follow the beautiful, beneficent example of Lois, grandmother of Timothy. But how different the Cretian old women! They remind one of the repulsive picture extant, of two drunken old dames wagging their heads in evil gossip while they sit over their toddy. It is a sad state of society when aged women have to be warned against the bad effects of wine, but is it not too true that drinking among a certain set of worldly, fashionable women is on the increase? Fashionable women and girls drink cocktails and wine in club houses and their example is imitated by the shop girl at the restaurants.

**Honored Ones.** No woman has such influence, even in the blush of youth, as in the holy calm of old age. Garfield paid his tribute to it when he turned from taking the oath of office as President of the United States to kiss the little old mother. Julia Ward Howe, truly great and blameless as a child at ninety, has set an example of "the beautiful old woman."

**Home Keepers.** We have no literary gem to excel king Lemuel's description of the ideal woman in Proverbs, and it is her type which Paul commends. It is good also to know that even an old bachelor like Paul distinguishes between the housekeeper and the homekeeper and in favor of the latter. Time and energy are not to be expended so much on the house and its furnishings as in the home and its inmates—the husband and children.

**Shortsighted.** A woman whose boy was a cigarette smoker was once invited to attend a mothers' meeting, where "How to Save the Boy" was the topic for discussion. The invitation was declined. "I must wash my lace curtains. I never neglect my housework for any outside interest," said this housekeeper. The homekeeper values a clean boy above clean curtains, and Paul would have woman bimekeepers.

**In the Days of Thy Youth.** "Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded." We are told that the words used in the original Greek signify soundness of mental and moral constitution, which shows itself in discreet and prudent conduct, especially **self-control**: the mastery of one's lowest appetites and lusts. The temptations to frivolity in youth are many, and evil is on every hand. The desire for mere pleasure; to live just for fun has plunged many into the lowest depths of degradation. At first the aim of the pleasure lover may have been innocent, or at worst only selfish, but too often a career that might have been useful is blighted.

**J. F. F.'s.** Twenty young couples formed a society and christened it the "Just for Fun Club." They were known as the J. F. F.'s and all went very well until the letters were interpreted "Just Forty Fools." He who makes pleasure the sole object of life is indeed a fool.

**The True Teacher.** Titus was a Greek convert from heathenism, probably one of the converts of Paul who affectionately styles him, "mine own son after the common faith." Paul had such confidence in him that he had intrusted him with the most difficult missions, making him the bearer of the two letters to the Corinthians. The work before Titus at Crete was not a light one, and since Paul always put the right man in the right place, we may be sure that, though young in years, Titus was both exemplary in conduct and wise in his work; but so great is the necessity that preaching and practice should conform that Paul reminds the young teacher that he must show himself a pattern of good works. "When I am a big man, I am going to sell whiskey just like

you, papa," said the saloonkeeper's son. The deadly fear that his boy would pattern after him caused the father to change his vocation.

**Talk or Speech.** An old Indian once tried to contrast a garrulous government agent with Bishop Hare, both of whom had spoken at an Indian tribal meeting. "Him boy talk, talk," indicating the agent; then he characterized the good and wise Indian's friend, "Him man, him speech." Paul advises "Sound speech that cannot be condemned." Speech untranslated into action is mere talk. To feel warmly, talk about it and do nothing, is a waste of motive power, as if one were to fire an engine, steam up and then open the escape valve without turning a wheel. It is not enough to talk about present-day evils; high sounding resolutions are only talk, unless acted upon and lived out. The temperance cause today needs sound speech interpreted through a church in action against all the powers of evil.

**The White Flower of a Blameless Life.** To so live that even your worst enemy can only praise you, and that your antagonist can have no evil thing to say of you. This means a constant daily living of the gospel at home and abroad, at school and play, in the shop and in business. A good man was once told that people were slandering him. "Then I must so live that slander will fall harmless," was the rejoinder.

**The Servant in the House.** There was no condition so deplorable as that of the slave in Paul's day. He was classed with the brutes and his condition was worse than the brute's, yet the Apostle says that even these slaves may "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." There is no place in life so insignificant or lowly that the Christian cannot bring honor to it. There are no duties so common that their Christly performance will not ennoble them. Well has the poet said,

"Who sweeps a room as for Thy laws,  
Makes that and the action fine."

**Quiz.** 1. Who was Titus and what service did he render Paul? 2. What does the apostle desire to emphasize in this lesson? 3. To how many classes does he speak? 4. Who were the Cretians? 5. What do we know concerning Titus's later years.

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. God loves to put his best servants into a hard field. 2. Old age needs the adornment of all the graces. 3. The best way to attain a beautiful old age is to practice for it in youth. 4. No one is ever old who carries through life the simple heart of a child. 5. Sobriety is the cornerstone of business success. 6. The flowers of self-pleasure ripen into the passion fruit of passion. 7. That is no sermon which is not practiced at home. 8. Think before you speak, work while you speak and act after you speak. 9. There is no work so humble that it cannot be made God's calling.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# ABSTINENCE FROM EVIL.

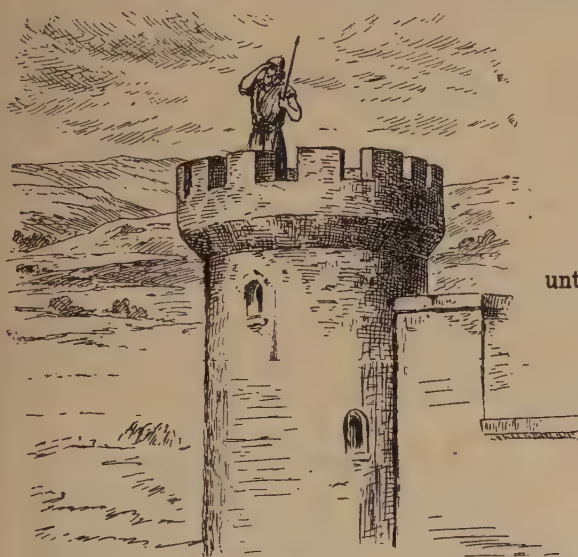
For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable



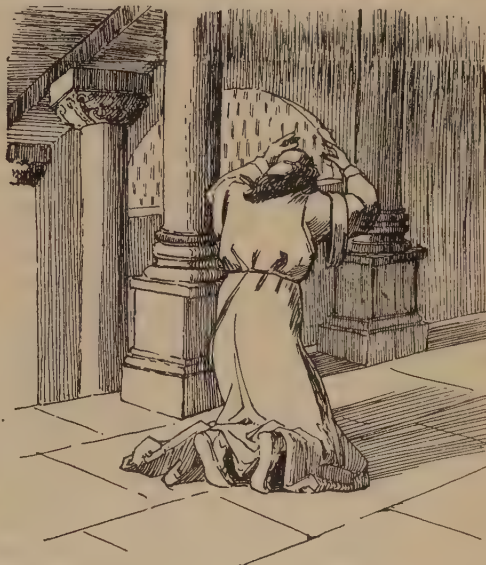
Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of



speaking evil of you: But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and



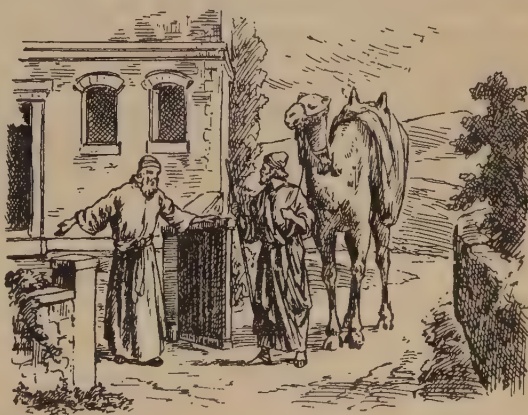
unto



And above all things have fervent



among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use



one to another without grudging.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 PETER 4:1-8.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We would abstain from all sinful excess. May we remember that Christ suffered for our salvation. Help us, we pray Thee, to cease from sin. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"Our march is forward ever, with weapons gleaming bright;  
Our warfare is with sin and wrong; our watchword  
'For the right';  
And above us, beckoning ever, the cross of snowy white."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 60. Place, Rome. Person, Peter.

**Scripture Setting:** The Old and the New Man. Likeness to Adam, Job 31:33. Repentance and forgiveness, Luke 15:21-24. The old man made new, 1 Tim. 1:13. The first and the last Adam, 1 Cor. 15:45. The two images, 1 Cor. 15:49. Death and life, 1 Cor. 15:22. The transformation, Rom. 5:20-21. Redeemed, Rev. 7:13-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Peter calls to mind the suffering Christ and declares: 1. That Christ's sufferings brought salvation from sin in the flesh. 2. Repentance is unto righteousness. 3. The follower of Christ should not fellowship with sin. 4. Each must render an account for sin. 5. The gospel was preached not only for repentance, but for godliness of life. 6. Watchfulness, sobriety and prayer are a part of Christian life. 7. The all-pervasive power of charity.

### THE DIVIDING LINE.

**Swimming Against the Stream.** The Apostle Peter is writing to those early Christians who occupied a peculiarly exposed position. All around them were idolators; on every side sin and worldliness. Loyalty to principle and refusal to partake of the sinful life about them would actually mean a separation that amounted almost to isolation. It is not strange that the weaker and more timid Christians excused their compromise with sin by urging the suffering and sacrifice a more strict observance of Christ's teachings would cost them. Today we find boys who smoke because "one wants to do like the other fellows," and girls who are not outspoken in their convictions against drinking and the use of tobacco. They do not want to appear different from the other girls of their set that smile upon the gilded youths who violate the rules of good manners and decency by practicing both habits in the presence of women. Those in business adopt the questionable methods of their worldly competitors, because strict honesty might entail a financial loss. Christian men fellowship in politics with the adherents of the saloon and vote with the brewer, because to do otherwise might mean to throw away their vote and lose political influence. After all, it is not so very far from Asia Minor to America and the centuries that roll between are as a page in the calendar.

**The Mind of Christ.** It does mean a battle, a constant struggle. Peter acknowledges that, and he advises arming one's self for the strife. The fisherman disciple cannot use words with the artistic skill of Paul, so he tersely sums it all up in a sentence. "As Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourself likewise with the same mind." Arm yourselves; set yourselves in battle array; be ready to go into the fight. The mind

of Christ is to be the Christian's panoply. Now, Christ's mind was opposed to all evil. He hated a lie and nailed it every time. He abhorred uncleanness, and lashed the hypocritical money changers. He had what the Christian most needs today—a mind well stored with Scripture so that when the hour of temptation came He could parry every thrust of the tempter with the Sword of His Holy Word; worst the enemy at every point, and say triumphantly, "Get thee behind me, Satan."

**The Mission of Suffering.** "He that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." The crosses we shrink from prove sources of strength when we accept them. There is an old superstition that every time we sigh we lose a drop of blood from the heart and thus impair our strength, but the good old English poet was nearer right who wrote:

"The sigh, then, only is  
A gale to bring me sooner to my bliss."

In our temptations Peter tells us we are to consider the sufferings of Christ. How small the loss of social prestige or popularity, or the financial cost of standing for principle, when we compare these with Christ's suffering for us.

"If all men's tears were let  
Into one common sewer, sea and brine,  
What were they all, compared to Thine?"

**Not as Others Do.** St. Peter knew well the pleasures of the world, which he sums up in a catalogue of vices. "When we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings and abominable idolatries." What a dark picture and how repulsive! When one takes the name of Christian the time is past for these.

**The Bible or Beer?** Nearly eighty years ago a young German was gloriously converted to God. Whereas he had formerly read vile books, he purchased a Bible and laid it at his place of work in the brewery owned by an uncle. It did not



take long to see that a Bible was quite out of place in a brewery. Indeed, the sight of it angered the uncle, who ordered it to go. The nephew went with the Bible, finding a different employment. However, he still drank beer, until one day as he sat at the noonday lunch with his Bible and a glass of beer beside him, the incongruity of the two struck him. He gave up the beer, but kept the Bible. One by one his former pleasures were put to the Bible test and renounced, until at last he had only the Bible and became a Bible colporteur. But God so blessed the sacrifice that at his death more than a thousand men and women testified that the "Bible man" had been the instrument of their salvation.

**The Friendship of the World.** Peter had not become a fisher of men without learning their ways. "They think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you." With fair words the saloonkeeper weaves his web for the boys; with flattery and honeyed phrase the temptress throws her net, but when each is foiled, the poison of their venom would destroy those whom they could not deceive. His friends said of a certain statesman who had fought corruption, "We love him for the enemies he has made." The raillery, hatred and scorn of evil persons is less baneful than their praise.

**The Final Account and Judgment.** What are the revilings and penalties of this world compared to the "Well done, good and faithful servant" of the Master, on that great day when He shall come to judge the quick and the dead, with a reward for those "who live according to God in the Spirit?" How near that time seems to Peter, who heard the announcement of the angels at the ascension! "The end of all things is at hand." Ah! Peter spoke more truly than he knew. Though the world has stood nearly two thousand years since this message was written, its words were true. The end of all things which conflict with righteousness was at hand. A new era had come, and ever since the risen, conquering Christ was upborne to Heaven, the chains forged by error, ignorance, superstition, dead formalism and sin have been broken, and link by link, evil is disappearing. Of the nine evils which Plato declared could never be overcome, only three—intemperance, lust and greed still remain. Against this last unholy trin-

ity, the church of Christ is marching, under the banner of the cross, and to the motto, "By this sign we conquer."

**The Need of Sobriety.** The Apostle has warned these early Christians against "excess of wine," but the ravage of drink is so strong that again the warning is repeated, "Be ye therefore sober and watch unto prayer," Christ comes to those who watch for his appearing, sometimes in a song, again in the voice of prayer or perhaps it is but a bird's note; but through the song, the prayer, or the simple trill, Christ has come to a sin-sick heart and made it whole. In this drink-cursed world how important it is that the Christian's example should be on the side of total abstinence.

**The Mantle of Charity.** Peter would have these Christians exercise charity among themselves. "For charity shall cover the multitude of sins." Do we not blame the drunkard, where we should exercise love?

**The Power of Little Things.** A poor drunkard lay in the gutter one hot summer day, a loathsome sight to all the passers by; his foul spew-stained face so covered with swarming flies as to appear black. In all the city no one was enough interested to seek to reclaim him, until a Christian woman passed by. The man's pitiable condition touched her tender heart. What to others was an object of laughter and scorn was to her a soul purchased with the Pearl of great price. There was so little she could do—only to throw her dainty, lace-trimmed handkerchief over the hot, blistered, foul, fly-covered face, to hide its disgrace and go on her way. An hour later the drunkard awakened and the dainty handkerchief spoke its message of tenderness and spurred the man to repentance and reformation. To that bit of linen, ten inches square, transformed into a mantle of charity, the world owes one of its greatest temperance reformers.

**Quiz.** 1. Who was Peter? 2. What can you say of his character? 3. Concerning his death? 4. Why were the early Christians looking for the speedy return of the Lord? 5. What chapter of the New Testament attests the superiority of charity over all the other virtues? 6. Why must there be a marked difference between the Christian and the world?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Inclination, custom, policy, expediency and personal advantage are oftentimes those the Christian must battle. 2. God disciplines and safeguards through suffering. 3. Your enemies are those who praise you to your face and speak evil of you behind your back. 4. By their fruits ye shall know them. 5. Watchfulness and prayer are an unfailing drink cure. 6. The mantle of charity is a garment made for universal wear.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

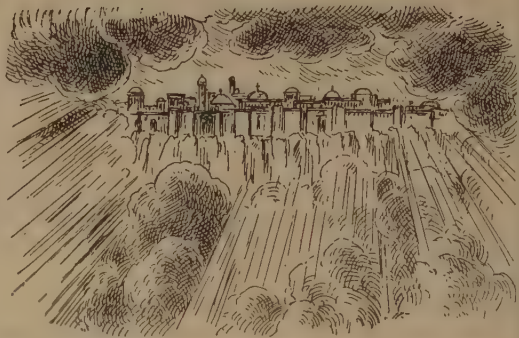


# A NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH.

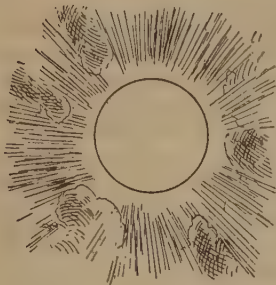
And I saw no



therein:  
for the  
Lord God  
Almighty  
and the  
Lamb are  
the temple  
of it.  
And the



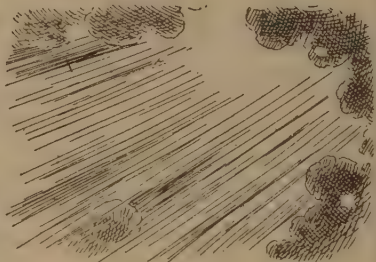
had no need of the



neither  
of the



to shine in  
it: for the  
glory of God  
did lighten  
it, and the  
Lamb is the



thereof. And the



of them  
which are  
saved shall



of it: and the



of the  
earth  
do  
bring  
their  
glory  
and



into it.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS REV. 21:22-27. READ ALSO ISA. 60:19-22.

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank thee for Thy great salvation; help us to so live that we may enter Heaven and may we lead others into the Kingdom. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

"The Kingdom that is coming  
Shall forever more increase  
Through the long, Eternal ages,  
Under Christ, the Prince of Peace."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 96. Place, Isle of Patmos. Person, John.

**Scripture Setting:** The Holy City. Christ the ruler, Isa. 9:6-7. God shall dwell therein, Ezek. 43:7. The new Heaven and earth foretold, Isa. 65:17. Jerusalem the Holy City, Joel 3:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The main facts to

be emphasized are: 1. Earthly things are not enduring. 2. The Gospel's dispensation was the beginning of a new Heaven and earth. 3. The highest worship does not require material form. 4. Christ is indeed the Light of the world. 5. Sin and defilement have no place in the Kingdom of Christ.

### THE NEW JERUSALEM.

**The Seer.** John had been driven from Ephesus and banished to the little island of Patmos with its steep bare cliffs and rocky coast line. Here, deprived of the society of friends, he communed with the past. And what a storied past it was, what wonderful memories it held! How reminiscence must have effaced the present, requiring a great voice on that Lord's day to rouse the aged apostle from his meditations. Turning to see that wondrous voice, the vision of the golden candlestick burst upon him, and the startled John saw his Master; no longer the simple Galilean peasant, upon whose bosom the beloved disciple had often rested, but a dazzling presence clothed and panoplied in Divine majesty and glory. What wonder that the gentle John fell as if dead at the feet of his Lord.

**The Vision.** John's Revelation is a record of the conflict of Christ and his saints over the powers of evil and of the struggle with sin and final victory. It is greater than any national epic or folk-lore legends. It is the story of the Conqueror of conquerors, and His Beloved, the church of the living God in the accomplishment of the most heroic undertaking since the world began, a journey through the wilderness of sin to the land of promise and the attainment of universal perfection and happiness.

**The Holy City.** What a void John has pictured. The great Creator who fashioned earth and sky out of nothing, has resolved them into nothing. The Seer of Patmos stands alone and looks into space; earth and heaven have passed away. John sees the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down out of Heaven from God, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away." Wonderful vision of the Seer of Patmos that could record the passing away of the earth with all its centuries of amassed wealth, grandeur and magnificence, in half a sentence! Would not its temptations and blandishments of honor, power and fame

lose their weight if we could see their triviality demonstrated as did John?

Ezekiel had seen the New Jerusalem in his distant day. Isaiah had pictured its bulwarks and highways. It is the kingdom of this world, conquered in His name, cleansed and purified by His regenerating power and redeemed through His blood. It was ushered in by Christ's coming on earth, for He is its Chief Foundation Stone, and to His servants He has committed the establishment of the City.

**The Lights of the City.** The Holy City has "No need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." The unchanging and perpetual glory of the Lord is in its midst, shedding its light throughout every street and habitation. It is the light of perfect trust that enables the saints of God to "walk by faith and not by sight." It is that light which has inspired Fanny Crosby to write thousands of hymns of praise. The soul of the blind hymn writer is so filled with this Divine light that it is said she is so unaware of sightless orbs and perpetual darkness that she always speaks of seeing, and to her the world is illumined with unchanging sunlight. "I know no night," the sweet singer declared to a friend. In such a God-illumined life there are no cloudy days, no dark nights filled with a thousand phantoms of terror. Under the effulgence of the light that proceeds from the Lamb, the night of slavery has passed with all its terrors; the darkness of heathenism is being lifted, and palling blackness of sin flees before it, as the night before the rising sun.

**The Inhabitants.** "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it." John is not speaking of translation to an unknown abode of bliss, but of this earth made blissful. How plainly is set forth the duty of Christian nations and the part which they shall have in the upbuilding of this new heaven and new earth, which Christ

gave His life to establish. No nation has been so favored by a Divine Providence as the Republic in which we live. It was founded as a place of religious liberty; through its Sabbath laws and day of national thanksgiving and praise, with the Bible in the schools, our forefathers laid its corner stone as a Christian nation. But are we still walking in the light; is the government of today a fit superstructure for that cornerstone, or are graft and bribery, the legalized saloon, Sunday excursions, theaters and ball games, only the hay and stubble of a building to be destroyed under the flame of His righteousness? Are not these things retarding the coming of that new heaven and earth seen by the Seer of Patmos?

**Its Tributaries.** "The kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." The Apostle Paul declared that the love of money is the root of all evil, and certainly the question of revenue has damned many a municipality, state and nation. It was impossible to convince the pro-slavery advocate that slavery so far from being a source of wealth was a financial drain upon the commonwealths that upheld it, and the nation, but its overthrow brought a greater era of prosperity than was ever known before. New England capital, New York financiers and Pennsylvania iron and steel brought their tribute to the new South, in the building of its mills and establishment of the cotton industry. It was formerly thought that prohibition destroyed trade, lessened the revenue and impoverished the community, but the history of no license towns and prohibition states has proved that civic righteousness builds up trade, and enriches town and state. Gradually we are learning what John saw in his vision; that the silver and the gold belong to God, and glory and honor and dominion are His, and all find their way to that nation which exalts Him in national and individual life, as surely as the needle finds the pole.

**Gates Wide Open.** The gates of the city are not to be shut by day, but will remain forever open, for there is no night there. When greed and lust and unholy ambition shall give place to the teaching of the Prince of Peace, the nations shall have no need for military defense. The most modern and costly dreadnought will be as antiquated and useless as the tub in which the child tries to row across the shallow pool. Standing armies will give place to the soldiers of the Cross and then shall be fulfilled the prophecy, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to men," which the angels sang at the birth of Christ, whose advent ushered in the coming of universal peace.

**A White City.** It is a glorified city, beau-

tified and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. How careful the bride, be she peasant girl or princess, that her wedding apparel shall be spotless and perfect in all its details. Nothing common, nothing defiled may be in the trousseau of a bride. So all who would enter into this Jerusalem must come by the way of Holiness, over which nothing unclean is allowed to pass. Its people shall be all righteous, its daily routine of business and pleasure, holy. Such is Christ's ideal for His people everywhere. "The dwellers upon earth are not those who simply tread its soil and breathe its atmosphere," but those who are earthly in their lusts, whose lives are soiled by sin, who fear the truth and breathe out lies. Such could not live in the rarified atmosphere of the new earth. Like the rich young man who came to Christ to inquire the way of life, but found its pathway too hard, they go their way sorrowing.

**The City Directory.** The names of all those who enter the city are found in its directory—"In the Lamb's book of Life." God stands over that blest book of remembrance and attests every name, for we are told it is written before Him for them that fear the Lord, meditate upon His name, and obey His law. Every act—the slightest deed is recorded there, whether it be good or evil.

**As God Sees.** A visit to the Washington monument gives a commanding view of the capital city. The great shaft is only 546 feet high, but as one stands at the top and looks down, how small appear the city's treasures! The capitol in which laws are made for the government of a nation looks like a toy house. The United States treasury building might be a child's bank; the White House for the bare chance of entrance to which statesmen have sacrificed conviction and bartered principle, seems no longer than the Noah's ark with which one played in childhood days. If earthly glories and riches seem so small from so slight an altitude, how trivial all the worldly things for which men strive will appear to the One who looks down from the Great White Throne, before which we must bring all our desires.

**Quiz.** 1. Who is the Seer of Patmos supposed to have been? 2. By what name was he distinguished from the other disciples? 3. What is the legend concerning his death? 4. For whom did John record his vision? 5. What prophets of the Old Testament wrote of a Holy City? 6. How can we help to establish the City?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The earth which was created out of nothing will disappear into nothing. 2. The first glimpse of the Heaven-descending City shone in the Star above the Bethlehem manger. 3. To the worshipful soul all space is a temple; the cobblestones of every street an altar. 4. The Holy City is self-illuminating. 5. God is the only true light. 6. The cross is the weapon of peace. 7. The first heaven and earth God created alone; in the creation of the new heaven and earth we are to be co-workers with him.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS MATT. 7:13-29.

**Prayer:** Save us, O God, from insincerity in our profession of love for Thee and help us to bring forth the fruits of righteousness that by giving all diligence we may add to our faith virtue and to virtue knowledge and to knowledge temperance and to temperance patience and to patience godliness and to godliness brotherly kindness, so that we shall neither be barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, whose we are and whom we serve. Amen.

Amid the snares misfortune lays  
Unseen beneath the steps of all,  
Blest is the love that seeks to raise  
And stay and strengthen those who fall;  
Till taught by Him who for our sake  
Bore every form of life's distress,  
With every passing year we make  
The sum of human sorrow less.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, The words were spoken about A. D. 28. The Gospel of Matthew was written about A. D. 75. **Place,** The Sermon on the Mount, from which the text is taken, was spoken from a hillside near Capernaum. **Persons,** Jesus, The Disciples. The multitudes of plain people who heard Jesus gladly.

**Scripture Setting:** A sin against society, Deut. 21:20. The height of folly, Prov. 20:1. A source of poverty, Prov. 21:17. Sure to bring disaster, Isaiah 5:11; 28:1. Abhorred by Jesus, Matt. 24:49-50. 6:10; Gal. 5:21. Bible warning, Noah, Gen. 9:21; Nabal, 1 Sam. 25:36. Belshazzar, Dan. 5:1-6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. As to the man, the drink curse blunts his moral sense so that he never sees or feels things in their true sublimity. He is always at his worst and never at his best. 2. As to the family, it means poverty, shame, evil tempers, faction, separation and hopeless unhappiness. 3. As to society, it means waste of wealth, corrupt morals, dirty politics, disease, crime and general demoralization. Drink has been a greater scourge than war, famine, and pestilence put together.

### RECKONING WITH THE DRINK CURSE.

**The Corrupt Tree.** The drink business makes a fair profession. It is never tired of showing how much it contributes to the public purse through payment of licenses and taxes, through the vast purchases of grain from which liquor is made and by the great aggregate of wages to the people employed in the industries more or less related to the traffic.

**The Debit Side of Drink.** But it never reckons on the other side the claims made upon the public purse for the maintenance of police and prisons, of almshouses and asylums, all of which draw their main business from the ranks of the drunkards; it never has anything to say of the damning effect of drink upon the individual and upon society—the loss of manhood and womanhood, the disruption of family and community ties, the dissoluteness, the profligacy, the murders, all of which have their springs in strong drink.

If ever the figure of a corrupt tree could be properly applied, it would be to the drink evil. In spite of its professions of good, it is evil and only evil, and that continually. By its fruits all know what its roots must be. Therefore, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, let it be hewn down and cast into the fire.

**The Fate of the Corrupt Tree.** There has always been a drink question, and from a very early date far-seeing rulers have feared it. It is said that as far back as the eleventh century before Christ a Chinese emperor had all the grapevines uprooted; and every reader of the Old Testament knows how urgently and insistently the prophets cried out against the evil as a threat against the state. In our own land the agitation against

the use of strong drink began in 1808, and in Ireland it was started in 1829, whence the movement spread rapidly into Scotland, and then to England. There are now organizations in every civilized land combating the evil, and their work received an unexpected endorsement and impetus from the governments of the nations at war, who, with one voice, though for different reasons, enacted prohibitory legislation. Manifestly, the tree is less luxuriant than it was and is showing most encouraging signs of disappearing altogether.

**Making the Doom of the Tree Certain.** In the United States we now have constitutional prohibition. It is hardly believable. It seems as if it were only yesterday that the Woman's Christian Temperance Union was being laughed at, that the Prohibitionists were an object of scorn, that the Anti-Saloon League was regarded as an organization of well-intentioned but impracticable cranks, and that, in general, the fight against the drink traffic was a fanatical attempt to divert the stars from their courses and to deny one of the fundamental instincts of human nature. The problem before the American people is a totally different one from that which in the past confronted them. They have now the problem, a serious and important one, of maintaining and promoting a public opinion which will make the law operative and binding and also of making their contribution to the education of other nations, so that prohibitory legislation shall become world-wide. No nation is ever safe where drunkenness is

a common and venial vice; no nation where prohibition exists is safe while in common social and commercial intercourse with nations where drinking customs freely obtain.

**Loyal Acceptance.** There must be a loyal acceptance of legislation. The class of a famous university in this country was preparing for an anniversary two years from now. A circular letter was sent to every member of this class asking if a stock of liquor should be secured against the day of celebration. Almost uniformly the answer was: "No. Let us obey the law." That is the proper temper.

**An Informed Public Opinion.** There must be a steady maintenance of public opinion on the dangerous character of intoxicants. One of the most useful agents in forming public opinion against the drink evil was the law requiring scientific temperance instruction in the public schools. The first law of this kind was passed in 1883, and now nearly every State in the Union is under such legislation. In the main the law is well enforced, but watchfulness is needed to see that the teachers who have this in hand are properly trained.

**A Worthy Experiment.** Here is the prediction of a distinguished scientist: "If really, for once, the entire civilized race of mankind should abstain from alcohol for thirty years, so that a completely sound generation should come into existence, there would result a transformation, a raising of the whole cultural structure, or heightening of the happiness and welfare of men, which could easily be placed beside the greatest historical reformations and revolutions of which we know anything."

**Keeping the Church at Its Best.** The Church must also be kept at its best in the matter of temperance education. There is no way of estimating the influence upon public opinion of the instruction given on this subject in Sunday School, Young People's Meetings, and from the pulpit. The authority of the Church is still strong and effective in matters relating to the moral and spiritual life, and it is not in question that where the Church takes a positive and united stand she is yet the strongest single influence in determining social custom and habit.

**Watchful Working.** There must be no intermission of the watch upon the insidious campaigning of the enemy. He has unlimited resources at his command. He can buy the influence of legislators, publicists and statesmen; he can command the advocacy of skilled writers and eloquent speakers who can make the worse appear the better reasoning. Greed is not easily subdued; it is resourceful beyond any calculation and it is unscrupulous beyond any dreaming. The influence of the traffic is as near omnipotent as anything human can be. The great political parties have for years stood in awe of it.

**Mr. Roosevelt and the Drink Issue.** Even Mr. Roosevelt, who hated the traffic, would not commit his Progressive Party to an open rupture with it. During the wine growing crisis in France, the Government actually solicited the medical profession for a written declaration of four or five lines which would "tend to rehabilitate wine in public opinion." It is a matter of record that Germany and England were prepared to take common action against allowing poor Africa to be "the cesspool for European spirits," but they were defeated in this by the attitude of France, which made action impossible. It is not to be concluded because the United States has prohibition in its national Constitution that the liquor interests will cease their efforts at recovering the markets.

**The Value of Prayer.** And always one must count on the effective instrumentality of prayer. A suggestion of this kind is coming to be regarded as purely formal and not without a flavor of cant. If the Church should ever reach this view, the day of its glory is departed. Every great reform has prospered by prayer. It is by prayer that God gets into it; and until God gets into a thing it can never prosper. One has only to recall the history of temperance reform in this country to get something of the value of prayer. It was prayer more than any other one thing which brought and kept the various agencies together and which put into the movement not only a unifying but an informing and impelling spirit. An alliance with God makes any movement invincible and irresistible.

**A Warning.** This is from a French patriot, a member of the House of Deputies: "What do I think of alcoholism? I think it will slay us if we do not slay it. I think that drunkards are dangerous sick persons, but I think the most culpable are the manufacturers of the poison, the sellers of the poison, the state which refuses to intervene, the politicians who, knowing the evil, have not the courage to apply the remedy." We are in a position to do something about it. Our State Legislatures and our National Houses of Congress are the creatures of the popular will. If we seriously intend to have a country free from the curse of kind, we can have it.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What are some of the Bible warnings against strong drink? 2. What is the earliest Bible example of drunkenness and what is its lesson? 3. Who are some of the men and women who in our own time have helped to make the world sober? 4. What did the governments of the nations at war during 1914-1918 do with respect to strong drink? 5. In what order did the states ratify the constitutional amendment for prohibition?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Give the children a chance by forbidding the use of strong drink and tobacco as long as they are subject to family control. 2. No one is in danger of drunkenness who wholly abstains. 3. He is a good patriot who for the nation's sake refrains willingly from the drink habit. 4. He is a good Christian who for the world's sake preaches total abstinence. 5. Drunkenness means poverty, wretchedness, woe and eternal death.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I CORINTHIANS 10:23-33.

**Prayer:** Our Father in Heaven it is in Thee that all our help lies. As Thou hast helped us to the glorious liberty which is in Christ, inspire us to aid others in their struggle for a like freedom. Forbid that we should do anything to cause a brother to stumble and grant that whether we eat or drink or whatever we do, it may all be done to the glory of God. Amen.

Help us, O Lord, Thy yoke to wear  
Delighting in Thy perfect will  
Each other's burdens learn to bear  
And thus Thy law of love fulfill.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting: Time and Place.** The First Epistle to the Corinthians was written by Paul in the early spring of A. D. 56 just before he left Ephesus for Troas in the course of his kind missionary tour (Acts, 19). Corinth was the capital of Roman Greece a wealthy commercial center and the home of a restless superficial intellectualism. **Persons,** Paul, at this time nearing his sixtieth year. The Corinthians an alert, but unstable people welcoming the gospel, but reluctant to give up heathen practice.

**Scripture Setting:** Paul Visits Corinth, Acts, 18:1-17. The Vices of Corinth, 1 Cor. 5:1-12. Liberal-

ity of the Corinthian Church, 2 Cor. 9:1-15. Christ's Law of Self Denial, Matt. 5:30; 19:21-28. Crucifixion of Self, Acts, 17:20-27. The Reward of Self Denial, Mark, 10:29-30; 1 Pet. 4:12-19; Rev. 7:9-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Epistle sets forth, 1. The Christian is never quite free from fight against sin. 2. Sin makes its attack under many guises. 3. Sometimes the flesh asserts itself. 4. Sometimes pride of mind betrays us. 5. Sometimes religious doubt overcomes us. 6. But the remedy for all is fellowship with Jesus and a loving concern for all men's good.

### A TEST OF BROTHERLY LOVE.

**Raising the Question.** Professor Marcus Dods in his admirable commentary on this First Epistle to the Corinthians tells the story thus: Fancy yourself at a Corinthian dinner table; the host is a heathen, three of the guests are Christians. The meal is being served. It is observed that some of the food offered is part of the sheep or ox offered that morning in sacrifice to an idol. Different views are taken at once. The heathen guests raise no question whatever. The Christian guests are divided. One thinks that to eat food which has been offered to idols is wrong; to him it is an endorsement of idolatry. The other two regard the whole issue as indifferent. One, however, wants to help the man whose conscience is sensitive about it and stands by him in declining to eat. The second sees no reason why he should have his liberty restricted by what he considers the silly scruples of a weak brother, so he indulges. Not, "Who is right," but "Who is Christian?" is the question. And it is this question thus raised that Paul tries to answer.

**The Test of Character.** It is just upon these matters which are really morally indifferent that a man has a chance to display the character of his religion. Strictly speaking dancing, theatre going, card playing are not immoral. But with some, perhaps many people, they are sources of temptation to immoral-

ity. The Christians under the law of liberty might indulge, under the higher law of love he will refrain.

**Answering the Question.** The question was really a serious one in Corinth. The Christian converts, in numerous instances, were taken from the pagan community. According to the universal custom "every meal was in a manner dedicated to the household gods by laying some portion of it on the family altar." More than that, on the occasion of any family celebration offerings were made in the temple and, later, the reserved portions were served at the feast given by the worshiper to friends and invited guests. Still further, on the occasion of public or national celebrations the same custom was observed. The Christian was in this dilemma. By eating he seemed to be sanctioning idol worship; by refusing to eat he was separating himself from his family, his friends, his state. In many instances the question was one of life or death.

**Diana or Christ.** There is a familiar picture of "Diana or Christ" in which a young Christian convert is being put to the test by officers of the government. Let her but offer a pinch of dust as incense to Diana and she lives; let her refuse and she dies. Pliny in a famous letter to Trojan comments upon the stubbornness of the Christians who would rather die than worship the statue of the Emperor.

**The Law of Liberty.** The religion of Jesus says Paul is not a question of meat at

all. In this was one of the things which distinguished it from the religion of Moses which forbade the eating of meat offered in heathen sacrifice. "Instances are on record of men dying cheerfully rather than suffer such contamination." The case of Daniel and his friends illustrate this prejudice. Paul is not afraid to bring forward the law of liberty. "In regard to the question of eating the meat of animals killed in idolatrous sacrifices" he says, "We enlightened Christians know that such meat cannot defile us. Idols have no real power to defile meat." It is time this question had been before the council at Jerusalem and the council had decided to the contrary. The decision expressly stipulated that converts from among the Gentiles should abstain from things polluted by connection with idolatry. Paul, in the present instance, reviews the whole case and decides in favor of the larger liberty. But only that he may bring greater prominence.

**The Law of Love.** For, he says, as long as we are bound up in each other we cannot live with respect to ourselves alone. Our duty to others is quite as imperative as our individual rights. It is an impious thing to give thanks to God for a right to indulge when such indulgence works harm to one's neighbor. "When," he says in effect, "when you so use your liberty, in itself allowable, as to make it a means of moral destruction to the weak Christian you do him a great moral injury and violate the law of Christ." Then comes his own noble declaration of loyalty: "If what I eat causes my brother to fall, never again to the end of my days will I touch any kind of animal food for fear I should cause my brother to fall." This is in exact harmony with the saying of Jesus: "Whoever shall occasion the fall of one of these little ones who believes in me, it would be better for him to have a millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea."

**A Personal Testimony.** I, as a Christian man and knowing that the earth and its fullness are the Lord's, may feel at perfect lib-

erty to drink wine. I may feel quite convinced in my own mind that morally I am not one whit the worse for doing so. But I cannot determine whether I am to indulge myself or not without considering the effect my conduct will have on others. There may be among my friends some who know that their temptation lies that way and whose conscience bids them altogether refrain. If by my example such persons are encouraged to silence the voice of their own conscience then I incur the incalculable guilt of helping to destroy a brother for whom Christ died.

PROFESSOR MARCUS DODS.

**The Limitations.** This law of love was recognized by Epictetus the pagan philosopher who when asked how any one could eat so as to please God, answered, "By eating justly, temperately and thankfully." No one could fulfill this obligation without thinking of the effect of his conduct on others. But must the weak Christian brother always and in everything be the rule of my life? By no means. The true Christian will have no serious difficulty in drawing the line where his duty ends and the other begins. His main difficulty will be in exercising the law of love to the extent he might and, therefore, ought.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Find out all you can about the early church in Corinth. Were the "saints" perfect then? 2. What were some of the temptations with which they struggled. 3. What was the difficulty about eating meat offered to idols? 4. Why should we deny ourselves to save another? 5. Are we to forego everything for the sake of another? 6. When does it become the duty of another to deny himself for our sake? 7. What was Christ's view on this subject?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Make the will of God your rule of life. 2. Eating harmful food is not eating to the glory of God. Drinking harmful beverages is not drinking to the glory of God. 4. Playing harmful games is not playing to the glory of God. 5. Practicing dishonesty in business is not doing business to the glory of God. 6. Consideration for others is a religious duty. 7. Abstaining from forms of amusement innocent in themselves and for us, but dangerous for others is both a duty and a privilege. 8. God is not unmindful of our struggles; He that keepeth us never slumbers nor sleeps.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.

N. B.—44 pages are here added to account for the full page half-tone engravings and descriptions of same; also little biographies of old masters and pages in Old Testament of this volume not counted in the regular folios making a total of 700 pages.



**BOOK TWO**

**THE BIBLE**  
**NEW TESTAMENT**

THE

ALPHABET

BOOKS OF THE



# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### NEW TESTAMENT

|                                   | PAGE |
|-----------------------------------|------|
| A Wonderful Book.....             | 3    |
| The Gospels.....                  | 4    |
| The Acts of the Apostles.....     | 5    |
| The Pauline Epistles.....         | 6    |
| The General Epistles.....         | 7    |
| The Life of Our Blessed Lord..... | 7    |
| Special Page—The Gospel.....      | 10   |

### FIRST DIVISION—THE GOSPELS 13-348

#### THIRTY YEARS OF PREPARATION

Time: 5 B. C. to A. D. 26

*Places: Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Egypt, Nazareth*

|                                                            |       |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Description of Doré's "Christ Leaving the Praetorium"..... | 13    |
| The Forerunner of Christ.....Luke 1:5-23 .....             | 13-15 |
| The Birth of Jesus.....Luke 2:1-20.....                    | 16-18 |
| Simeon and Jesus.....Luke 2:22-40.....                     | 19-21 |
| Visit of the Wise Men.....Matt. 2:1-12.....                | 22-24 |
| The Flight Into Egypt.....Matt. 2:13-18.....               | 25-27 |
| Description of Ploekhorst's "Flight Into Egypt" .....      | 26    |
| Return to Nazareth.....Matt. 2:19-23.....                  | 28-30 |
| The Boy Jesus.....Luke 2:40-52.....                        | 31-33 |
| Description of Hofmann's "Christ Among the Doctors".....   | 33    |
| Preaching of John the Baptist,....Luke 3:7-18.....         | 34-36 |

#### THE YEAR OF OBSCURITY

Time: A. D. 26 to A. D. 27

*Places: Wilderness of Judea, Bethany beyond Jordan, Cana, Sychar, Jerusalem, Judea*

|                                                                             |       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Baptism of Jesus.....Matt. 3:13-17.....                                     | 37-39 |
| The Temptation of Jesus.....Matt. 4:1-11.....                               | 40-42 |
| Description of Ploekhorst's "Christ Taking Leave of His Mother".....        | 43    |
| Jesus Begins His Ministry.....Matt. 4:12-25.....                            | 43-44 |
| Jesus and John.....John 1:29-37.....                                        | 45-47 |
| The First Miracle.....John 2:1-10.....                                      | 48-50 |
| Cleansing the Temple.....John 2:13-25.....                                  | 51-53 |
| Description of Kirchbach's "Christ Casting Out the Money<br>Changers" ..... | 53    |
| Jesus and Nicodemus.....John 3:1-21.....                                    | 54-56 |
| Jesus at Jacob's Well.....John 4:5-14.....                                  | 57-59 |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## THE YEAR OF POPULARITY

Time: A. D. 28 to A. D. 29

*Places: Capernaum, Galilee, Jerusalem, Nain, Gadara, Nazareth*

|                                                              | PAGE    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Sowing and Reaping.....John 4:35-42.....                     | 60-62   |
| The Nobleman's Son Healed.....John 4:43-54.....              | 63-65   |
| Jesus Rejected at Nazareth.....Luke 4:16-30.....             | 66-68   |
| The Draught of Fishes.....Luke 5:1-11.....                   | 69-71   |
| A Sabbath in the Life of Jesus.....Mark 1:21-34.....         | 72-74   |
| The Leper Healed.....Mark 1:35-45.....                       | 75-77   |
| Jesus' Power to Forgive.....Mark 2:1-12.....                 | 77-80   |
| Jesus at Bethesda.....John 5:1-15.....                       | 81-83   |
| Jesus and the Sabbath.....Matt. 12:1-18.....                 | 84-86   |
| The Beatitudes.....Matt. 5:1-12.....                         | 87-89   |
| Love Your Enemies.....Matt. 5:42-48.....                     | 90-92   |
| How to Pray.....Matt. 6:5-15.....                            | 93-95   |
| Our Father's Care.....Matt. 6:24-34.....                     | 96-98   |
| The Golden Rule.....Matt. 7:7-12.....                        | 99-101  |
| The Two Foundations.....Luke 6:46-49.....                    | 102-104 |
| The Centurion's Faith.....Luke 7:1-10.....                   | 105-107 |
| The Widow of Nain.....Luke 7:11-16.....                      | 108-110 |
| Jesus and John the Baptist.....Luke 7:18-35.....             | 111-113 |
| Warning and Invitation.....Matt. 11:20-30.....               | 114-116 |
| The Sinner's Friend.....Luke 7:36-50.....                    | 117-119 |
| Growing Hatred to Jesus.....Matt. 12:38-45.....              | 120-122 |
| The Parable of the Sower.....Matt. 13:3-8, 18-24.....        | 123-125 |
| Pictures of the Kingdom.....Matt. 13:44-50.....              | 126-128 |
| The Parable of the Tares.....Matt. 13:24-30.....             | 129-131 |
| Christ Stilling the Tempest.....Mark 4:35-41.....            | 132-134 |
| The Fierce Demoniac.....Mark 5:1-20.....                     | 135-137 |
| What the Bible Teaches About Work. Mark 6:13; John 5:17..... | 138-139 |
| The Power of Faith.....Matt. 9:18-25.....                    | 140-142 |
| The Twelve Sent Forth.....Matt. 10.....                      | 143-145 |

## THE YEAR OF OPPOSITION

Time: A. D. 29 to A. D. 30

*Places: Capernaum, Tyre and Sidon, Decapolis, Caesarea,  
Philippi, Mt. Hermon, Galilee, Jerusalem,  
Eastern Bethsaida*

|                                                         |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| The Five Thousand Fed.....John 6:3-13.....              | 146-148 |
| Jesus Walking on the Sea.....Matt. 14:22-32.....        | 149-151 |
| Description of Ploekhorst's "Christ and St. Peter"..... | 151     |
| Jesus, the Bread of Life.....John 6:22-51.....          | 152-154 |



# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                                                                | PAGE                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| The Gentile Woman's Faith.....                                 | Mark 7:24-30.....155-157        |
| Seeing and Confessing Christ.....                              | Mark 8:22-26.....158-160        |
| Peter's Great Confession.....                                  | Matt. 16:13-20.....161-163      |
| The Cross Foretold.....                                        | Matt. 16:21-28.....164-166      |
| The Transfiguration.....                                       | Matt. 17:1-9.....167-169        |
| Jesus and the Children.....                                    | Matt. 18:1-7, 10-14.....170-172 |
| The Duty of Forgiveness.....                                   | Matt. 18:21-35.....173-175      |
| Jesus at the Feast.....                                        | John 7:37-53, 8:12.....176-178  |
| The Man Born Blind.....                                        | John 9:1-41.....179-181         |
| Jesus the Good Shepherd.....                                   | John 10:1-16.....182-184        |
| The Mission of the Seventy.....                                | Luke 10:1-12, 17-20.....185-187 |
| Description of Ploekhorst's "Good Samaritan" .....             | 188                             |
| The Good Samaritan.....                                        | Luke 10:25-37.....188-191       |
| Jesus Among Friends and Foes.....                              | 192-193                         |
| The Rich Man's Folly.....                                      | Luke 12:13-21.....194-196       |
| Lawful Work on the Sabbath.....                                | Luke 13:10-17.....197-199       |
| Parable of the Great Supper.....                               | Luke 14:15-24.....200-202       |
| Lost and Found.....                                            | Luke 15:3-10.....203-205        |
| The Prodigal Son.....                                          | Luke 15:11-32.....206-208       |
| The Rich Man and Lazarus.....                                  | Luke 16:19-31.....209-211       |
| The Raising of Lazarus.....                                    | John 11:30-44.....212-214       |
| The Ten Lepers.....                                            | Luke 17:11-19.....215-217       |
| The Pharisee and the Publican.....                             | Luke 18:9-14.....218-220        |
| Jesus and the Little Ones.....                                 | Mark 10:13-16.....221-223       |
| Description of Hofmann's "Christ and the Rich Young Ruler".... | 223                             |
| The Rich Young Ruler.....                                      | Mark 10:17-22.....224-226       |
| The Laborers in the Vineyard.....                              | Matt. 20:1-16.....227-229       |
| The Last Journey to Jerusalem.....                             | Matt. 20:17-28.....230-232      |
| Blind Bartimæus.....                                           | Mark 10:46-52.....233-235       |
| Zacchæus the Publican.....                                     | Luke 19:1-10.....236-238        |

## PASSION WEEK

Time: Saturday, April 1, to Friday, April 7, A. D. 30

Places: *Bethany, Jerusalem, Bethphage, Gethsemane, Calvary*

|                                                               |                           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| The Anointing at Bethany.....                                 | Mark 14:3-11.....239-241  |
| The Triumphal Entry.....                                      | Matt. 21:1-16.....242-244 |
| Description of Hofmann's "Christ's Entry into Jerusalem"..... | 243                       |
| The Fig Tree Cursed.....                                      | Mark 11:12-19.....245-247 |
| The Fig Tree Withered.....                                    | Mark 11:20-28.....248-250 |
| The Parable of the Vineyard.....                              | Luke 20:9-19.....251-253  |
| The Parable of the Marriage Feast.....                        | Matt. 22:1-14.....254-256 |
| The Two Great Commandments.....                               | Mark 12:28-34.....257-259 |
| The Widow's Mite.....                                         | Mark 12:41-44.....260-262 |
| The Gentiles Seeking Jesus.....                               | John 12:20-36.....263-265 |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                         | PAGE    |
|---------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| The Destruction of the Temple Fore-                     |         |
| told..... Mark 13:1-20.....                             | 266-268 |
| The Command to Watch..... Mark 13:33-37.....            | 269-271 |
| The Ten Virgins..... Matt. 25:1-13.....                 | 272-274 |
| The Judgment..... Matt. 25:31-46.....                   | 275-277 |
| The Passover..... Mark 14:12-16.....                    | 278-280 |
| Washing the Disciples' Feet..... John 13:2-16.....      | 281-283 |
| Description of da Vinci's "The Last Supper".....        | 283     |
| The Lord's Supper..... Matt. 26:21-30.....              | 284-286 |
| Many Mansions..... John 14:1-6.....                     | 287-289 |
| The Vine and the Branches..... John 15:1-8.....         | 290-292 |
| The Work of the Spirit..... John 16:5-14.....           | 293-295 |
| Jesus Interceding..... John 17:11-26.....               | 296-298 |
| Jesus in Gethsemane..... Matt. 26:36-45.....            | 299-301 |
| Description of Hofmann's "Christ in Gethsemane".....    | 300     |
| Jesus Betrayed..... Mark 14:43-50.....                  | 302-304 |
| Description of Hofmann's "Christ Taken Captive".....    | 303     |
| Jesus Before the Council..... Mark 14:53, 55-65.....    | 305-307 |
| Peter's Denial..... Mark 14:54, 66-72.....              | 308-310 |
| Description of West's "Christ Rejected".....            | 309     |
| Jesus Before Pilate..... { John 18:28-31.....           | 311-313 |
| ..... { Matt. 27:11-14                                  |         |
| ..... { Luke 23:13-15                                   |         |
| ..... { Matt. 27:19, 20, 24, 26                         |         |
| Description of Munkacsy's "Christ Before Pilate".....   | 312     |
| Description of Ciseri's "Ecce Homo".....                | 314     |
| Jesus Mocked..... Matt. 27:26-31.....                   | 314-316 |
| Description of Thiersch's "Bearing the Cross".....      | 317     |
| Jesus Crucified..... { John 19:17-19, 23, 24.....       | 317-320 |
| ..... { Luke 23:44-49                                   |         |
| ..... { John 19:31-34                                   |         |
| Description of Munkacsy's "The Crucifixion".....        | 319     |
| The Burial of Jesus..... Matt. 27:57-66.....            | 321-323 |
| Description of Ciseri's "Christ Borne to the Tomb"..... | 322     |

## THE FORTY DAYS

Time: Sunday, April 9, to May 18, A. D. 30

Places: Jerusalem, Emmaus, Sea of Tiberius, Galilee, Bethany

|                                                        |         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Jesus Risen..... Matt. 28:1-15.....                    | 324-326 |
| Description of Thompson's "The First Easter Dawn"..... | 325     |
| Jesus and Mary..... John 20:11-16.....                 | 327-329 |
| The Walk to Emmaus..... Luke 24:13-35.....             | 330-332 |
| Jesus Appears to the Apostles..... John 20:19-23.....  | 333-335 |
| Jesus and Thomas..... John 20:24-31.....               | 336-338 |



# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

|                                | PAGE                       |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jesus and Peter.....           | John 21:1-19.....339-341   |
| The Great Commission.....      | Matt. 28:16-20.....342-344 |
| Jesus Ascends into Heaven..... | Luke 24:50-53.....345-347  |

## SECOND DIVISION—THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 349-462

|                                        |                                    |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| The Day of Pentecost.....              | Acts 2:1-36.....351-353            |
| The Early Christian Church.....        | Acts 2:37-47.....354-356           |
| The Lame Man Healed.....               | Acts 3:1-16.....357-359            |
| Peter and John Before the Council..... | Acts 4:1-31.....360-362            |
| Ananias and Sapphira.....              | Acts 5:1-11.....363-365            |
| Peter and John in Prison.....          | Acts 5:12-42.....366-368           |
| The Seven Chosen.....                  | Acts 6:1-7.....369-371             |
| The First Christian Martyr.....        | Acts 7:54-60; 8:1-2.....372-374    |
| The Disciples Scattered.....           | Acts 8:1-25.....375-377            |
| Philip and the Ethiopian.....          | Acts 8:26-40.....378-380           |
| Saul of Tarsus Converted.....          | Acts 9:1-20.....381-383            |
| Saul's Early Ministry.....             | Acts 9:20-32.....384-386           |
| Peter Working Miracles.....            | Acts 9:31-44.....387-389           |
| Peter's Vision.....                    | Acts 10:1-20.....390-392           |
| Peter and Cornelius.....               | Acts 10:21-48.....393-395          |
| The Spread of the Gospel.....          | Acts 11:1-30.....396-398           |
| Peter Delivered from Prison.....       | Acts 12:1-25.....399-401           |
| The First Christian Missionaries.....  | Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-15.....402-404 |
| Paul at Antioch.....                   | Acts 13:13-52.....405-407          |
| Paul at Lystra.....                    | Acts 14:1-28.....408-410           |
| The Conference at Jerusalem.....       | Acts 15:1-35.....411-413           |
| First European Convert.....            | Acts 15:36-41; 16:1-15.....414-416 |
| Paul and Silas in Prison.....          | Acts 16:16-40.....417-419          |
| Thessalonians and Bereans.....         | Acts 17:1-15.....420-422           |
| Paul at Athens.....                    | Acts 17:15-34.....423-425          |
| Paul at Corinth.....                   | Acts 18:1-17.....426-428           |
| Paul at Ephesus.....                   | Acts 18:18-28; 19:1-20.....429-431 |
| The Riot at Ephesus.....               | Acts 19:21-41.....432-434          |
| Paul's Farewell to Ephesus.....        | Acts 20:1-38.....435-437           |
| Paul at Jerusalem.....                 | Acts 21:1-36.....438-440           |
| Paul's Defence.....                    | Acts 21:37-40; 22:1-23.....441-443 |
| Paul Before the Council.....           | Acts 23:1-11.....444-446           |
| The Plot Against Paul.....             | Acts 23:12-35.....447-449          |
| Paul Before Felix.....                 | Acts 24:1-27.....450-452           |
| Paul Before Agrippa.....               | Acts 25 and 26.....453-455         |
| Paul Shipwrecked.....                  | Acts 27, and 28:1-6.....456-459    |
| Paul at Rome.....                      | Acts 28:7-31.....460-462           |

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## THIRD DIVISION—THE EPISTLES AND REVELATION 463-575

|                                                               | PAGE                        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Description of Long's "Christ or Diana" .....                 | 465                         |
| Peace with God.....Romans 5:1-15 .....                        | 465-467                     |
| Life or Death.....Romans 6:12-23 .....                        | 468-470                     |
| The Life-giving Spirit.....Romans 8:1-18 .....                | 471-473                     |
| The Security of Believers.....Romans 8:28-39 .....            | 474-476                     |
| Faith and Confession.....Romans 10:1-13 .....                 | 477-479                     |
| Christian Living .....                                        | Romans 12:1-21 .....        |
| Making the Nation Christian.....Rom. 13:1-10; Prov. 14:34.... | 483-484                     |
| The Temple of God.....1 Cor. 3:11-17.....                     | 485-487                     |
| The Christian Working With Others.1 Cor. 12:15-27.....        | 488-489                     |
| Christian Love.....1 Cor. 13.....                             | 490-492                     |
| The Resurrection .....                                        | 1 Cor. 15:12-26, 50-58..... |
| Christian Liberty .....                                       | Gal. 4:1-16.....            |
| Reaping the Harvest.....Gal. 6:1-10.....                      | 499-501                     |
| Saved by Grace.....Eph. 2:1-10.....                           | 502-504                     |
| The Christian Armour.....Eph. 6:10-20.....                    | 505-507                     |
| Paul Writes to a Friend.....Phil. 1:8-21.....                 | 508-509                     |
| Christ Our Example.....Phil. 2:1-13 .....                     | 510-512                     |
| Christian Contentment .....                                   | Phil. 4:1-13.....           |
| The Christian Home.....Col. 3:12-25 .....                     | 516-518                     |
| The Coming of the Lord.....1 Thess. 4:13-18.....              | 519-521                     |
| The Faithful Saying .....                                     | 1 Tim. 1:15-20; 2:1-6.....  |
| The Deceitfulness of Riches.....1 Tim. 6:6-12, 17-19.....     | 525-527                     |
| The Inspired Word.....2 Tim. 3:14-17; 4:1-5.....              | 528-530                     |
| Paul's Last Words.....2 Tim. 4:5-18.....                      | 531-533                     |
| Our Great High Priest.....Heb. 4:14-16; 5:1-6.....            | 534-536                     |
| The Sanctuary .....                                           | Heb. 9:1-12 .....           |
| The Sacrifice .....                                           | Heb. 9:11-14, 24-28.....    |
| The Triumphs of Faith.....Heb. 11:1-10 .....                  | 543-545                     |
| Faith and Works.....Jas. 2:14-26.....                         | 546-548                     |
| The Sins of the Tongue.....Jas. 3:1-18.....                   | 549-551                     |
| The Perfect Pattern.....1 Peter 2:19-25.....                  | 552-554                     |
| Christian Progress.....2 Peter 1:1-11.....                    | 555-557                     |
| Walking in the Light.....1 John 1:5-2:6.....                  | 558-560                     |
| Perfect Love .....                                            | 1 John 4:7-16.....          |
| The Glorified Saviour.....Rev. 1:9-20 .....                   | 564-566                     |
| The Message to the Churches.....Rev. 2 and 3.....             | 567-569                     |
| The Saints in Heaven.....Rev. 7:9-17 .....                    | 570-572                     |
| The Great Invitation.....Rev. 22:8-21 .....                   | 573-575                     |



# TABLE OF CONTENTS.

## LITTLE BIOGRAPHIES OF GREAT ARTISTS

### NEW TESTAMENT

|                                             | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------|------|
| Ciseri, Antonio.....                        | 314  |
| da Vinci, Leonardo.....                     | 284  |
| Hofmann, Heinrich.....                      | 69   |
| Kirchbach, Frank.....                       | 53   |
| Long, Edwin.....                            | 465  |
| Munkacsy, Mihaly de.....                    | 312  |
| Plockhorst, Bernard.....                    | 26   |
| Raphael, Sanzio da Urbino.....              | 399  |
| Rembrandt (list of Biblical paintings)..... | 345  |
| Schonherr, Carl A.....                      | 81   |
| Thiersch, Ludwig.....                       | 317  |
| Thompson, Jerome J.....                     | 326  |
| West, Benjamin.....                         | 310  |
| Zimmerman, Ernst.....                       | 72   |



## FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS

|                                            | PAGE                  |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Christ Leaving the Praetorium.....         | <i>Doré</i> 13        |
| The Flight Into Egypt.....                 | <i>Plockhorst</i> 26  |
| Christ Among the Doctors.....              | <i>Hofmann</i> 33     |
| Christ Taking Leave of His Mother.....     | <i>Plockhorst</i> 43  |
| Christ Casting Out the Money Changers..... | <i>Kirchbach</i> 53   |
| Christ and the Fishermen.....              | <i>Zimmerman</i> 72   |
| Christ and St. Peter.....                  | <i>Plockhorst</i> 151 |
| The Good Samaritan.....                    | <i>Plockhorst</i> 188 |
| Christ and the Rich Young Ruler.....       | <i>Hofmann</i> 224    |
| Christ's Entry Into Jerusalem.....         | <i>Hofmann</i> 244    |
| The Last Supper.....                       | <i>da Vinci</i> 284   |
| Christ in Gethsemane.....                  | <i>Hofmann</i> 301    |
| Christ Taken Captive.....                  | <i>Hofmann</i> 304    |
| Christ Rejected .....                      | <i>West</i> 310       |
| Christ Before Pilate.....                  | <i>Munkacsy</i> 312   |
| Ecce Homo.....                             | <i>Ciseri</i> 395     |
| Bearing the Cross.....                     | <i>Thiersch</i> 317   |
| The Crucifixion.....                       | <i>Munkacsy</i> 319   |
| Christ Borne to the Tomb.....              | <i>Ciseri</i> 323     |
| The First Easter Dawn.....                 | <i>Thompson</i> 326   |
| Christ or Diana.....                       | <i>Long</i> 465       |



Book of Books

Inspired of God

Beautiful in Expression

Light of Life

Enduring Eternally

The Bible is composed of 6 books  
written by about 3 authors in a period  
of time covering about 1 600 years.

When the temple of Solomon was built, the stone was hewn in the quarries, the timber was cut in the forests of Lebanon, the beams and the pillars, the doors and the hangings, the beautiful carved work overlaid with gold was all prepared before it was brought to the temple site.

When we read that there were 183,000 people employed in the work; that it took seven years to complete it; and that every part fit so perfectly that the whole immense structure was erected without the sound of axe, hammer or any tool of iron, we must conclude that some great master planned every detail of that magnificent building.

We go into a great factory and into one department where we see pieces of wood beautifully carved and paneled; into another where they are painted and polished; into others where pipes great and small are being toned and tuned, where banks of ivory keys are being fitted and finished, where great bellows are being built, where innumerable little pulleys and pins and levers are being turned and trimmed, and we say: What can come out of all this confusion?

But one day, in a great cathedral far across the continent, some workmen begin to put the pieces together till their work is done, when a stranger we had not seen till then sits down before it. He touches a button and sweeps the keys, and forth from the great organ there bursts in thunderous tones such music as we had never heard before, till the tears fall from our eyes and the mighty cathedral trembles with the volume of melodious sound; then we recognize the master in whose mind the great organ was conceived.

We take up a book. It is called the Bible. We look for the author's name, and learn that probably not less than thirty-six authors contributed to it, whose lives covered a period of about 1,600 years. They wrote in three different continents and many countries; in three different languages, and from every possible human standpoint. Among the authors were kings and countrymen, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. What confusion and contradiction must be here!

But let us examine it before we pass judgment. The first chapter takes us back beyond the beginning of time; the last chapter draws aside the firmament of the future and reveals eternity and the destiny of man.

Between these two every known form of literature is found: the oldest history, the sublimest poetry, the sweetest songs, the most unanswerable logic and captivating romance, the most marvelous biography, the foundation principles of all good law and government, the loftiest eloquence, the profoundest philosophy and the most inimitable stories and parables.

From its pages the thunders of Sinai roll, and after fifteen hundred years the echo resounds in the song of the angels as they herald the advent of a promised Child. Love declared to be the fulfilling of the Law.

The Book has one great plan and one supreme purpose—the salvation of man. One all-absorbing theme—the Messiah. One chief center—the cross. One ultimate end—the glory of God.

Our conclusion is: The Bible is one Book; it has one Author. It is the inspired Word of God.

**Romans.** Sets forth very clearly the sinfulness of the human race, the doctrine of salvation through faith in Christ, and duties and privileges of the Christians. Written from Corinth, A. D. 58.

**First and Second Corinthians.** Are a plea for right living, and a reproof of the evils in the Church in that day. Various doctrines are defined, chief among them being the Lord's Supper and the Resurrection. Paul also vindicates his former teaching in Corinth.

The first Epistle was written from Ephesus about A. D. 57. The second Epistle was written from Macedonia later the same year.

**Galatians.** Called the "Magna Charta of Christian Liberty." It is a strong treatise on the doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ, and gives some detail of Paul's life up to this time.

Written while on his third missionary journey, probably at the close of A. D. 57.

**Ephesians.** Describes the Ideal Church. Written during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, probably A. D. 62.

**Philippians.** The Way of the Ideal Christian. It expresses Paul's determination to be such. The only one of his letters to the churches that contains no word of rebuke.

Written from his prison at Rome, A. D. 62 or 63.

**Colossians.** Exalts the Ideal Saviour, while it warns against false teachings.

Written about the same time as, and is similar to, the Epistle to the Ephesians.

**First and Second Thessalonians.** The coming of Christ and the glories of the Resurrection are the most important themes treated.

These are the earliest of Paul's writings, and were written probably from Corinth A. D. 52 or 53.

**First and Second Timothy and Titus.** Are aptly called "The Pastoral Epistles," and principally give directions about the duties and character of a pastor.

The first Epistle to Timothy was probably written from Macedonia, A. D. 65.

The second Epistle to Timothy was written from Rome during Paul's second imprisonment, about A. D. 67 or 68, and shortly before his martyrdom.

The Epistle to Titus was probably written about the same time as the First Epistle to Timothy.

**Philemon.** The Personal Epistle. Philemon had been converted by Paul. Onesimus, his slave, had probably robbed him and fled to Rome, where he too was converted by Paul. Paul's letter to Philemon entreats him to forgive and receive Onesimus as a brother.

Written at Rome, A. D. 63 or 64.

**Hebrews.** Shows the superiority of the Christian dispensation over the Jewish as Christ is superior to Moses. Although the thoughts were evidently Paul's, the author, place and date of writing are uncertain.





**S**T. PAUL had written to seven churches. Here we have seven Epistles without address to any particular church, hence the name "General."

**James.** An Epistle of Faith addressed to Jewish Christians. "Deeds, not words," is the theme. It is the moral teacher of the New Testament.

**Author.** Undoubtedly James, the brother of our Lord.

**Place.** Jerusalem. The date of writing is uncertain, but not later than A. D. 63.

**First and Second Peter.** Two Epistles of Hope. They describe the benefits of trials, a holy life, various duties, punishment of the wicked, and the second coming of Christ.

**Date and place of writing uncertain,** though they were probably both written at Rome by Peter.

**First, Second and Third John.** Three Epistles of Love.

**The First:** A doctrinal discourse to the

Gentiles on the person of Christ, and vital relation to Him as necessary to a holy life.

**The Second:** To an elect lady and her children. An exhortation to love, faith and godliness.

**The Third:** To Gaius, commending him for his hospitality and piety.

**The author—John,** the beloved disciple.

**Place—Ephesus.**

**Date—A. D. 85-95.**

**Jude.** Warns against false teachers and the certainty of judgment, and the punishment of the wicked.

**Author,** Jude, a brother of James and of our Lord.

**Place and date uncertain,** though probably Jerusalem, A. D. 65 or 66.

**Revelation.** The Prophetical Book of the New Testament. This book was written by John in his old age, and gives us the story of the visions that God gave him on the island of Patmos, where he was in exile. It deals largely with that heavenly home to which all of God's children will at last come.

## STORY OF THE LIFE OF OUR BLESSED LORD.

**T**HE life of our blessed Lord may be considered in six divisions, for the sake of clearness. Of course in the space allowed us, we can only indicate its barest outlines.

**First: The Angelic Prelude.** This took place on the plains of Bethlehem. Joseph and Mary had gone to that town from Galilee, and there the Babe Jesus was born. To the shepherds on Bethlehem's plain, the angel of the Lord appeared, and announced the birth of Him who was to be the Saviour of the world. Suddenly there was with this angel a multitude of the Heavenly host, who united in the first angelic song that this world has ever heard, a song of great joy to all people. This was followed by the visit of the shepherds to the stable, and their adoration of Him of whom the angels sang. In turn this was followed by the visit of the

wise men from the East, who brought gifts, and did reverence to the Child. Then comes the flight into Egypt and the return to Nazareth. This is all that we are told about the childhood of this wonderful Babe, except that He grew in stature and in favor with God and man, and that at about twelve years of age He visited Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph.

**The Thirty Years of Silence.** In Nazareth these years were spent. As Jesus' reputed father was a carpenter, it is most likely that the boy was brought up in that trade. Thus our Master was for thirty years a working-man. Of course His was a godly home, and He must have been instructed in the Word of God, which at that time was the Old Testament. In due time He came forth from His retirement, and began the public min-

istry that has been the benediction of the whole world.

**The Year of Obscurity.** This is the name given to the first year of our Lord's ministry, because we know so little about it. Had it not been for what the Evangelist John tells us about it, we should not have known that there was such a year. It began with the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. At the very beginning of this year came the temptation in the wilderness, in which Jesus came off conqueror. In this year, too, He had that wonderful interview with Nicodemus in Jerusalem, in which He gave utterance to the wonderful words found in John 3. During this year our Lord did not work many miracles, at least so far as the records run. But He taught and won many disciples, among them Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip and Nathanael. Apparently owing to the opposition of the ecclesiastical party, and the general spiritual torpor of those in Judea, our Lord left Judea at the end of this year and went north to Galilee. Here he hoped to find a more ready acceptance of His message. On the way to Galilee He passed through Samaria, and here, at Jacob's well, had that remarkable conversation with the Samaritan woman, which may be found in John 4.

**The Year of Popularity.** This year was spent in Galilee. The teaching and the miracles of our Lord here raised the people to the highest pitch of enthusiasm. Wherever He went, vast throngs followed Him, so that at times they had not leisure even to eat in peace. So anxious were the people to get near to Him and to be healed, that on one occasion they actually took the roof off a house, so as to be able to let a paralyzed man down in the room where Jesus was. At other times the multitudes were so vast that they knocked each other down in their mad anxiety to get near Him. Never had the world seen one who was able in this way to heal all manner of disease instantly. There was no case too hard for Him. The blind, the lame, the paralyzed, the leprous, the fever-stricken, all were instantly healed by His word of power. Indeed, it was not needful even for Him to see His patient. For, as in the case of the nobleman's son, He could heal by a word, and that without seeing His patient. He cast out evil spirits with His word, and showed that His power was irresistible. Even death was not beyond His power, for He called back the spirit of the departed, and thus showed that His power extended to the other world.

His teaching, too, was most popular, and they hung on His lips, for they said, "Never man spake like this man." The common people heard him gladly, and to them He proclaimed the Word of Life. At times during this year the Saviour must have wrought hundreds of miracles in a day, as in the case at Capernaum, where all the sick that were in that city came to Peter's house, and were all healed without money or price. During this year He preached what is called the Sermon on the Mount, which you may find in Matt. 5, 6 and 7. At last the people grew so wild in their enthusiasm that they wanted to force Him to proclaim Himself king, and thus bring the rule of Rome in Palestine to an end. Of course our Lord would not do this, for He did not come to establish an earthly kingdom, but an Heavenly. This enthusiasm of the people was aroused by His miracle of the feeding of the five thousand. They thought that one who could thus feed them for nothing was just the kind of king that would suit them. Had our Lord yielded to this popular clamor, His work as Redeemer would have been ruined. The Romans would have at once put down such a movement, and have put Him to death as a rebel.

**The Year of Opposition.** During this year of intense activity in Galilee, the Scribes and Pharisees were watching to see how they might discredit the Master with the people. They spied on Him at all times, and opposed Him wherever they could. They saw that His aims and theirs were irreconcilable, for theirs were motives purely selfish, while His were unselfish. For a time they apparently hoped that they could make use of Him to further their political aims. But when they found that this was impossible, they took their stand against Him, and never swerved in their aim, until they nailed Him to the cross. They opposed Him for his non-observance of some of their minute observances of the law, such as that of Sabbath keeping, by means of which observance they had really "made void the law of God." Again, they were offended at His humble origin. They scoffed at Him as "the carpenter's son." They were offended because He kept company with those whom they despised, such as publicans and sinners. Of course it displeased them that He had chosen a publican (Matthew) as one of His Apostles.

They did not try to deny that He wrought many miracles. But they went so far as to ascribe His power to the influence of Satan himself. In every way, for such reasons as



the above, they opposed Him, and tried to undermine His influence with the common people. About one-half of this year of opposition was spent by our Lord in Galilee, and the other half in nearby places. Towards the close of this year, Jesus started for Jerusalem, where He knew that the end of His life would come.

**The End.** At last, the end came. The ecclesiastical party could stand Him no longer. So they planned to put Him to death. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem angered them to the last degree, for they saw that He was the most popular man in the land. They felt that to carry out their plans it was necessary that He should be put out of the way. So they agreed to pay Judas to betray Him into their hands. This was done on Thursday night of Holy Week. Then they tried Him before their national religious council, called the Sanhedrin, and though they had no two witnesses whose testimony agreed, they condemned Him to be worthy of death. But as under Roman rule they had not the power to carry out this sentence, they took Him before Pilate. Pilate declared again and again that he found no fault in Him. So did also Herod, to whom Pilate sent Him. Yet in spite of this, to please the people, Pilate condemned Him to be crucified.

So on Friday morning, they took the Master out to Calvary, and there, between two thieves, they crucified Him. Blessed be God, one of these thieves was so touched by what he saw that he prayed the Lord to have mercy on him, and to this prayer the Master replied: "Verily, I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." At three o'clock on that day, Jesus passed away, and they placed Him in a new tomb in Joseph's garden, to await the final preparation of His body for burial, as the next day was the Sabbath day.

**Easter Morning.** But on Easter morning there happened a wonderful thing. The angel of the Lord descended and rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre. Jesus arose from the dead and appeared on that day first to Mary, then to the women, then to Simon Peter, then to the two disciples as they walked to Emmaus, and finally to the ten in the upper chamber in Jerusalem.

These appearances caused the disciples to pass from deepest despair to highest exultation. Now they knew that they had not been deceived in Him, and that He was really the Son of God, as Peter had himself confessed. For forty days He appeared to His disciples from time to time, to assure them that it was really He and none other. Then, on the Mount of Olives, He parted from them, and was taken up into Heaven from whence He had come. So ended His wonderful earthly life, a life full of marvelous works and still more marvelous teaching.

But the end was not yet. Before He ascended, He promised that He would send the Holy Spirit with power on His disciples. This took place on the day of Pentecost, when they were endued with power to carry to the ends of the earth the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Of this we have already spoken in the article on the Acts of the Apostles. In view of all that we have said, we may well believe that we are trusting not in a dead Jesus, but in One who is living at the right hand of God as our Divine Saviour, and who has all authority and power to intercede with God in our behalf. Ours is a living and loving Saviour, who died for us, and rose again, and who now sitteth on the right hand of God the Father, who shall redeem this world, and shall give unto us eternal life, if only we accept Him and follow Him as our Divine Lord and Master.

DR. A. F. SCHAUFFLER.

#### NOTE.

Our reckoning of time is supposed to date from the birth of our Lord, but we should add four years to our present calendar in order to be strictly correct. For example: the year of our Lord 1900 was in reality 1904.

The way that this discrepancy came about is as follows: In the year 525 A. D. the Roman Abbott Dionysius began to compute time in his Easter tables from the birth of our Lord. But he did not calculate aright the dates that are given in Luke 3:1, and so dated wrongly the time of Jesus' birth. Of course it is too late to remedy this matter on all our calendars, but we do well to bear this mistake in mind.

# THE GOSPEL

## The A.B.C. of The Gospel!

**G**ood  
reat  
lad  
lorious  
racious

**O**f  
neness  
bedience  
rder  
vercoming  
ppportunity

**S**ure  
aving  
upreme  
atisfying  
anctifying

**P**ardon  
of  
eace  
ower  
rayer  
urity

**E**nduring  
an  
xalted  
verlasting  
xcellent  
stablished

**L**aw  
of  
ove  
ife  
ight  
iberty

All have sinned and come short  
of the glory of God

Behold the Lamb of God that tak-  
eth away the sin of the world.

Come unto me all ye that labor  
and are heavy laden and  
I will give you rest.

*John, three, sixteen.*

FOR

God so loved the world that  
he gave His

Only begotten

Son that whosoever believeth  
in Him should not

Perish but have

Everlasting

Life

**I**  
am  
not  
ashamed  
of the  
**Good  
Only  
Sacred  
Priceless  
Eternal  
Living**

of  
Christ  
for  
it  
is  
the

**Purifying  
Overflowing  
Working  
Exalting  
Refining**

of God  
unto  
salvation  
to everyone  
that  
believeth.



# FIRST DIVISION

THE PROPHETS, ETC.







## CHRIST LEAVING THE PRÆTORIUM

BY DORÉ

After Pilate had given the Jews permission to crucify Christ, the priests and soldiers led Him away from the judgment hall, known as the Prætorium, to Golgatha, called the place of a skull, that He might be crucified. One Simon, a Cyrenian, passing that way, was compelled to bear the cross.

Doré, the artist, has painted on an enormous canvas his own conception of this scene. All of Doré's art is arranged for artistic effectiveness, and he has made this very impressive and imposing. Christ is represented in a long white garment, still wearing His thorny crown, walking with stately bearing down the steps from the judgment hall. Before him is unfortunate Simon, struggling with the heavy cross, also carrying the bag of tools, hammer and strong nippers, for nailing the victim to the cross. Just behind Christ march the Jewish priests, and on either side is a mass of humanity. On the balcony above are those who gossip together carelessly, showing much curiosity, but in no way serious. On the right below, the soldiers are rudely pushing back the crowd, who stumble and fall over each other. Much time may be spent in the study of individual faces and character manifested by each. It is a finely conceived group. On the left-hand corner is a similar crowd which is less disturbed, but in it are revealed the passions of men and their hatred of the self-sacrificing Christ. This is one of the most effective pictures that Doré has painted. Thousands of people have stood before it spell-bound, some weeping and some praying.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





COPYRIGHT 1912 BY THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

CHRIST LEAVING THE PRAETORIUM

After Dore's painting by Max Böhn.





# THE FORERUNNER OF CHRIST.

There was in the days of Herod, the



of



a certain



named Zacharias,  
of the course of  
Abia: and his



was of the



of Aaron,

and her name was Elisabeth. And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to



when he went



of the Lord.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 1:5-23. READ ALSO JOHN 1:19-34.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Make us obedient to Thee. Help us to prepare the way for the coming of Christ into many hearts and to become messengers of Thine. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"How dear to my heart is the story of old,  
The story that ever is new,  
The message that saints of all ages have told,  
The message so tender and true."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Before the Account called Anno Domini, the sixth year. Place, The Temple, Jerusalem. Persons, Zacharias, his wife Elizabeth, and the Angel of the Lord.

**Scripture Setting:** Prophecy fulfilled. The coming of John foretold, Mal. 3:1; 4:5. The voice in the wilderness, Isa. 40:3, John 1:23. Esais' prophecy, Matt. 3:3. Christ's testimony, Matt. 11:14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of the story are, 1. That God hears and answers prayer. 2. He always gives more than we ask. 3. The influence of a blameless life. 4. The appearance of an angel to announce the birth of the long-promised forerunner of the Messiah. 5. The careful conduct which God demands of those whom He would use in His service. 6. That the trusting Christian should ask no sign.

### AN ANGEL PROMISES A LITTLE SON.

**A Long Night.** How long a whole night vigil seems to the watcher! How he counts the hours and how unending they seem! How often the watcher peers into the darkness for some sign of daybreak. Thus the Jews had watched for the coming of their Messiah through the ages of captivity, persecution and humiliation which seemed to them the longest and darkest of nights. Isaiah, Ezekial, Amos, Hosea, had preached to deaf ears and unrolled visions before those who were as if blind; then for four hundred years no prophet had appeared in Israel; there was no longer open warning or sign from the God they had disregarded, and they had passed through a great many troubles as a nation.

**Watching for the Dawn.** Trouble leads one to seek help; indifference had given place to eagerness for the coming of the One who was to destroy their enemies, avenge their wrongs and restore and even increase their supremacy. While ground under the heel of Rome, it was a solace to know that the time was not far distant when they should be able to trample their enemies into the dust. They had watched so long they knew every sign, and that the hour was at hand. Led by this belief the Jews were returning to Jerusalem; and that city presented the appearance of a great home coming. There were some righteous ones who believed they would not die until their eyes had seen His coming. Everywhere was an air of expectancy. It was as if any morning they might wake to see His banner planted on the hills around about Jerusalem; at any hour the trumpet might sound to call the faithful to unsheath their swords; any moment might see the city filled with the effulgent brightness of His glory. After the long night what joy and relief when they should see the first streak of light in the horizon.

**The Forerunner.** In ancient times it was a great thing to be the king's forerunner. The office was held by a young man, perfect in physical development and so fleet of foot that some even believed that his feet were winged, just as in statues and pictures of the Winged Victory. When the king entered his chariot, the forerunner would run in front of the chariot, waving an emblem of authority and calling upon the people to make way for the royal passage. Isaiah had foretold that a prophet should appear, as a spiritual forerunner to proclaim and prepare for the coming of Israel's Messiah. It was now four hundred years since Malachi had declared he should be no less a personage than the translated prophet Elijah. With eagerness the pious Jews awaited the appearance of this forerunner who should proclaim the coming of their King.

**A Devout Home.** Among the watchers there could have been none more fervent than the godly couple in the quiet hillside home outside Jerusalem. It is said that to have been well born is to have overcome all the greater difficulties of life. Fortunate is the child born into such a home as Luke pictures, where for generations back, the ancestors on both sides were priests of God, and where husband and wife were both righteous and obedient to all the laws of God, blameless and without reproach. But alas, no child had been born to Zacharias and Elizabeth. It was their chief sorrow and one great disappointment. Long they had prayed for children, but now they had transferred their anticipation to longing and waiting for the Messiah.

**The Morning Sacrifice.** Every morning a priest watched on the highest pinnacle of the temple for the first sign of dawn to give the signal for beginning the day's religious service, when the massive temple gates swung open and a three-fold blast from the silver



trumpets of the priests called the people to their devotions. Even earlier, a part of the priesthood were ready for duty. The number of officiating priests has been variously estimated at from 20,000 to 85,000, and each week day fifty priests were on duty in the temple. They met early in one of the temple halls where their ministry for the day was assigned by "lot." Four times was the lot taken; but it was the third lot that all awaited, for this designated who was to offer incense in the holy place.

**An Auspicious Moment.** Only once in a life-time might any son of Aaron hope to enjoy that privilege. Indeed the honor came not at all to some. The casting of this lot was preceded by prayer on the part of all the assembled priests. Our story begins the first week in October, in the sixth year before our present era. Among the assembled priests was one whose genuine piety was unquestioned by all. He had lived more than sixty years, and yet never during all his life time had he obtained the honor of offering incense in the holy place. Did he know as he stood awaiting the "lot" that strange and wonderful things were to happen to him that autumn morning? The moment to which every priest looked forward was his. For the first and the last time, the lot fell to him.

**The Priest and the Angel.** Zacharias stood alone within the holy place. The incense had been spread upon the altar, on which the red coals glowed. Outside the worshippers silently watched while the prayers of Israel ascended to Heaven in the cloud of odors that rose from the golden altar. The priest was ready to reverently withdraw when suddenly a wondrous sight met his eyes. Between the altar and the golden candlestick stood the angel Gabriel. Never before had such a vision appeared to an ordinary priest on such an occasion. No wonder that Zacharias was troubled and fear fell upon him.

How sweet the words of the mighty Gabriel, "Fear not, for thy prayer is heard." Have you ever heard words like this whispered to your soul? And when the blessed assurance is given that your prayer is heard, do not the angels seem very near? Zacharias and Elizabeth were to have a son and his name was to be called John. Not only the father and mother were to rejoice at his birth, but his coming should be a source of joy to many.

**The Promised Son.** There are two ways in which a person may be great. One of these is to be great in the sight of men. Such persons may be very wicked and cruel and even cause much suffering in the world. Napoleon belonged to this class of great men, and he plunged all Europe into bloody warfare. But John was to be great in the sight of the Lord. He was to be humble, obedient, a total abstainer and courageous. This is true greatness. What a difference between those who are truly great and counterfeit heroes! This child was to be filled with the Holy Ghost, and his coming was to bless and not destroy mankind.

**The Sign Given.** If we continue the story, we shall find that when the priest, who had grown to be an old man before the good fortune to be chosen to enter the holy place had come to him, was told that he and his wife were to be the parents of the much anticipated forerunner who was to come in the spirit of Elijah to prepare Israel for the coming of the Lord, Zacharias was too humble a man to believe it and asked a sign. Now when he had been so signally honored by the visit of the mighty angel Gabriel, such unbelief was very wrong; but sometimes when we ask for things we should not have, God answers our prayers that we may learn that He knows best what to give us. So Zacharias was given a sign, but that sign was to be his own dumbness until all these things the angel had promised had come to pass.

**Fulfillment.** The people waited for Zacharias, wondering at his long delay, but when he came out to them, though he could not speak to tell them what had happened, it was all explained. Just as our faces are such mirrors of our thoughts as to tell whether our companions are good or evil, so when they looked into Zacharias' face the people knew he had seen an angel. All that the angel told the aged priest came to pass. The forerunner of the Messiah was born, as had been foretold seven hundred years before. At first the Jews did not know that the child who was born to Zacharias and Elizabeth was destined to be so great a person, but we shall learn later how it was made known to them.

**Quiz.** 1. What prophets had foretold John's coming? 2. What great hope inspired the Jewish people at this time? 3. To what former priest and his wife did an angel appear to foretell the birth of a son? 4. What resemblance between the two? 5. To whom did the angel Gabriel appear besides Zacharias? 6. Do we need an angel to tell us our prayers are answered?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. When God needs men and women he knows just where to find the right material. 2. Life is not a lottery in which man draws at random; the disposal of the lot is in God's hands. 3. Devils, not angels, should be held in fear. 4. The faith of some good men is so weak that it takes an angel and a miracle to convince them that their prayer is answered. 5. When God wanted to show the world the greatest man, he set before them a total abstainer. 6. We may all be forerunners of God.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

For unto you is born this



in the



a Saviour, which is



the Lord.  
And this shall  
be a sign  
unto you; Ye  
shall find the



And suddenly  
there was



praising God, and  
saying, Glory  
to God in the  
highest, and on earth



good will toward





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 2:1-20.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for the manifestation of Thyself through the person of Jesus Christ. We pray that like those shepherds of old, we may welcome the Christ and spread the good news of His advent to those about us. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"And still their Heavenly music floats  
O'er all the weary world;  
Above its sad and lonely plains  
They bend on hovering wing,  
And ever o'er its Babel sounds  
The blessed angels sing."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, probably Dec. 25, the fifth year before the account called Anno Domini. Place, Bethlehem. Persons, the Holy Child, Mary His mother, Joseph, shepherds and angels.

**Scripture Setting:** The Promised Ruler. Mighty Counselor, Isa. 9:6, 7. Emmanuel, Isa. 7:14. The Righteous Judge, Isa. 11:1-5. The Shepherd, Isa. 40:10, 11. The King, Jer. 23:5, 6. Universal Sovereign, Zech. 14:16, 17. Prophet, Deut. 18:15. From everlasting, Micah 5:2. Victor over Satan, Gen. 3:15. The Annunciation, Luke 1:26-38.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The great central fact of the story is the birth of the Holy Child, Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. In addition we have given us: 1. The announcement of Christ's birth by the herald angel to the watching shepherds. 2. It is made known to these simple men that Christ was born for all people. 3. The Advent is honored by the Heavenly chorus. 4. The new born King is found lying in a manger, and accepted by the shepherds.

### WHEN ANGELS SANG ON EARTH.

**Taking the Census.** When Augustus Caesar, from his imperial palace in Rome, ordered a census of the Roman Empire which should include the inhabitants of Syria he had no idea that he was actuated by anything save his own royal will. So little do we know of the reason for our own acts, that the proud Emperor would have resented the suggestion that the census instead of being his own imperial decree, was conceived more than seven hundred years before when through His prophet Micah, God had declared that Israel's promised Ruler should come out of Bethlehem. The Emperor of Rome had simply been used by a Ruler mightier than any earthly potentate in the fulfillment of prophecy.

**How Prophecy was Fulfilled.** Now Mary and Joseph were in the little town of Nazareth in Galilee far away from Bethlehem, when this imperial decree was issued, which made it necessary for every family to go to the city of their fathers to be registered, and as both were of the house of David, it sent them on their way to the city of David. The journey must have occupied at least three days and they found the little town of Bethlehem so crowded with pilgrims on the same errand that there was no place for them at the inn and they were forced to seek shelter in a stable.

**Bethlehem.** As they toiled up the long gray hills the Virgin Mother saw the town, a thread of low flat-roofed houses, running along the hill ridge. The valleys on either side softened by the silvery green foliage of the olive, the pale pink bloom of the almond and the deeper blush of the budding peach trees, justified the name which signified "House of bread." Perched on the mountains was the castle of Herod, who was to

seek to destroy the Holy Child. As she passed a pretty brook she may even have seen the shepherds who were soon to hear the Heavenly chorus, and if she stopped to drink of the spring for whose water her ancestor David so longed, she might even have seen the new star mirrored there.

**In the Manger.** The stable was only a cavern in the hillside and this mother laid her most precious treasure in the hollowed trough of the manger. It was fitting that He who came to feed the hungry and redeem the poor should so make himself one of them, that he was born and cradled just as the poorest babies in all that land have been from time immemorial. Though there is no stable there now, a church is built on the spot where there is authority for believing that the stable once stood. It is called the Church of the Nativity and was built by the Empress Helena in the early part of the fourth century. It brings that first Christmas very near, to stand beside the silver star that marks the place where Christ lay cradled in the Bethlehem manger and where the shepherds knelt so many ages ago. It is the tangible and established evidence that the birth of our Saviour is the truest and greatest fact in all history and not a legend as some would have us believe.

**Watching over the Sheep.** Christmas time is often one of the loveliest periods of the year in Judea. Flowers bloom and the shepherds lead out their flocks again to browse for a few weeks on the renewed pasture. It is significant that these flocks were destined for temple sacrifices which the shepherds watched that December night, when called from the fields to see the Lamb of God who was to be a living sacrifice for all sin. Not in the stable, that cavern by

the hillside, but out in the quiet solemn night, in the star-lit heavens, is the birth of the long-heralded King announced. Who cannot see the shepherds sitting in their long silent night watches in the open fields, and who does not sympathize with them in their fear when the glory of the Lord shone round about them, in all its dazzling brightness? And yet was it not beautiful that the birth of the One who was to be known as the Good Shepherd was first announced to the shepherds who were themselves sheep of His flock? When will men learn that angels are their friends, the messengers of God sent to minister to His children? This beautiful angel whose dazzling radiance made the shepherds sore afraid bade them, "Fear not." It was the first preacher of the Gospel who hovered near them. No one else had honored the advent of the Messiah. The earth had never even wakened from its slumbers to welcome Him. People slept on as though the mightiest event in all the history of the world had not just transpired. But if no priest announced His coming, no royal herald trumpeted His birth, an unheard of thing happened. Higher honor had the Babe in the manger than any heir to an earthly throne. A herald angel came down from Heaven to announce the birth of the Prince of Peace.

**Good Tidings.** "I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Have we not reason to rejoice that the good tidings was not for the watching shepherds only; nor as the Jewish people had always imagined: just for the Jews? It was not even to be confined to that age, but for **all people**. The angel does not announce a King but a Saviour. The Jews wanted and watched for a King, but God, who knew all their backslidings and shortcomings, their ingratitude and unfaithfulness, saw that they needed first a Saviour. He must save us from the dominion of sin before we can be His loyal subjects.

**The Angel Chorus.** There has been music ever since the world began, but never such as burst upon the entranced ears of the Judean shepherds. It was the only angel chorus ever heard on earth. When the herald angel had spoken, a multitude of the Heavenly host came forth to sing the glad tidings he had just uttered.

"Glory to God in the highest,  
On earth peace,  
Goodwill toward men."

Their song is the key-note of the Gloria in Excelsis sung from age to age and generation to generation, and to be a never-ending Christmas carol. It ushered into the darkened world, Heaven's own light, and the Divine melody that flooded the Judean hills that night and entranced the ears of those, who, like the shepherd Psalmist of Israel, tended the flocks by night, shall never cease until its prophecy is ended. The angels' song ushered in a new era. Never another night so dark, for was not the Light of the World come to shed its beneficent rays until the time when there shall be no more night? It told that God's own Son had left the splendor of Heaven that He might manifest the glory of the Father, and through the salvation and redemption of the world, add glory and honor to His name. It was the announcement of the birth of the Prince of Peace, whose work shall not end until man shall cease to draw the sword and war is no more. "Good will toward men" proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of Love, whose center should be the Manger of Bethlehem, and where every man is the brother, and God the Eternal Father of all. The words of Lincoln's second inaugural address, "With malice toward none, with charity for all," spoken in the midst of cruel war, have been called "An earthly echo of the Heavenly anthem."

**The Shepherds' Visit.** Following the directions of the herald angel the shepherds left their flocks and "came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the Babe lying in the manger." Blessed faith which gave to these Judean shepherds the high privilege of being the first witnesses of His advent, the first worshippers at the shrine of Christ, and the first evangelists to proclaim His coming to men. It is long since that Christmas day, and so humble was their calling that their names were never recorded and have long since been forgotten, but they live on.

And today the entire Christian world joins them in glorifying and praising God for the Heavenly vision of that first Christmas eve, when God manifested His love for a sin-darkened and fallen world, through that greatest of all gifts, the gift of His Only Son, our Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.

**Quiz.** 1. What noted Bible characters had lived in Bethlehem? 2. Why did our Lord choose a stable for His birthplace? 3. Did He ever have a place He could call home? 4. When did Isaiah hear the angels sing? 5. Which one of Christ's ancestors was a shepherd? 6. How may Christ be born into our hearts? 7. How may we imitate the shepherds?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Christ's presence makes the humblest place a throne of power. 2. The evangelism of the world was begun through the shepherds. 3. The stable is no longer a mean place since it was irradiated with the smile of the Babe of Bethlehem. 4. From the manger to the cross, from the cross to the grave, from the grave to the throne is the Christian progress. 5. God loves the lowly and simple of heart. 6. God's love is manifest in the gift of Christ to the world. 7. Every Christmas carol is the echo of the angels' song. 8. Only a child, and He the Divine Child, could have made a Christmas.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## SIMEON AND JESUS.

And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord;

And, behold,  
there was  
a man in



whose name  
was Simeon;  
and the same



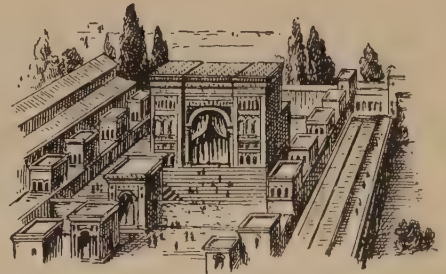
was just and



waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see



before he had  
seen the  
Lord's Christ.  
And he came  
by the Spirit  
into the



and when the parents



Jesus, to do  
for him after  
the custom  
of the



# SIMEON AND JESUS.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 2:22-40.

**Prayer:** Lord, help us to see in the blessed Babe of Bethlehem what Simeon saw. May we see in Him our salvation, may He light our pathway through life and we share His glory in Heaven. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"May we feel Thy presence near;  
May Thy glory meet our eyes,  
While we in Thy house appear."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the fourth year before the account Anno Domini. Place, the Temple, Jerusalem. Persons, the Holy Child, Mary, Joseph and Simeon.

**Scripture Setting:** In the House of the Lord. Prayer heard, 2 Sam. 22:7. The Christian's desire, Psa. 27:4, 5. The Temple, a refuge, Psa. 84:1-4.

Value of worship, Psa. 84:10. The Lord's coming to the Temple foretold, Mal. 3:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The main features of the story are, 1. The sacrifice and offering of Mary and the Holy Child. 2. The poverty of that sacrifice. 3. The appearance of Simeon. 4. His Expectation. 5. Its Fulfillment. 6. His vision of Christ. 7. Suffering foretold.

### WHAT SIMEON SAW.

**Looking Backward.** Fifteen hundred years before our story begins, when God's people were in bondage, the Egyptians were so cruel that they ordered every boy baby born of the Jews to be destroyed at his birth. Thus it became necessary for God to free His people from Egyptian bondage else they would be wiped out of existence. With wonderful forbearance God first sent Moses to plead with the Egyptian ruler, Pharaoh, to "Let my people go," but each time Moses entreated, the Israelites were treated more cruelly. We remember how God, who is so long-suffering, sent various plagues, hoping each would warn the hard-hearted Egyptians. But the Egyptians hardened their hearts and treated the Israelites still more cruelly. At last because nothing else would soften their hearts, there came that memorable night when the angel of the Lord passed over the land at the solemn hour of midnight and smote all the first born of Egypt, but sparing the first born of the Israelites.

**The Dedication of the First Born.** In gratitude for this deliverance the Jewish law considered the eldest son of every family God's property until he was redeemed by sacrifice and offering; and the Jewish church provided that forty days after his birth the eldest son must be brought to the temple and a sacrifice and an offering made there. The offering was five shekels of silver or about fifty cents in our money. It was the price of his redemption. Now the little babe whom Joseph and Mary brought to the temple was God's own Son and needed not to make sacrifice; but the Scriptures tell us He came to fulfill the law and we will find Christ was always very scrupulous in His religious observance. There are some people who think they can be good without going to church or observing any religious duties, but Christ was not one of these.

**Child of the Poor.** Poverty cannot be as great a misfortune and handicap as we think or God, who was so very careful about His Son's surroundings and training, would not have put Him into a home of such poverty as Saint Luke reveals. Now when she brought her first born to the temple, the mother was expected to bring a young lamb for the burnt offering and a pigeon or a turtle dove for a sin offering, but the law provided that if the parents were too poor to furnish a lamb, the mother might offer two pigeons or turtle doves instead of the lamb and one turtle dove or pigeon, and Mary was so poor she brought only two pigeons. Mary loved her child, so it must have been a great sorrow and humiliation to be too poor to honor her first born as other mothers did. Perhaps after all the angel had told her, she wondered why God did not provide a better sacrifice. There are mothers who will not take their children to church and Sunday school unless they can be "dressed as good as other children," but Mary was a woman of faith and good sense and she knew that God is not a respecter of persons.

**Simeon.** It were worth a lifetime of endeavor to at last merit such a portraiture as St. Luke sketches of Simeon, for the apostle tells us he was first of all a just man; he had never defrauded anyone. Consideration for others had been the rule of his life. Then he was devout; loving, serving and fearing God. He was an expectant Christian and the Holy Ghost was upon him. As we read Luke's sketch of the man, one feels that the world needs more Holy Ghost Christians. Simeon was not a stranger to the temple. If he and Anna had only been occasional worshippers, they might have missed the wonderful blessing of that wonderful morning and both might have died without seeing the Messiah. How great the loss today to those who do not habitually seek the house of God. To the devout worshipper there is nothing more inspiring than old Christ Church of Philadelphia, where one sees the pews of Washington, Franklin and other patriot fathers who were regular attendants of wor-



ship at the historic old church during the troublous days of the American Revolution.

**How a Song was Born.** It is said that every person lives for the attainment of some one desire. With some the desire is for money, in others it is fame and office. Then there are people whose chief desire is for clothes, so that there are unfortunates who have sold their souls for adornment. But Simeon's desire was not so trivial or selfish as any of these. "It had been revealed unto him that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." When the One who had lain in his arms became the greatest Preacher the world ever heard and said "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled," may He not have thought of Simeon? The Spirit led the expectant old saint of God into the temple just as the Holy Family entered. What a happy moment it was for the old man. How tenderly and with what sacred, wondering love he took the Child in his arms. He held to his heart the very Son of God, the infant Messiah. Do you not see the venerable saint with face uplifted and streaming tears of joy, while the Holy Child in his arms nestles close to his breast, as Simeon exclaims, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word." These words have been sung or chanted in the Christian church for 1,900 years. The early church chanted them in Latin and because the two first words were "Nunc Dimittis" the song is called the Nunc Dimittis. It is not so hard to die when one has seen Christ.

**With Simeon's Eyes.** There is a legend that Simeon was so old he had lost his sight, but surely he had more than mortal vision as he stood in the temple holding the baby Jesus. Let us look through Simeon's eyes and see what he saw. The little Child in his arms was to be the salvation for the world. Ah, Simeon was not seeing as a Jew that day, for they only looked for their own salvation. Here in the Holy Babe was salvation for all people. Simeon knew the thick, almost impenetrable moral and spiritual darkness that enveloped the world, and he saw in Christ the Light of the World. Long after Simeon had "departed in peace" Christ Himself announced, "I am the Light of the World." The Jews were to despise and reject Christ, but Simeon saw in that tiny Babe "The glory of Thy people Israel." Something of the glory which Christ had before the world was, must have been re-

vealed to Simeon. What do we see in the Babe of Bethlehem today? Is Christ our salvation, light and glory?

**An Old Man's Blessing.** While Joseph and His mother marveled at the words that had been uttered, Simeon blessed them. They had entered the temple humiliated by their poverty, but now they were abashed by the greatness of the One they called "Son." With what awe and respect they listened to the old man—how they valued his commendation. Do we show the same respect to the aged and manifest the same desire for their approval? But Simeon knows that, like Paul, those who follow this Babe must glory in the Cross. He sees the bleeding wounds, the pierced side and knows that the sword thrust shall pierce the mother's heart. Highly favored and blessed above women was Mary, but as a mother she should suffer above all mothers. Wonderful things had occurred in the temple that morning. A mother's heart had swelled with joy at the prophecy of her Son's future, but did Mary return to Bethlehem happy?

**Another Witness.** If we read on, we will find that Simeon's was not the only hymn of praise that day, for a woman of eighty-four took up the song of praise and Anna, the prophetess, gave thanks unto the Lord, and pointed all the proud Pharisees who looked for redemption in Jerusalem to the lowly Babe. What a contrast to the infant Saviour were these two saints who had passed the three score and ten years that were the allotted age of man. What a wonderful group, composed chiefly of the poor, the lowly and the aged! Was it not a type of the time foretold by the prophet Isaiah when there should be no more an infant of days, nor an old man of years? Simeon and Anna had renewed their youth in the sight of the Messiah. Their eyes had seen the redemption of Israel; they had looked upon the One who was to be the salvation of a darkened, sin-sick world. Their prophetic vision peered into the centuries to come when the light of the Son of God should illumine the Gentile world; when ignorance should vanish, the darkness of heathenism disappear and all should be under His reign.

**Quiz.** 1. What did the sacrifice and offering for the first born commemorate? 2. What did the offering for Christ signify? 3. What other aged saint recognized Christ as the Messiah in the temple? 4. What do these things teach us in regard to the performance of church duties?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. All children should be given to God and His service early in life. 2. It is not the value of the offering that proves its worth. 3. Poverty must furnish many opportunities for service, or the One who came to serve humanity would never have chosen it. 4. As a rolling stone gathers no moss, so an occasional worshipper gains no great blessing. 5. The eyes that have seen Christ will not grow dim in the shadow of death. 6. Jesus is the light of the world, the source of life, light, hope, joy, peace, immortality. 7. Age has always worshipped at the throne of childhood. 8. Christ made the cradle both a throne and an altar.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

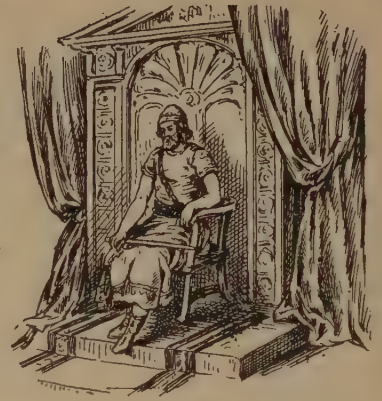


# VISIT OF THE WISE MEN.

Now when Jesus was born in



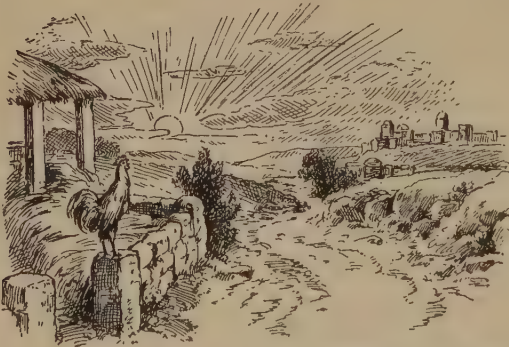
of Judæa  
in the  
days of  
Herod the



behold,  
there came



to Jerusalem,  
Saying, Where is  
he that is born  
King of the Jews?  
for we have seen  
his star in the



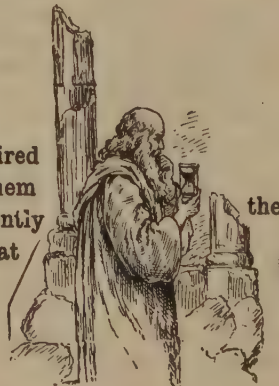
and are  
come to



him. Then Herod, when he had privily called the



enquired  
of them  
diligently  
what



the



appeared.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 2:1-12.

**Prayer:** Lord, be to us the day star of life. May Thy light guide us until like the wise men we shall find the Christ. Make us like them, earnest seekers after Thy Kingdom. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Shine on our gardens and fields,  
Shine on our working and weaving;  
Shine on the whole race of men,  
Believing and unbelieving;  
Shine on us now through the night,  
Shine on us now in Thy might."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the fourth year before the account called Anno Domini. **Place,** Bethlehem. **Persons,** the Wise Men, Herod and the Holy Family.

**Scripture Setting:** The Gospel for the Gentiles. Origin of the Gentiles, Gen. 10:5. Gentiles shall seek Christ, Isa. 11:10. Righteousness shall extend to the Gentiles, Isa. 42:1. Are made the people of God, Hos. 2:23. Gentiles shall acknowledge God, Jer. 16:19. A world wide acceptance of the Gospel, Mal. 1:11. A light of the Gentiles, Acts 13:47. The Holy Ghost given, Acts 10:45.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this lesson are, 1. The appearance of His star in the East. 2. The coming of the wise men to Jerusalem. 3. Herod's fear and duplicity. 4. The confirmation of prophecy concerning Christ's birthplace by the chief priests and scribes. 5. The finding of Christ under the guidance of the star. 6. The adoration and offering of the wise men. 7. Their secret departure.

### THE WISE MEN AND THE STAR.

**The Wise Men.** Rays of sunlight fall athwart the most darkened path and in Christ's life we find the light and darkness strangely commingled. He was born in a stable among dumb brutes, but an angelic host sang at His birth. His mother could not furnish a lamb for His sacrifice, but before she bore her Son from the temple, He had been twice proclaimed the Messiah or "Lamb of God." In every day life does not God outweigh every humiliation with some great blessing? When His own chosen people failed to honor His birth, a welcome came from the heathen world. In ancient times it was believed that the character and conduct of men was determined by the stars, and the learned men who spent their time studying the stars were called Magi or "the wise men," and were highly honored.

**A Star Appears.** During the dispersion of the Jews they had sought refuge among all the principal nations of the earth, and with a greater loyalty than some of us, wherever a Jew goes he clings to his religion and carries the Scriptures with him. Therefore, wherever they went they carried the hope of the Messiah and told it to others; this is why even in the far off East some great deliverer or ruler was expected to appear. In those days, it was a common belief that when a king or great man was born the event was proclaimed by a new star in the sky. Fifteen hundred years before, Balaam, a prophet, had predicted the appearance of a star out of Jacob which should proclaim the coming of a great ruler to the Jews and now such a star had been seen in the East. Ever since its appearance an effort has been made to explain the phenomena, but after all the discussion we only know that a star appeared in the sky, so luminous and so

marvelously bright that the Wise Men called it "His star."

**In Search of the King.** Inspired and guided by the star, those eastern wise men started out on their journey in search of the promised King. We do not know just whence they came, whether Arabia, Persia or Chaldea. Whichever country, it was a long journey. They were earnest seekers who did not send their servants but went in person to pay homage to the new born King. Are we as earnest seekers of Jesus, I wonder? With the very swiftest of Arabian horses,—the swiftest horses in all the world, or perhaps a train of camels,—they cross the desert; we can follow their trail by the odor of costly myrrh and frankincense. Never once do they lose sight of the star which guides them to Jerusalem. On the advent of so great and so long-promised a King they must have expected to find the city in gala array and its inhabitants in joyous celebration of the great Deliverer. Instead no one save an old man and aged woman knew anything about it, and they were so little known outside the temple that the Magi never heard of them. Do you not think less determined seekers after Christ would have been discouraged and have kept their treasures and returned home?

**Herod Troubled.** The Magi's astonishment at the indifference of the people is shown in the question put to Herod, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" Dr. Edersheim tells us that the Jerusalemites were polished, witty and pleasant, living in luxuriously furnished palaces and giving sumptuous entertainments at which the women appeared in costly but immodest dress, and wine was served. The bazaars offered everything from a false tooth; hand

mirrors with golden pincers attached to pull out grey hairs, to a Persian shawl, an Indian dress or silk paid for by its weight in gold. John tells us that "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life is not of the Father," so how should a society so engrossed in these things know the Son? It was perfectly natural that they should have left the welcome of the Saviour to a few shepherds and an old man and woman.

The thought of His coming inspired these worldly people and cruel, ambitious, wicked Herod with a very different feeling from that in the hearts of the Magi. The bare possibility that One might come who would endanger his own rule struck terror to the heart of Herod, so he called all the high priests together. You may be sure he did not tell them of the wise men who had seen the star in the East. He simply asked them where Christ was to be born and they pointed to Bethlehem.

**A Tyrant's Duplicity.** The wicked Herod had put his own sons to death lest they should dispossess him; how his heart must have raged at the bare thought of the possibility of even a pretender to his throne. But Herod stifled his feelings, and professing that he too desired to worship the coming Ruler, urged the wise men to "Go and search diligently for the young child," and report to him when they had found Him. But how useless subterfuge is when the Lord knows our every thought. God knew all the wicked plotting and planning in Herod's cruel, hard heart, and did not let him thwart the Divine purpose by finding the child.

These Magi were real wise men possessing a true dignity, very different from the make-believe dignity of Herod's court, and we may well imagine how thankful they were to get out into the open, and to see the star that never seemed to have shone with greater purity than after a day spent in Herod's court. It was a wonderful star, for it went before them, leading them up the hill country into Bethlehem and then as though it were a living thing, "It came and stood over where the young Child was." Our own Emerson, who was a great philosopher, once said that if you want to succeed, you must "hitch your wagon to a star." If they had kept their eyes fixed on the earth, or if they had lingered in Jerusalem, dallying with its pleasures, the Magi would never have been successful seekers of Christ.

**The First Gentile Worshipers.** The wise men had only a vague idea of the Messiah, but they were sure that the Messiah would come with something

more enduring than earthly splendor or when they entered Bethlehem so eagerly they would have been disappointed when the star stood over the humble home of Mary and Joseph, who had moved from the stable to a peasant house. But that simple home which held a carpenter's bench, the sign of ennobling labor, and where dwelt Mary unadorned by the luxurious equipment of a Jerusalem belle, but with a mind embellished by the highest culture and thought; that home which held the Babe, was more beautiful than any of the luxurious palaces of Jerusalem. Theirs was a wonderful privilege, to enter the first Christian home and to kneel at the family altar which held the living Christ and to be the first Gentile worshippers at that altar! Did they know, we wonder, that the Child's reign should continue until every knee should bow before His throne and every tongue confess His name? Did they see Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles? Did they see a barbarian race in the far off isles of Great Britain christianized; a Christian nation builded on a new continent and the gospel preached in China, India, Africa and the isles of the sea?

**The First Offering.** One cannot be a true worshipper without wanting to give to the adored one. Having found the One whom they sought, they opened their treasures. This is what religion should do for all. The wise men did not hesitate to lay their gifts upon the altar; gold, frankincense and myrrh. The ancient church with its symbolism, saw in the gold the emblem of His royalty. Frankincense and myrrh were two odorous gums obtained from trees that grow in the East, and are even more valuable than gold. In the myrrh was thought to be a significance of His humanity and His burial, while the frankincense was a token of His Divinity. Even though the Magi may not have intended it to be so, certainly the first offering to Christ signified all this. We give because He is our King, because of the example of His life, in memory of His sacred death, and as unto God.

**Unto Their Own Country.** This is all we know of the wise men. Much has been conjectured and many beautiful legends have grown about the story. Probably the most beautiful is Dr. Henry Van Dyke's story of "The Other Wise Man," who set out to go with the others, but was so delayed and impoverished ministering to the sufferings and wants of the needy that he never found Jesus till the day of the crucifixion, and starting to Golgotha with the pearl of great price as a ransom for the Saviour, he gave the pearl, his last and only treasure, to buy the freedom of a poor girl who had been sold to a wicked master, and with the pearl his only hope of serving Jesus. But Dr. Van Dyke tells us so beautifully that "his journey was ended, his treasures were accepted," for there came the words so sweetly spoken, "Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of my brethren, thou hast done it unto Me." We rejoice in the story of the wise men, for their journey, adoration and offering blazed the way for us who are also of a Gentile race, and ever since their time the world's wisest men, astronomers, scientists, statesmen and philosophers have worshipped the One whose star was seen in the East.

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. There are patches of blue in every sky. 2. "Seek Me and ye shall find Me." 3. The things of this world crowd out Heaven. 4. Herod might hoodwink the wise men, but he could not deceive God. 5. The "star gazers" are the world's greatest achievers. 6. True greatness is oftenest found in humble surroundings.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And when they were departed, behold, the



in a dream,  
saying,



and



and flee  
into



and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When



he



and



into Egypt.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 2:13-18.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee that in times of danger, perplexity and doubt, Thou art near to warn, direct and help. Keep us from all evil. Help us to hear and recognize Thy warning voice and obey Thy commands, assured that our peace and safety is to be found only in Thee. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne,  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the fourth year before the account called Anno Domini. **Persons,** the Christ Child, Mary and Joseph. **Places,** from Bethlehem into Egypt.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Protecting Power over His children. Jacob protected, Gen. 28:15, 31:3, 35:1. Care over Joseph, Gen. 45:4-8. Moses saved, Heb. 11:23. The shepherd boy protected, 1 Sam. 17:37. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego unharmed

by the fiery furnace, Dan. 3:17, 25, 27. Paul unharmed by viper, Acts 28:3-6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The main features of the story are, 1. The warning from God in time of danger. 2. The command to go into Egypt. 3. The implicit obedience to the command. 4. The flight. 5. The fulfillment of prophecy. 6. Herod's wicked decree.

### THE BABY JESUS IN DANGER.

**The Angel's Warning.** We have seen how God used Augustus Cæsar, the Imperial Emperor of Rome, to fulfill the words uttered by a prophet four hundred years before, that Christ should be born in Bethlehem. Seven hundred and fifty years before the coming of our Saviour, through Hosea God had said, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son," and Herod, wicked as he was, was made to serve God's plan. It is one of the instances when He uses the wrath of man to praise Him. Herod was determined not to be outwitted by the eastern Magi even if it cost the lives of all the children of Bethlehem. But the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, telling him what Herod had planned and warned him to flee into Egypt and remain in that country until God should tell him to return.

**God's Providence and Provision.** We have seen the poverty of that home. Surely even a journey to Egypt would have been out of the question had it not been for the providence God so often manifests to those who trust in Him. He tells us "Before you call I will hear and answer," and here is an instance. God had anticipated their need and sent the wise men with their offering; the gifts of the Magi provided the means for the journey into Egypt. We may be sure that what we give to God will be made to serve a purpose which will multiply our offering a hundred fold. Are you not glad that it was Gentile gold which made it possible for the Baby Jesus to escape the wicked Herod? Some men labor all their lives, neglect God and violate their religion in order to provide a fortune for their children and that their sons may have millions to squander, but God provided for His only Son in a very different way. In after years,

Jesus could say, "Ask and ye shall receive," because He had tested the Father and knew.

**Illustration.** Some years ago, one of the missionaries sent out by Bishop Taylor was suddenly attacked by the terrible African sickness and died within a day, after commending his wife and little boy, who would be left all alone among savages, to God's care. The natives attributed the good missionary's sickness to the devil and fled, leaving the poor wife alone to care for and bury her dead. She must even make the coffin. It all seemed so hard, that before she began the sorrowful task she fell on her knees and prayed to God. While she was still praying Bishop Taylor entered. The Bishop had been far away and was not even expected to visit that section of the country for three months; but when at prayer one day he had heard a voice which told him to go at once to this missionary's wife. When they counted the days they found that message came ten days before the missionary was even ill—it took just ten days for the journey. The Bishop did not know why he had been sent to the wife instead of the missionary, until he found the husband dead. God foresees and provides for the needs of all who love Him and trust Him, just as He did for His dear Son.

**Thy Will, Not Mine.** How perfect was Mary's submission to God's will! "Be it unto me according to Thy word," was the spirit of the Mother of Christ. May not the mother's habit of submission have made it easier for her Son to pray in the agony of the garden, "Not my will but Thine be done"? She who had replied to the angel's announcement, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord," had journeyed the length of Palestine to come to Bethlehem without a murmur. There was no dissatisfaction when her quarters were a stable, nor complaint when forced to make the offering of poverty at the birth of her first born. So now she leaves the little home they had founded in Bethlehem to meet an uncertain future. What wonderful things God can accomplish through the soul that says





## THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

BY PLOCKHORST

When it was told to Herod, ruler of the Jews, that a child was born, called Jesus, whom the prophets had foretold as "The King of the Jews," the ruler was very jealous and sought to do away with the Infant. Not being able to find Joseph and Mary the mother of this wonderful Child, he ordered that all babes in Bethlehem and round about be slaughtered. But God had warned Joseph, that he should leave that country and flee to Egypt, and remain there the rest of Herod's lifetime. So the Holy Child and His parents departed.

Our picture, by the celebrated German artist, Plockhorst, represents the Madonna and Jesus mounted on a donkey, as the method of travel was in those days, while Joseph follows on foot. The artist who made the picture was celebrated for the beauty of his figures. We see here highly idealized faces, as became such persons. The Lord sent an angel to guide them on the way. Quite properly this messenger is represented as an intelligent child, with angel wings, who looks up at the Virgin Mary seriously, while other angels float in the air about. Joseph is represented in the ordinary costume of the time, carrying a pilgrim staff and with a little traveling sack hung from his neck. Fastened to the saddle is a bag, perhaps filled with provisions. The landscape is exceedingly simple, not very specific, but the palm trees suggest a tropical country.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT

## BERNARD PLOCKHORST. 1825.

Born in Brunswick, Germany, in 1825, Bernard Plockhorst, like many lads with the spark of graphic genius in them, became attracted to the reproductive branch of the graphic arts, and for want of anything better at hand, was by his parents apprenticed to a lithographer. This may have seemed to them to offer a fit field for employment and remuneration. It quickly proved itself, however, all too small for the growing genius.

On such rare holidays as were his, the young man was wont to stroll abroad in the rural ways near Leipsic, book and pencil in hand, intent upon the surrounding beauty of the placid country side, and the character of its men and women who might be met in the way. Upon a day he encountered another, occupied as was himself. The stranger, little older than Bernard, drew with a grace and freedom that to Plockhorst, used to the niggling exactitude of the lithographer, was miraculous. Here was the greatness of sight, the ease and masterliness which in his very soul he had longed for.

As young men do, they became acquainted. The new friend was moved to admiration no less candid than that of Plockhorst for his own, for certain qualities, undeniably great, in Bernard's work, and urged that he should go to school and paint from life—that he should get to work in earnest. Piloty himself (that was the new friend's name) was going to Munich, where were schools and a gallery. There a man might do something. He might even attain a scholarship—perchance, if he were very great, a professorship that should give him opportunity for the expression of the greatness that was in him.

It was enough. When Piloty went to Munich, Bernard packed his modest traps and his sketches and followed him. Together they worked at the great school in Munich, and so counselled was Plockhorst by his mentor—so, constantly did they work together, so utterly did Plockhorst defer to

the senior knowledge of Piloty, exerted in all disinterestedness, in faithful loyal friendship, that Piloty has many times since been complimented by being referred to as Plockhorst's instructor. Piloty was something better than that—he was his pace maker.

From Munich Plockhorst went to Paris, where he at once attracted the notice of Couture.

After three years in Paris, Plockhorst went to England, and from there as a point of departure commenced the wanderyear.

Through Belgium, Holland and Italy travelled the painter, with knapsack, brushes and portfolio, looking always, sketching continually, memorizing more, as every painter who is worth his canvas does. At last Plockhorst came to Berlin, and at once attained an established and popular place as a portrait painter. In no long time, however, the innately religious aspiration of the man realized itself in a great canvas, painted in 1866, of "Mary and John Returning from the Tomb of Jesus." This determined him upon his future career as a painter of Biblical themes. "Christ's Farewell to His Mother," and the "Walk to Emmaus," are probably the best known of his works in America. Both these works are owned in St. Louis.

Others of his works of equal note abroad are "The Contest of Archangel Michael with Satan for the Body of Moses" (1861-66) in the Cologne Museum, "Mary and John Returning from Christ's Tomb" in the Lowenstein Gallery at Moscow, "Christ and the Adulteress," "Mater Dolorosa," both in the Leipzig Museum, and "Resurrection" in the Cathedral at Marienwerder. Among his more recent works may be mentioned "Christ's Entry Into Jerusalem," "Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me," "The Flight Into Egypt," "The Good Samaritan," "Christ and St. Peter," and "Abide With Us." Of several meritorious portraits, those of Emperor William I and Empress Augusta (1876) are in the National Gallery, Berlin.

JAMES BEALINGS.



I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,  
I'll be what you want me to be.

**Fleeing by Night.** Night has its terrors and phantasms and even to those who are superior to superstition it is depressing to start on a journey by night. Yet how often God's people have been compelled to flee by night. How many times Jacob was alone and a wanderer by night! It was in the night that Pharaoh ordered the Israelites from Egypt. David was let down from a window in the night to escape from Saul; Daniel spent the night in the lion's den and now Mary must take the child Jesus and flee in the night. But in every instance God was with these wanderers of the night and protected them. Perhaps He wants to show His children that night has no terrors and to teach them that to those who trust God there is no night. Mary would have been foolish to have been afraid of the night which is peopled with His guardian angels and illumined by the Father's loving care.

**Egypt.** The Jews of Christ's time were almost as great globe trotters as the Americans of today. They were found in every country and just as Paris, London, Berlin and other European cities have a United States colony to which Americans abroad congregate, so there were Jewish colonies in Rome, Antioch, Alexandria and many other cities. In Alexandria the Jews had their own synagogues, one of which was a magnificent edifice, almost equalling the temple in Jerusalem. Matthew tells us nothing of the sojourn of the Holy Family in Egypt, but we know that Christ would have received as scant welcome from the Jewish residents in Alexandria as from those in Jerusalem. The world was never so worldly, so engrossed in pleasure, so money mad, so deep in sin as when Christ came. His Star shone from out the darkest sky and upon the blackest night the world has ever known. There was nowhere that God's beloved only Son could find a welcome. So we can only conjecture that the short time spent in Egypt was passed very quietly with the mother as His only worshipper and how little even she realized of the Divinity of her Son!

**Herod's Wrath.** When the wise men failed to return to his court or to report the discovery of the new-born ruler, Herod felt that he had been mocked and Matthew tells us he was "exceeding wroth," and Herod's

wrath was something to be greatly feared. Why, his insane fear of a rival claimant to the throne alone had caused ten thousand to be slain during the thirty-seven years of his reign. And now the reckless tyrant ordered the slaughter of all the children in Bethlehem and its neighborhood of two years of age and under. We must remember that Bethlehem was a small village and therefore instead of the wholesale slaughter we have been led to imagine by ancient pictures which portrayed the massacre, not more than twenty children could have been included under the order; a number so small in the murderous career of a monarch who had caused one thousand persons to be slain by one decree, that the historians of the times seem not to have thought the terrible deed worthy of mention. How much better to live under a Christian government, and yet the mothers of the United States will never have security for their offspring until our nation has dethroned the wicked Herod of the saloon, which is slaying so many mothers' boys and girls.

**The First Martyrs.** Rachel, Jacob's beloved wife, had died near Bethlehem and 600 years before Jeremiah must have foreseen this cruel slaughter of the innocents as he looked upon the tomb of Rachel, which is at the village gates, and under the image of Rachel weeping for her children, drew the mournful picture of the bitter wailing of the mothers of Bethlehem over their murdered babes. We are apt to think of Stephen as the first martyr of the Christian era, but these slaughtered, innocent babes have been rightly called the first martyrs upon whom Satan wreaked his vengeance, because of the appearance of the star whose brightness and light was to increase until its protecting beams should cover every child throughout the world.

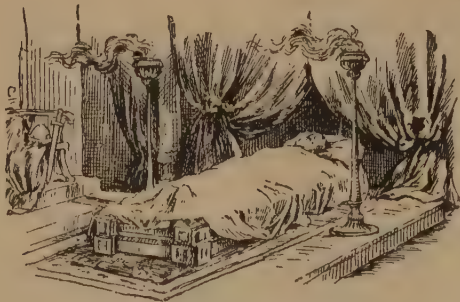
**Quiz.** 1. What young lad was sold into Egypt? 2. What resemblance did he bear to Christ? 3. For what was Herod noted? 4. What painters have portrayed the slaughter of the innocents? 5. How did God provide means for the journey into Egypt? 6. Has God ever provided for you in time of need? 7. Do you trust Him and are you trying to obey Him as Mary did?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Dreams are sometimes realities. 2. He who is in readiness may entertain angels. 3. God is the greatest of all bankers, ready to supply every need according to His riches. 4. To the trustful Christian, the night is as the day. 5. God's word will always be fulfilled; even the wicked help to bring it to pass. 6. The Herods slay little children; Christ takes them in His arms and blesses them.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

## RETURN TO NAZARETH.

But when Herod



behold,



appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying,



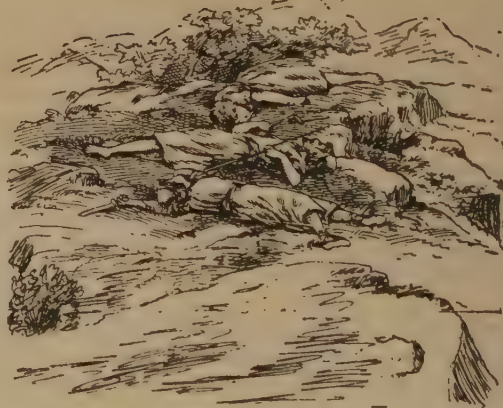
and



and go into the



for they are



which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the



and came into  
the land  
of Israel.  
And he came  
and dwelt in a



called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 2:19-23.

**Prayer:** Lord, Help us to so study the life of our Saviour that we may be brought nearer to Him than ever before. Give us such a knowledge of our Lord that we may follow in His footsteps. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"O who like Thee, so mild, so bright,  
Thou Son of man, thou Light of light?  
O who like Thee did ever go  
So patient, through a world of woe?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the third year before the account called Anno Domini. Places, from Egypt to Galilee. Persons, the angel of the Lord, Joseph, Mary and Jesus.

**Scripture Setting:** Warned of God. Noah's warning, Heb. 11:7. Angels warn Lot, Gen. 19:15-17. God appears to Moses in Midian, Ex. 4:19-20. The angel of the Lord appears unto Balaam, Num. 22:31.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The main features of the lesson are: 1. The death of Herod. 2. The recall to Palestine. 3. The assurance of safety. 4. The return from Egypt. 5. Joseph's doubts greater than his faith. 6. The turning aside into Galilee. 7. The choice of Nazareth as an abode. Prophecy again fulfilled.

### CALLED A NAZARENE.

**The Recall.** Herod was dead and buried amid barbaric splendor in the castle of Herod near Bethlehem, the scene of the massacre that has made his name eternally infamous. The day of his death had been made a feast day on which all mourning was forbidden.

Again the angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, this time with the welcome summons to return to his own country, and Joseph, obedient always to the Heavenly vision, prepares to move his precious charges back to the land of Israel. In order to further His glorious cause or to fulfill His will, God may separate His servants from friends, kindred, home and native land, but we may be sure His angel guards all such on their journey and that He is so gracious and kind that when His plans have been worked out, He will recall them just as He did Joseph and Mary.

**Assurance of Safety.** No need for Joseph to fear or to seek the cover of night, "For they are dead which sought the young child's life." The words were more portentous than Joseph realized and should be a source of comfort to every Christian today. For more than one Herod has sought to kill Jesus. Satan knew that the coming of Christ into the world and His reign was the death knell of Satan's power, and

"Wherever is told

The sweet story of the Babe of old"

the devil has his emissaries who seek to take the life of the young Child. Sometimes it is a so-called historian who tries to disprove the Bible story, again it is a great infidel, like Voltaire, Paine or Ingersoll, who boasts the overthrow of the Christ and His religion, but the Herods of each generation who seek to destroy the Precious Life, die and are no more, while the Babe of Bethlehem lives with an ever-increasing number of worshippers and adherents. We need not fear for that sacred Life.

**Back to Judea.** Now was the prophecy fulfilled "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." The journey of the Holy Family was probably without incident, since Matthew does not dwell upon it, and probably only gives the account to show how Hosea's prophecy was fulfilled.

But we can easily imagine how joyously Mary and Joseph set out on the journey which was to bring them back to their own country. We may even picture the group. There was no ostentation or pomp to be-token royalty; no sign that the simple ass on which the mother and child were mounted, was carrying the long-expected King, the promised Messiah. The travelers formed a humble cortege, but with what tender, reverential solicitude Mary shielded the young child and what rapture stirred the mother's heart as she remembered the angel's announcement and Elizabeth's prophetic greeting. Often her voice burst out in a song of thanksgiving that she should be so highly favored among women. What mattered poverty and exile, and separation from kindred and friends, when God had chosen her and given her charge of His Son. With gladness and patience Joseph walked by the mother's side and guided the faithful ass as they journeyed under the Eastern stars. How very close God must have seemed to them as they talked of the wonderful things which had happened to them. Many questions each asked of the other, for they only vaguely understood the import of the angel's visit and of all that had occurred. The full realization of many things the mother was to learn long afterward as she stood with pierced heart under the shadow of the cross which bore her Son. Not until He had proved Himself Conqueror of death and Victor of the grave would she fully know the Divine power and authority of the Child whom she sheltered

and shielded on their homeward journey. Ah, it was beautiful to climb the gray Judean hills, to look down into the great valleys and to linger in the peaceful villages of the land they loved, but neither Joseph nor Mary realized all that journey was to mean to the world.

Herod the Great had as hard a time as most rich men in disposing of his property and made a number of wills, in each naming a different heir, several of whom he afterward killed. Herod left two claimants to the throne. The matter was carried before the emperor in Rome, who decided in favor of Archelaus, greatly to the disappointment of the people, for Archelaus is said to have surpassed his father 'in cruelty, oppression, luxury, the grossest egotism and lowest sensuality,' without possessing either the talent or energy of Herod. In some way news of Archelaus' accession reached Joseph, to whom it was very bad news indeed.

Joseph trembled for the safety of his sacred charge; and instead of settling in Bethlehem, he changed his plans and turned aside by the coast road to Galilee and returned to the city of Nazareth, which had been the former home of himself and Mary.

It is said that the little son of one of our presidents, on his arrival at the White House, once wrote to his chum, "Father and I have a big undertaking on our hands in the government of this country." I think Joseph exaggerated his responsibility for the safety of the child in much the same way. The Father who had sent His Son to this world had given assurance of His safety, and that should have been enough for Joseph. How little need we should have for worry or fear or anxiety or care if we only trusted Him more!

**Galilee.** At this point of our story it will not be inappropriate to take a survey of Galilee, which is to be the home of Jesus for nearly thirty years. Though the Jerusalemites were wont to speak of Galilee and the Galileans with the greatest contempt, affecting an abhorrence even of their vernacular, and though they regarded these unlettered country people with great disdain, the Galilee of Joseph and Mary's time was a fertile and thickly settled country with many populous villages and towns; the center of many industries and having a goodly share of the world's commerce. It was a beautiful country, including mountain and plain, even including a far-off view of snow-capped Mount Hermon which rises to the height of eight thousand five hundred feet. While not on the sea coast, from its hills may be seen the silver sheen of the Mediterranean with white sails in the far distance and

busy ports along the coast line. In the southern part of Galilee the eye may take in terraced gardens, palms, orange groves, wide spreading fig and silvery olive trees, bounded by the hills of the south. Such is the country Joseph chose for his home.

**A City Called Nazareth.** The Nazareth of today is said to be very like the Nazareth to which Joseph brought Mary and her Child and which they made their home; only there are no longer the great caravans which in those days formed a part of the commerce of the world; nor is Nazareth any longer a priest center as it was in Christ's time, when many priests lived in Nazareth going up to Jerusalem to perform their priestly duties. The little city lies on the hillside, 1,100 feet above the sea. It was a secluded spot for the upbringing of a destined ruler. We shall learn through His parables how instead of complaining of the narrowness of His environment and of the lack of opportunity for culture, the boy Jesus studied every phase of the village and farm life about it and used it afterward in declaring truths immortal.

**Prophecy Fulfilled.** The Jews had eight names by which the Messiah was to be called, the most prominent of these being the Branch. Isaiah, Jeremiah and Zechariah had all called Him by that name, Zechariah saying, "Behold the man whose name is the Branch," and strangely enough this is the meaning of the words translated "He shall be called a Nazarene." The timidity which made Joseph's fear to return to Bethlehem where Christ would have been a part of Jerusalem life and led him to bring the Child to Nazareth, where he lived as a transplanted Branch, wrought the fulfillment of prophecy.

**Quiz.** 1. What caused the return of the Holy Family to Palestine? 2. What caused Joseph to change his plans? 3. What prophecies were fulfilled through Christ's flight to Egypt and return? 4. What child in the Bible was hidden by his parents lest he should be destroyed by an Egyptian ruler?

**Seed Truths.** 1. The enemies of truth die, but truth lives on. 2. The effort to destroy belief in the Son of God is fraught with danger to the one who makes the attempt. 3. Faith is greater than obedience. 4. Few even of God's saints have been willing to abide wholly by His warnings. 5. There is no greater, today, than Jesus of Nazareth; every undeserved reproach may be made a title of honor.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE BOY JESUS.

Now his



went to



every year at the



And when he was



they



after the custom  
of the feast.

And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the



tarried  
behind  
in Jeru-  
salem;  
and



and his



knew not of it.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 2:40-52.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Help us like our great Example ever to be about Thy business. May we love Thy house and Thy word and honor Thee in the common, everyday duties of life. Make us strong in body, mind and spirit for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"I'm glad my blessed Saviour  
Was once a child like me,  
To show how pure and holy  
His little ones may be."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 8. Places, Nazareth, and the temple at Jerusalem. Persons, the boy Jesus, Mary, Joseph and the priests.

**Scripture Setting:** Duties of Youth. Youth should honor age, Lev. 19:32. Submission to elders commended, 1 Peter 5:5. Discipline helpful in youth, Lam. 3:27. Duty to parents, Ex. 20:12. Duty to God, Eccles. 12:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Through our lesson Luke tells of, 1. The first passover of Jesus. 2. The first appearance of Christ in the temple. 3. His marvelous understanding of the law. 4. Jesus' first announcement of His Father. 5. His obedience and patient waiting for the time of His ministry. 6. The physical and spiritual growth of Jesus.

### THE IDEAL YOUTH.

**Natural Growth.** Doubtless when told to be like Christ, thousands of boys and girls have thought at once of the Christ who made the lame to walk and who even raised the dead to life, and they have wondered how they were ever to be like such a supernatural person, when the truth is that from infancy to manhood Christ was just like other boys only without sin. For thirty years of His life He lived just as any man or woman may live today; for the first twelve years of His life He lived just as any boy or girl may live. Does it not make our bodies seem very sacred when we remember that Christ lived in a body just like ours, grew tall by the same natural laws and increased in weight by the same natural process as you and I?

**Not a Weakling.** Because He was good we must not think of Jesus as a weakling. His wonderful endurance during the years of His ministry prove that He must have been a muscular lad; a good pedestrian, lithe and agile; a boy who went through the world with eyes wide open. He knew where the foxes had their holes, the birds their nests and where the earliest wild flowers bloomed. He was a keen observer of men. The temptations common to boyhood were not absent from Galilee and if He had not been strong in spirit to resist the temptations of childhood, He would not have been strong to resist the tempter on the Mount.

**A Poor Boy.** Joseph, His reputed father, was a working man, or as some snobbish people would say, "a common mechanic," providing a poor home, plain clothing and simple fare for the family. Now, this did not have to be so. God, His Father, owned the world and it would have been easy for Christ to be rich. May we not think that He chose to be a poor boy so we may not look down on people who are poor, and if

we are poor we need not consider ourselves so very unfortunate? Indeed, He knew that in almost every instance poverty is safer than riches for boy and girl.

While God desired a very plain earthly home for His Son, it must be a pious home. It was a home of prayer; the Holy Scriptures were known from Genesis to Malachi, and the husband and wife were conscientious in the observance of their religious duties even to going every year to Jerusalem to the feast of the passover.

**The First Passover.** No World's Fair ever held has been frequented by such numbers as came to Jerusalem to the feast of the passover. They came from Syria, Chaldea, Egypt, Rome, Antioch and every place, to the number of 2,700,000 persons. The festival was kept in memory of the deliverance from Egypt and lasted seven days; every male Jew came to this convocation. While women were not required to come, many did and it was natural that one, of Mary's religious nature, should accompany her husband. In those days a boy of fourteen was of age, so that at twelve we find Jesus going to the feast with Mary and Joseph. It was His first passover and how sacred the occasion must have seemed to a boy like Jesus. Some children dislike to attend church with their parents, but Jesus went gladly.

**The Lost Boy.** Joseph and Mary were a day's journey on their way home when a discovery was made that must have struck terror to the mother's heart. Jesus was not with the company of returning Nazarene pilgrims! We all know how easy it is to be lost in a great crowd and as their party was large, His absence was not noted till the close of the day. Some careless parents never know where their children are, but as soon as Mary missed her child they began a search for Him. Alas, for the boys who



Figure 1. The effect of the concentration of the solution on the rate of the reaction.

The rate of the reaction was measured by the change in the concentration of the reactants.

Table 1

## CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS

BY HOFMANN

When Jesus was twelve years old, His parents took Him with them to Jerusalem, where it was the habit of many Jews to gather for the celebration of the feast of the passover.

When the days of the feast were fulfilled they returned to their own country. At the end of the first day's journey Jesus had not yet joined His parents, but had tarried at Jerusalem. He was found in the temple, among the learned doctors, listening to them and asking questions. Much the doctors wondered at His knowledge and wisdom. When asked why He had given them so much trouble, He replied to His parents: “\* \* \* wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?”

The picture of this notable scene by Hofmann, the German artist, is everywhere considered very beautiful. The artist is a realist and all the characters are actual men, Jews, such as may be found in any land; men of evident intelligence and education. The Christ Child is a real boy, somewhat idealized, with a sweet, earnest face, but not a fanciful figure. On the left a well dressed, black-bearded man rests his chin on his hand and thinks very hard. He is evidently impressed with the Child's knowledge. The scroll in his right hand suggests consultations of the old writings. Under his left elbow is a bound book, and a similar book is on the knees of the older man at the right corner. Not imagining that any such book existed in Christ's time, we may simply consider it an effort to make the scene realistic, as if we ourselves were in the party. Such realism appeals to mankind, and it is entirely correct from the artistic point of view.

A bald-headed man is now forcing home a pertinent question, which the Child answers with confidence. A very old, bearded man looks on, rather amused at the Infant's precocity. The young Christ is the embodiment of what the Germans call “A Wonder-child.” There is a feeling of luxuriousness in the clothing and attitudes of the doctors as if they were well cared for men of wealth. -

-JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS  
J. HUBER. 1850. OIL. 100 x 150 cm.





are lost through disobedience and sin, never to be restored to the mother who goes heart-broken to the grave.

**The Search Successful.** Luke tells us that "On the third day they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions" so intelligently as to astonish those who heard Him. The title of rabbi was very like the title Doctor of Divinity, so these doctors were learned priests, who delivered free lectures in the various rooms of the temple. They were largely attended by the youth of the day who were anxious for an education. A number of the rabbis sat in their "classroom" on a semi-circular divan or couch, while the students sat cross-legged on the ground before them.

It is not strange that the rabbis should be surprised at the Boy of twelve who could give a new meaning to the Scriptures, and life and beauty to the law, but we wonder that Mary and Joseph were amazed. It shows how hard it is for even the best of God's people to comprehend all the wonders of the Gospel. Mary's complaint of their anxious search sounds almost like a rebuke.

**In His Father's House.** There is a story of a princess who was stolen and became a goose girl. She grew to womanhood before she ever again entered the royal palace which had been her childhood home, and then what vague stirrings of memory were awakened by the things that had once been so familiar, though she knew them not. We may imagine that it must have seemed the same to Christ. The Son of God was in His Father's house, and though it was not the Father's pleasure to reveal Himself wholly to the Son till He should enter on His ministry, God's great love must have manifested itself to the Son, who for the first time makes public announcement of His Father. Jesus reminds Mary who His Father really is, as with reproachful tenderness He asks His mother, "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"

**His Father's Business.** There was a world of longing in that question. The first sight of the great throngs so thoughtless and worldly, even though attending a religious observance, showed Him how greatly the world needed a Saviour. Doubtless there were money changers in the temple, and though He might not yet drive them out, how it must have troubled Him to see His Father's house made a den of thieves. How the great heart, pulsating and throbbing for the sorrows of humanity, yearned to spend

itself and be spent in His Father's business. Every eager youth who has longed for a part in the great battle of life and has been eager to do things can sympathize with Jesus in the stir of feeling. How truly He took upon Himself the nature of man even to its longings and aspirations!

**His Father's Will.** How many boys and girls longing to do great things are as patient and submissive as Jesus? It is doubtful if the Nazareth of His time had a school even like those primitive schools of Jerusalem and the larger cities of Palestine; but whether He ever went to school or not Jesus had learned the most valuable lesson in all the world, to bide God's time. It is hard for the girl who longs for a college course to content herself with plain, humdrum home duties instead. How dissatisfied is the boy who longs for a public career and must work on the farm or in the shop. But suppose one had lived in a mansion and had been a King with angels to do his bidding, would it not be still harder to relinquish all these for such a life as Jesus led; to "go down" to Nazareth and be subject to the godly but simple carpenter and to Mary who pondered so much and understood so little? Surely if we bring our yearnings and strivings, our longings and ambitions, our hopes and disappointments to Him, Christ will help us to find joy instead of discontent in the Father's will.

**A General Favorite.** With this little glimpse of Jesus' life in Nazareth we may well believe Luke's statement that "Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man." What a sense of values Jesus had. He did not put athletics ahead of knowledge in His preparation for life. He put first things first and sought the approval of God rather than the approval of men.

**Quiz.** 1. In what way was Christ different from other children? 2. What do you know about the feast of the Passover? 3. What notable announcement did Jesus make in His reply to Mary? 4. What traits of character made Christ a favorite with all?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The boy who is not strong enough to say "No," will never make a strong man. 2. Jesus chose poverty. 3. God and the angels were guests at the home despised by the elite of Jerusalem? 4. Mary could trust her boy. 5. Fortunate is that mother whose son is found in God's house. 6. It is easy to lose Jesus in the bustle of the world and to find him in the temple.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# PREACHING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST



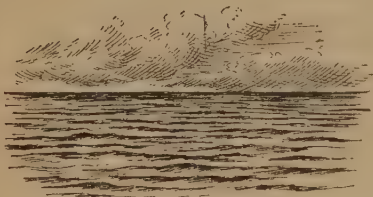
And as the

were in  
expectation,  
and all men  
mused in  
their  
hearts of



whether he  
were the

Christ, or not; John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with



but one  
mightier  
than I  
cometh, the



of whose — I am not  
worthy to



he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with



Whose



is in his



and he will thoroughly purge his



and will  
gather the



into his garner; but the



with fire unquenchable.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 3:7-18, MATT. 3:1-12, MARK 1:2-8, JOHN 1:19-28.

**Prayer:** Lord, fill us with sorrow for our sins, help us to turn from them and find repentance and remission of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ. For His name's sake. Amen.

Rites cannot change the heart,  
Undo the evil done,  
Or with the uttered name impart  
The nature of Thy Son.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 26. Place, Bethabara beyond Jordan. Persons, John and a multitude of hearers.

**Scripture Setting: Repentance.** True repentance, Isa. 1:16-17. Repentance leads to God, 2 Chron. 15:4. A condition of salvation, Ezek. 33:15. Sinners called to repentance, Luke 5:32. Repentance and remission of sins, Luke 24:47. Jesus preaches

repentance, Matt. 4:17. Repentance proved by works, Acts 26:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The main points of John's preaching are: 1. Prepare the way of the Lord. 2. Repentance must be proved by reformation. 3. The uselessness of spiritual pride. 4. True repentance is to cease from evil and do good. 5. The announcement of Christ's coming. 6. The two baptisms.

### THE VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS.

**Out From the Wilderness.** Even if you have attended camp meeting or assembly you can hardly imagine the motley multitude that flocked to hear John the Baptist when he emerged from the wilderness, a gaunt figure, clad in strange attire, with features worn by fasting, but bearing the stamp of close communion with God. They came in growing numbers, soldiers in the uniform of Rome, rabbis in priestly garb, Pharisees and Sadducees, lawyers and scribes, the poor and the wealthy. Was it a proof of the perverseness of audiences that this stern, blunt exhorter should have suddenly become a popular preacher, or was it his message, "Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand" and his call, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," that drew the people from all the land of Judea? The Apostle John gives the secret of the wonderful power of this preacher; he was "a man sent from God." If God sends the messenger, He will provide the hearers for the message.

**A Deserved Rebuke.** Can you imagine a minister beginning his sermon by addressing his audience as a "generation of vipers" as this preacher did that day by the Jordan? The mode of address does not seem strange when Matthew tells us that many of his audience that morning were the wicked Pharisees and Sadducees who made the greatest pretense to righteousness while harsh, overbearing, unjust and censorious in their lives. They belonged to the same class whom the tenderest and most loving Preacher, afterward called "whited sepulchres." They didn't come to John as the others did, for repentance and confession of their sins, but with the intention of weakening his influence with the people by their criticism. How careful one should be as to

the motive of worship, and not to stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of the scornful, when God's Spirit is abroad among the people.

**John Demands Proof.** These Pharisees and Sadducees whose life had been nothing but a form all their lives would have gone through the new form of baptism which John had introduced, but John demands proof of their repentance, and his declaration, "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance" is like a knife cutting apart pretense from reality. "I am sorry for my disobedience," said a frequent trespasser to his teacher. "Then be sorrier and cease to transgress," said Dr. McCosh.

Now these Pharisees and Sadducees thought repentance was only for the Gentiles. They expected Abraham's righteousness to save them just as some husbands hold their religion in their wives' names, and some men and women trust to a godly father and a praying mother for their salvation; while others trust to confirmation or church membership. John tells them "God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." We wonder if he knew the prophecy contained in his words. Very shortly the Gentiles, whom the Jews regarded as of as little account as the ground they walked on, became the children of God.

**A Call to Repentance.** John issued a call to repentance under the figure of the axe laid to the unfruitful trees; the trees were the impenitent persons and the axe was the Judgment day. We find the multitude of hearers anxiously asking, "What shall we do then?" There is wonderful power in earnest preaching. It is said that when the great preacher, Jonathan Edwards, warned sinners to flee from the wrath of God, strong men fell to the floor and many held to the pillars of the church for support. An anxious desire to know what to do to be saved is indeed a sign of repentance.

**A Common Sense Religion.** Though wilderness bred, John was neither a mystic nor a dreamer. He despised cant and upheld common sense. When the soldiers, publicans and selfish asked, "Master, what shall we do?" he spun no sophistries. To the soldiers, who were employed in police as well as military duty, he did not even say "Lay down your arms." Now, the three chief evils of their profession were abuse of power, blackmail and the demand for booty; so to them John's command was "Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely and be content with your wages." The publicans were tax gatherers; their covetousness and dishonesty were proverbial. John places an embargo on their special sin by saying to them, "Exact no more than is required of you." To the luxurious and selfish he commanded a division of their abundance with their poorer neighbors. What could be plainer or more to the point than advice which is as appropriate today as when it was given nearly 2,000 years ago.

**Art Thou the Christ.** Who could this strange preacher of righteousness be? There had been none so brave to rebuke royalty since Elijah had stood before Ahab. The great Elijah had appeared in the mountain wilderness of Gilead as suddenly as John had come out from the wilderness, and he had rebuked Israel and its kings as sternly and roughly. God had said His prophet was to come in the spirit of Elijah which the Jews thought meant that Elijah was to reappear on earth. It was natural that those who held this belief thought John was actually Elijah reincarnated. Others were ready to accept him as the long promised Messiah.

**An Answer That Required Courage.** Many times men have yielded to the temptation of impersonating another. History records many pretenders to thrones. Was it a temptation to John, I wonder? He did not need to declare himself. The world is so credulous that he had but to maintain a discreet silence, take on an air of mystery and the fervid imagination of his hearers would do the rest; while on the other hand, if they learn that he is just an ordinary man, his only reward for his honesty may be the desertion of his audiences, since people turn as quickly as weathercocks. It is a characteristic of the man that he not only disavows either of the miraculous personalities ascribed to him, but he even mini-

mizes his own importance. He, whose coming was foretold by two ancient prophets, and whose birth was prophesied by an angel, the man sent from God, reveals none of these supernatural incidents, but declares himself to be only a "voice in the wilderness!" Surely one test of John's greatness was his modesty and humility.

**The Humble Lover.** John the ascetic is a lover. He loves the Messiah whose coming he is to foretell. It had been his joy before birth; he had dreamed of his Lord's coming during the solitary years in the wilderness and he is as eager as Solomon to tell of the excellence of his Beloved. In Oriental countries a slave always unlooses the latches or fastenings of the sandals or shoes of his master upon his arrival and John is so humble he feels himself unworthy to perform even this menial service for the One he proclaims. We all so enjoy praise that it is easier to accept more than one's share, and it requires a truly generous person to confess one's own inefficiency and ascribe greater ability to another as John does, but a knowledge of the Lord makes us humble and like the One we love, who is meek and lowly.

**The Two Baptisms.** Jealousy had no place in John's soul. He was glad to preach the gospel of repentance, to prepare the way for his Lord and to baptize with water. It was his mission, but he rejoiced that there was a greater than he, who should baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire. He was willing to decrease, to live a few lonely years in the wilderness, to preach a few months by the Jordan, to feel the weight of the sword upon his neck and to fill a lonely grave, if his Lord might increase. John had been inspired by the Holy Ghost, he had spoken with a tongue of fire against the evils of his day, but his were special gifts. He rejoiced that the time was near at hand when the multitudes whom he had baptized could receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. John was so great-hearted that he rejoiced in the breadth and greatness of the Gospel which should make the least in its Kingdom greater than himself. There is no more beautiful example of "In honor preferring one another."

**Quiz.** 1. How many Gospels tell us of John the Baptist's preaching? 2. Which of the prophets was desert bred? 3. What relationship did John bear to Christ on the human side? 4. What king admired and feared him? 5. How, when and where did John die?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Some men are as subtle as serpents, but they are never admirable. 2. There is a difference between regret and repentance; the one is a sign of weakness, the other is a source of strength. 3. He who speaks the truth unadorned and unvarnished is the greatest preacher. 4. Caesar's greatness was envious Cassius' destruction and Marc Anthony's greatness. 5. As Christ increases in our hearts, self decreases.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# BAPTISM OF JESUS.

Then cometh



from



to



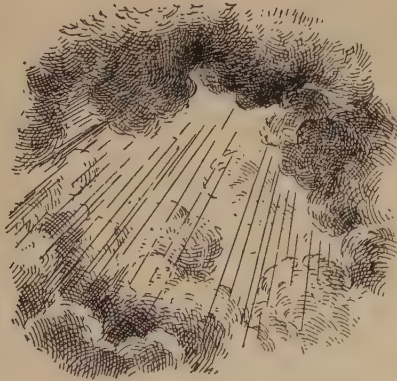
unto John, to be baptized of him. But



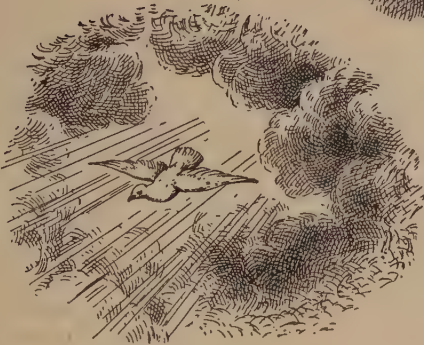
forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway



and, lo, the



unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God



and



And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 3:13-17, ALSO MARK 1:9-12, LUKE 3:21, 22, AND JOHN 1:29-36.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for Thy testimony concerning Thy Son Jesus Christ. May He be manifest to us. Help us to realize His presence in our lives and to obey and follow where He leads. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Spirit of truth and love,  
Life-giving, holy Dove,  
Speed forth thy flight.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 27. Place, Bethabara, a ford of the Jordan. **Persons,** Jesus, John and the Holy Spirit.

**Scripture Setting:** The Witness of the Holy Spirit. Descends upon Christ, Mark 1:10. The Holy Ghost in bodily shape, Luke 3:22. Seen by John the

Baptist, John 1:32. Foretold by Isaiah, Isa. 11:2; 42:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of the lesson are: 1. John's humility. 2. Christ's fidelity to religious observances. 3. The baptism of Christ. 4. The descent of the Holy Dove. 5. The Father's acknowledgment of Christ.

### THE FATHER ACKNOWLEDGES THE SON.

**Teaching by Example.** Christ never asked another to do what He would not do Himself. The One who said "Honor thy father and thy mother" spent the first thirty years of His life teaching this lesson of obedience to youth. During all those long years He proved Himself an obedient son. Joseph probably died when Jesus was nineteen years old and after that Jesus supported His mother by manual labor. Even in the agony of death His last care was to provide a home for her through the beloved disciple. We have come to a momentous period in His life when He set an example of the utmost importance to all who profess His name.

**Preparing for the King.** According to Jewish law those who were ceremonially defiled must cleanse themselves before offering sacrifice, while there was also a baptismal rite for converted Gentiles; but never before had it been suggested that the Jew should undergo a baptism of repentance. Here was a preacher who proclaimed a King and Kingdom for whose coming they were to undergo a public baptism or cleansing as an outward sign of sins repented and evils forsworn. Multitudes from far and near were baptized in the course of John's ministry and the rite became so popular that even the Pharisees and Sadducees desired to be baptized without ever repenting of their sins or desiring the coming of the Kingdom or its King.

**Illustration:** What bustle and preparation there is when a new king ascends the throne. A year or more is allowed to intervene before his coronation, not alone as a period of mourning for the dead king but to allow tradesmen, shopkeepers and courtiers time to prepare for the great event. Millions of pounds are expended in England alone. John only asked that in preparation for the King, they should be clean and righteous.

**Open Confession.** None could so denounce hypocrites and sinners and John feared neither king Herod or the Pharisees and Sadducees, but he feels himself unworthy to baptize Jesus, and protests that his baptism is a needless rite for One who is sinless. It would be more fitting that Jesus should baptize the preacher. It was true that the sinless Jesus had no need of a baptism for repentance; but on the other hand, as the Messiah bearing the sins of the world, it was meet that He should humble Himself and suffer this rite, just as when a little Babe, He had endured the rite of circumcision, and just as the sacrifice for redemption had been offered for the One who was Himself the Redeemer. It was His Cross to suffer for sin even unto death. More than that it was a baptism of preparation for the new Kingdom He was to usher in; a separation from the old life at Nazareth and consecration to the office of Messiah. Jesus answering said unto him, "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

**An Infallible Test.** Just as the chemist submits everything that comes to him to a solvent, Jesus had a test for every act and that test was, "Is it of God?" We will find that later He asked that question of John's baptism. Was it from Heaven or of men? Though before, He came to the Jordan to be baptized. He had settled that question for Himself. Because it was of God, sinless and stainless though He was, He was not too good to conform to any rite God approved. There is infinite love in the heart of Jesus, as He makes the sacrifice, and figuratively exchanges the robe of his spotless, stainless righteousness for the sackcloth and ashes of the sinner; bends before John, and consecrates Himself to the office of Saviour of a world of sinners. We know His habit of



prayer in times of need, and Luke tells us He stepped out of the baptismal waters praying.

**The Heavens Open.** "And, lo, the heavens were opened unto Him." Was there a deeper significance in this than even the Apostles saw; that just at the moment Jesus bowed Himself to take up a world's guilt, the heavens should open, and was it to tell us that the heavens have ever since been open and shall always remain open to all whose sins He has borne on the Cross? And what that glimpse of Heaven meant to Jesus! One must be far, far away from home to know what pleasure even a letter from home brings. But suppose in some unexpected moment and manner the door of the real home should open, revealing all its loved ones in their accustomed places; all the cherished and familiar objects in that home, what a transport of joy it would bring. If Jesus had staid in Nazareth; if He had not taken up His cross and submitted to the ordinance of baptism, would this vision have been His?

**The Baptism of the Spirit.** But what is that ray of light which descends from the shining open door of Heaven, gently, swiftly and evenly, like the downward flight of a dove? It is the baptism of the Holy Ghost which John foretold, which is necessary in every Christian experience and without which even Jesus would have been powerless to save the world. The solemn act of consecration is over. As He comes out of the water the heavens open and now Matthew tells us Jesus "Saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Him." Marvelous light from Heaven! Sacred Dove! It is not strange that the early Christians used the dove as the symbol of the Holy Spirit. In the Catacombs of Rome it is rudely graven over the remains of many martyred Christians, who desired no graven epitaph, save this sign and token of the Holy Spirit, which had enabled them to triumph over the flame and rack and beasts, in joyous and victorious death.

**His Father's Voice.** "Lo, a voice from Heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." After thirty years of silence, Jesus heard His Father's voice and was greeted as "My beloved Son."

How welcome that salutation! It told Him that all that quiet waiting in Nazareth; the meek obedience to earthly parents; the life of poverty and manual labor were pleasing in God's sight. Thus far His course was approved. The baptism was Jesus' consecration, the voice and salutation was God's anointing of His Son.

**Three in One.** Now, strange as it may seem, every person is three persons in one. We have a physical being which is our body; our intellectual being which is the mind, and a spiritual being which is the soul. The body labors with hands and feet and its work is shown in the pyramids of Egypt, the great wall of China and other physical memorials; the mind works through the brain and all the mighty inventions of the land are the result of its labor; the soul manifests itself through our inner consciousness, and every noble cathedral, every beautiful painting that tells of Christ, all ennobling literature, all great oratorios are manifestations of the soul. Mind, soul and body working together have created all ennobling architecture, art, music and painting which this earth contains. So we find in the Divine Being we worship, three perfect persons: the Father who created us; the Holy Ghost which is His Spirit animating us to good deeds and thoughts, and Christ, our Saviour and Example.

**A Mighty Task.** The task of saving the world was so great that even Christ alone could not have accomplished our redemption. Therefore at the moment when by His baptism He had consecrated Himself to this stupendous task, the Holy Spirit came down from Heaven and rested on Him. Thereafter He would work in its power. By an unmistakable token—His own voice—God the Father proclaimed His co-operation in the work. That is why Matthew tells of the descent of the Holy Spirit and the acknowledgment of the Father; so that we may know that every attribute of the God-head is enlisted in the redemption of the world. We may well rejoice that we have so sure a salvation.

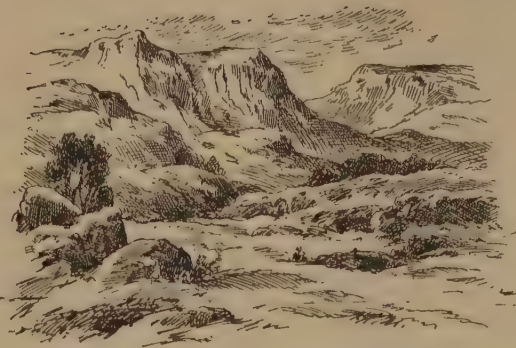
**Quiz.** 1. How old was Jesus at the time of His baptism? 2. What did John's baptism signify? 3. Why could the sinless Jesus submit to baptism for repentance? 4. What prophet tells us that He bore our sins? 5. On what other occasion was Christ acknowledged by a voice from Heaven?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Humility and holiness combined make greatness of character. 2. Some esteem themselves too good to submit to the religious forms, but the One who was altogether good saw the need of them. 3. Father, Son and Holy Ghost combined for the redemption of the world. 4. The work of salvation is pleasing to God.

MARGARET WINTINGER.

# THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the



to be  
tempted of



And when he  
had fasted forty  
days and forty



he was afterward  
an hungred.  
And when the



he said, If  
thou be the  
Son of God,  
command  
that these



be made



But he  
answered  
and said,  
It is  
written,



shall  
not  
live by



alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.



# THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 4:1-11; ALSO MARK 1:12, 13, LUKE 4:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord, For times of temptation may we be prepared by the indwelling of Thy Holy Spirit and the knowledge of Thy Word. Thou who wast in all points tempted like as we are, do Thou deliver us from every device of the evil one. May our trials and temptations only fit us for better service. In Jesus' name. Amen.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 27. Place, Mt. Quarantania, near Jericho. Persons, Jesus, Satan and angels.

**Scripture Setting:** Help in Temptation. Deliverance from temptation, 2 Peter 2:9. Christ as an Intercessor, Luke 22:31, 32. God a help in temptation, 1 Cor. 10:13. Christ's victory over temptation a help to those tempted, Heb. 2:18. Christ, our High Priest, Heb. 4:15, 16.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of the Temptation in the Wilderness are: 1. It follows a time of highest spiritual exaltation. 2. The duration and loneliness of the struggle. 3. During temptation Jesus keeps his body under through fasting. 4. The tempter comes at the weakest moment. 5. He would extinguish faith and awaken doubt as to the truth of God's record. 6. The devil ceases his jibes of unbelief and in the last temptation acknowledges Christ.

### A BATTLE OF TWO KINGS.

**How the Battle Was Fought.** Marvelous as it may seem the greatest battle the world has ever known and the one in which the most momentous issues were at stake was fought by two. It was greater than Thermopole or Waterloo. Poets and painters have portrayed it as a battle of two kings, giving the prince of darkness a real form and robing Christ as the King of glory. But if the glorious and all powerful Lord of Heaven met and conquered a wicard and sinister bodily presence the record would be of little more value to us than the story of St. George and the dragon; while robbed of such spectacular features it becomes your battle and mine, and the victory is for us, since the Scriptures tell us Christ was "in all points tempted in like manner as we are, only without sin." It is more important that we should know about it than any battle in our school histories, since from the struggle we are to learn how to become conquerors. We are to study His sword thrusts knowing that His antagonist is now our antagonist, and that if we follow His mode of warfare the wily Satan will flee from us as he did from Jesus. Since our adversary always appears to us in spirit and suggestion, may we not believe that temptation came to Christ in the same way? The battle will be as real, the story plainer and it will be more helpful to us in the warfare we must wage. And are not the real battles of the world fought in this manner? What is a victory gained through standing armies and great dreadnoughts but a mere conquest by brute force?

**The Battle Field.** It was a battle of the wilderness, only no sound of martial music and clanging artillery in the wilderness of Quarantania—the most lonely, dreary and desolate place in all the world. Where are

"Take the name of Jesus ever,  
As a shield from every snare;  
If temptations round you gather,  
Breathe that holy name in prayer."

the myriad hosts gathering for conflict? We see only a Man, weary and spent, among the wild beasts that inhabit this region. Satan, the offensive force, is invisible and the sole defense against the mighty foe is this one Man.

**The Accoutrement.** But let us not turn away since the battle is ours, for Jesus carried into the wilderness our bone and blood, flesh and nerves just like ours. Emptied of all Divine attributes He bore our humanity. But He carries with Him the memory of that moment when the heavens opened to Him the glory that had been His even before the world came into existence. After a silence of thirty years He had heard His Father's voice in commendation and while still in a transport of happiness, He must go to the battlefield! Perhaps you can recall some great blessing which came to you making you stronger to endure the trial that followed. It is God's way of preparing His children for the conflict of life.

**The Discipline.** The discipline of those forty days in the wilderness was most stern. The battle was waged without interruption. He was continually tempted and St. Luke tells us, "He did eat nothing in those days." St. Paul says those who would be victors should keep their bodies under and Jesus held His body under subjection through fasting. We honor those patriot fathers whose muskets held the wilderness; for the hardships they endured, that future generations might dwell in safety in its fastnesses; but we will never comprehend all that Jesus endured for us during those forty days when He not only fought our battle but blazed a way of safety for all who must follow Him in the wilderness of temptation.

**The Enemies' Tactics.** Satan hates to see any young person receive the baptismal

token of God's acceptance, but how he must have raged when Jesus consecrated His beautiful, pure young manhood to the salvation of a world from Satan's rule, by baptism in the Jordan. He would overcome Christ at the outset of His ministry, and he marshals the first great regiment of doubts to defeat Jesus. Satan always knows the most opportune moment and the most insidious temptation to offer, so he attacks Jesus when worn and wearied from the forty days' fast and fight, and he uses the most powerful battering ram in all the world, manned by that single word of two letters, "If." "If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread."

**Jesus Uses the Sword.** Now temptation may come from a most innocent desire and there is no sin if there is no yielding to temptation. Jesus was hungry. The devil knew that. God had just acknowledged Jesus as His Son; could He be made to doubt God's word all his fortifications would be gone. Jesus never used His sacred power merely for His own benefit. Should He do so now, self would be in the saddle and self is always a traitor to God. Then, too, had He commanded the stones into bread, Jesus would have forever separated Himself from the hungry and suffering. In the hour of His greatest need He chose to be the Brother of every man and woman who has ever suffered the pangs of hunger. It was His meat to do the will of the Father; He would not exchange spiritual meat for material bread, he preferred physical to soul hunger. Therefore He draws his sword, which is the Word of God, and strikes effectively, "It is written that man shall not live by bread alone." Like a true soldier Jesus always had His sword at His side. Do we, I wonder?

**Sword Parries Sword.** In the Gettysburg battlefield guides will show you where the battle became a hand to hand conflict. It is so in the wilderness now. In a moment the devil has taken Jesus (whether bodily or in a vision we do not know) to Jerusalem; He is on the highest pinnacle of the temple. On the one side, deep below, were the worshippers who thronged the temple courts; on the other the giddy depth of the gorge of the Kedron. Only a miracle could avert death from the perilous fall down either side. The enemy shows Him this and Satan quotes Scripture. He, too, acknowledges the power of such a weapon. But how awkwardly he handles the "Sword of the Word," recalling the promise of the ninety-first Psalm and urging Jesus to summon an-

gelic protection by casting Himself down.

**Foiled!** Sword clashes sword, and Jesus grasping the hilt, "It is written," gives a telling thrust, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord Thy God." Jesus knew that His acceptance by the Jews as the Messia was improbable; it was at best a question of ages and centuries. The devil has thwarted many a reformer by offering a short cut; here is a chance to expedite matters. Should Jesus reach them unharmed from the dizzy height of the pinnacle, they could but acknowledge that He must be the One of whom it was promised "He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee." But have we ever a right to premeditatively and presumptuously thrust ourselves upon God's providence? Does He not expect us to give our bodies the care natural law demands? Jesus thought so, and He had all the laws that govern our safekeeping as so sacred that He would not tempt God by disregarding them. Satan is foiled.

**The Enemy Offers Terms.** Satan is a very wise tactician. He now sees that it is impossible to conquer Jesus, but can he not make Him tributary to himself and use His supernatural power as an ally to his own destructive work? This time Jesus is shown the whole world, and the lying Satan says, "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me." It is a beautiful world, as we all know, stored with wealth and power; Jesus left His Heavenly throne to save it, and now it is offered to Him. Can He do better than to accept it? Some sophists would even call the offer providential.

Surely a starving opponent will accept the overture from so powerful an adversary; but Jesus will not resort to worldly methods to gain a Divine purpose. It is a world created by His Father. It is God's world. In claiming it, Satan sought to deceive the second Adam with a lie, as he deceived the first Adam. Besides Jesus has seen the world from a Heavenly viewpoint and he knows that though once pure, it is now a lost world. Yes, and the devil can only give for a season and pay in counterfeit coin, for this vain earth is to vanish into nothingness and a new Heaven and a new earth shall replace it. Jesus will not make obeisance to Satan. Weak and spent as He is, He completes the victory by forcing the enemy to retreat. "Get thee hence, Satan."

**Conqueror.** "And behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." Blessed moment for us when Jesus refused earthly honor for the solitary path of submission, suffering and sacrifice, even though He paid for the refusal with His life. We may well rejoice that in that moment in the wilderness Jesus chose the cross and crucifixion that we might be crowned as conquerors. For through His victory we are able to overcome Satan.

**Quiz.** 1. What two Bible characters fasted forty days? 2. Name some other Bible characters that were tempted. 3. To what part of Jesus' nature did the first temptation appeal? 4. The second temptation? 5. The third temptation? 6. Which temptation was the strongest?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Each has his wilderness battle. 2. Christ wore no halo or crown into the wilderness. 3. Every battle should be preceded by a vision of God. 4. Only a moment were the heavens opened, but the wilderness held Him forty days and forty nights. 5. "If" is the devil's first lieutenant. 6. The world wants a sovereign but needs a Saviour. 7. Angels watch over every conflict and participate in each victory over Satan.





## CHRIST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER

BY PLOCKHORST

It is not probable that this scene is described in the Bible, but our imagination may well picture the parting of Christ from His mother, as He starts on His life work. It is a touching moment both for Him and for her, and awakens human sympathy to a high degree.

In the usual dress of the Orient, His pilgrim staff in His hand, Jesus speaks His parting words. The earnest look of the Christ and the perceiving gaze of the holy mother explain themselves perfectly. In the distance Christ's followers stand waiting for His coming. The arch doorway opens upon a landscape of palms.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST TAKING LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER.





# JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 4:17-25; ALSO MARK 1; LUKE 4. AND JOHN 1-4.

**Prayer:** Help us to realize, our Father, that we, too, are ministers of thy grace and gospel, and that only as we follow closely the teaching and example of Jesus shall we make our ministry a sure and abiding blessing. By the indwelling of the Spirit equip us for our work and cause it to be fruitful in those graces which are for the healing of the nations. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O give us hearts to love like Thee,  
Like Thee, O Lord, to grieve  
Far more for others' sins than all  
The wrongs that we receive.  
One with Thyself, may every eye  
In us, thy brethren, see  
That gentleness and grace that spring  
From union, Lord, with Thee.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATION.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28, spring and summer. Place, Galilee, especially Capernaum, which was practically the headquarters of Jesus during his public ministry. Persons, Jesus, Peter and Andrew, brothers; James and John, also brothers, and their father Zebedee. All were Galileans.

**Scripture Setting:** Read the incidents of the home life and training of Jesus; His Visit to the Temple, Luke 2:40-52. His Baptism, Matt. 3:13-17. His Temptation, Matt. 4:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Every man has a mission in the world. 2. Living with God, he is

likely to make no mistake about it. 3. He begins early to prepare for it. 4. He does not waste his time or strength in selfish or useless side lines. 5. He finds it to center in two things—a desire to do the will of God, and to help his fellow men. 6. The best preparation is to build up a strong character perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. 7. He will select good men to help him in his work—that is why the Church exists. 8. He will not be above ministering to men's bodies while seeking the welfare of their souls. Jesus found bread for the hungry and health for the sick.

### HOW TO SAVE THE WORLD.

**A New Order.** The world into which Jesus came was sorely in need of help. It was a sordid world; men and women were content with material good, with comfort, luxury, freedom from work and pain and sorrow, with scarcely a thought of virtue, goodness, brotherly kindness. It was therefore a sad world and a wicked world, going from bad to worse and no hand outstretched to save. Even the religious teachers of that day thought of God, when they thought of him at all, as of some one greatly interested in ceremonial worship and greatly despising the publican, the sinner, the outcast. Then came Jesus and a new order of things began.

**Division of Time.** Account for it as we will, the most intelligent and best people look back to that first coming of Jesus as to a new era in the world's development and as to the beginning of the best order the world has ever known. It is not without significance that we mark the grand divisions of history as "Before Christ (B. C.)" and "In the year of the Lord (A. D.)"

**The Herald of the New Order.** Jesus was at this time just turned thirty. He came to his work in the prime of his young manhood. He did not hurry nor begrudge the time of his preparation. He was content in this, as in all things, to await the Father's good pleasure. He knew and accepted the discipline of the home; He had kept His senses keen and alert to the revelations of God in the world about Him, in the world within Him, and in the history of His people. He knew His Scriptures not only as to the letter but as to the spirit, and through them God spoke to His responsive soul. He had His trade—that of the carpenter—and lived in modest

independence. He moved among the people in friendly fashion and learned sympathy for their woes and wants, for their sorrows and their sicknesses. In daily contact with the religious leaders of his day, He saw and felt the hollowness and deadness of the popular religious teachings and practices, and His heart was stirred to a deep compassion for the people who were as sheep having no shepherd. But chiefly he had learned the habit of intimate communion with the Father in perfect love of whom was made that disclosure of the Father's will concerning all his children which has thrilled the heart of the world from that day to this.

**Organizing for World Conquest.** There is a story to the effect that Jesus, when asked how he expected his work to be carried on, said "By my friends." As soon as he entered upon his public work he began to gather about himself some of these "friends."

**Choosing His Friends.** The Gospel of John (chapters one to four) tells the story. He started with Andrew, Peter, James and John; later He added Philip and Nathaniel; later, Matthew and the others. As the world looks at such things, the start was not very promising. They were not rich nor learned, and they had no influential connections either with the priesthood or the government. But they were good, wholesome, average men, capable of honest love and indefeasible loyalty, and out of such material the best friends of Christ have been created in all succeeding ages. They had good sense and high character; they knew how to learn and how to teach; they were devoted, industrious, not easily discouraged and friendly, and they

loved the Master with unquenchable love. They had spiritual insight and moral fibre; for a religion designed to create spiritual insight and moral fibre better men could not have been found. Each had his own individual characteristics, but all had a common devotion to the Master and His cause. The exception to this was Judas, who doubtless began well but was drawn away by his own selfish greed and became a deserter and traitor.

**The Message of Good Will.** The mission of Jesus was promoted in two ways: first, by teaching and preaching; second, by works of mercy. Both were designed to emphasize the central thought of His message, viz., that "God so loved the world" He would not leave anything undone to make proof of that love.

Jesus began his ministry with a summons to "Repent." Repent means a change of mind, a turning one's back upon old ways and a resolute seeking of new ways. Jesus wanted, above all things, a new way of thinking about God. They had been thinking of Him as an "absentee" God with no concern for the poor, the sinful, the weak, the distressed, the sorrowful, and with a great concern for temple treading and new moons, with thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil. "Repent," says Jesus, "change your ways of thinking about God, and see how completely you will then change your way of thinking about other things and your way of life." All religion goes back to that. If a man has right thoughts about God he will have right thoughts about sin, about forgiveness, about holiness, about loving one's neighbor and about serving his day and generation. God is not afar off; He is nigh at hand; He is in the hearts of men; He loves them with an everlasting love; He wants above all things to have them as His dear children in truth and in deed.

The description of Jesus in His concern for the sick is beautiful and touching in the extreme. "They brought all the sick to Him; the people who were suffering from various diseases and pains—demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He cured them." The Church through many centuries, by reason of a false contempt for the body and a grievous misunderstanding of what was involved in spiritual religion, has almost dropped out of sight this idea of God's concern for our

bodily ailments. Much truer is the thought of the poet:

The healing of his seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

Prayer has still its healing efficacy; and God has still unfailing compassion and help for all who suffer.

**The Worth of the Message.** Ours is a practical age. We ask of every religion, What of it for the good of man? This is as it ought to be. Religion does not exist for itself; it exists as God's way of helping man to his best self. Has the message of Christ done anything for the welfare of the race?

**What Christianity Has Done.** Christianity with all its blemishes from the conduct of deficient Christians has surely established a claim upon men's consideration. It has changed the face of the world and all for the better. It has given man his chance at forgiveness and at holiness of character and of life. It has ameliorated the condition of the poor and oppressed; it has freed the slave; it has saved the drunkard and the victim of lust; it has promoted social advance and political liberty; it has permeated the world with its passion for pity and kindness; it has established hospitals for the sick, care for the orphan, homes for the aged, schools for the ignorant, protection for the weak and succor for the needy.

One may examine any institution which has promise of good for man and he will find that the informing spirit which moves and rules it has the Christian stamp upon it. Nor are its sympathies narrow and exclusive. It has the whole world for its parish; and everywhere it brings light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death to bring their feet into the way of peace.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What was the home life of Jesus? How does it illustrate the value of family religion? 2. What Bible did Jesus have? 3. Why was Jesus baptized? 4. Could Jesus be tempted of evil? 5. What kind of men did Jesus select as disciples? 6. Has he a place for "plain people" in the work for the Kingdom? 7. Is his religion easy or difficult? 8. What has it done for you? What has it done for the world?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Jesus needs friends to carry on his work. Are you his friend? 2. A man is likely to find Jesus if he is bound to find him. 3. Jesus found a sad world and brought joy into it. 4. The world finds the true secret of joy in the Christian view of life. 5. Discipleship means whole hearted dedication to the service of Christ. The first disciples "left all and followed him." 6. Jesus says the beginning of the Christian life is to get a change of heart and this change of heart is got by bringing Jesus into one's life as the controlling factor of that life. 7. Think of Peter and Andrew as fishermen and then think how they glorified life by becoming disciples.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.

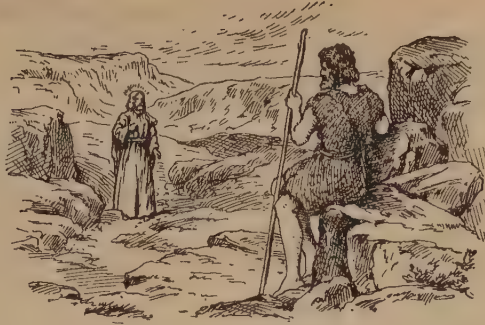


# JESUS AND JOHN.

The next day



seeth



and  
saith,



the



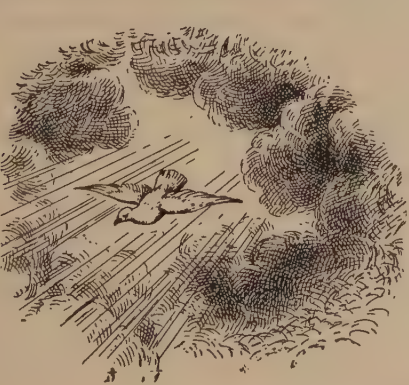
of God,  
which  
taketh  
away the



of the  
world.

This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.  
And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water,

the same  
said unto  
me, Upon  
whom thou  
shalt see the



and



the same is he which  
baptizeth with  
the Holy Ghost.

And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 1:29-37.

**Prayer:** Lord, help us, like John, to see in Jesus the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. May we as unselfishly seek the advancement of Thy Kingdom. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Just as I am—Thy love unknown  
Hath broken every barrier down;  
Now to be Thine, yea Thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, January, A. D. 27. Place, Bethabara, a ford of the Jordan. Persons, Jesus and John.

**Scripture Setting:** Jesus, the Lamb of God. As a lamb to the slaughter, Isa. 53:7. The Lamb slain, Rev. 5:8-9. Praise of the Lamb, Rev. 5:12-13. Satan overcome by the blood of the Lamb, Rev. 12:9-11. The Lamb and His company on Mt. Zion,

Rev. 14:1. The song of the Lamb, Rev. 15:3. The Lamb enthroned, Rev. 22:1-3.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The story of Jesus and John sets forth: 1. John's testimony concerning the descent of the Holy Spirit at the baptism of Jesus. 2. The significance of that appearance. 3. John's announcement of Jesus as the Lamb of God, the Saviour of the world. 4. His record of Jesus as the Son of God. 5. John's humility and greatness.

### AN IMPORTANT WITNESS.

**The Evidence.** We cannot study the story of Jesus without being impressed with the weight of evidence which proves that that wondrous life was and is still the greatest reality in all the world. Matthew and John, two of the inspired writers of the four Gospels which tell the sacred story, were of the twelve disciples who lived with Jesus in the closest companionship. Mark tells the story as he heard it from Peter; while Luke tests and sifts documentary evidence and the oral testimony of living witnesses that we may know their certainty; and each tells the story as he sees it, not as a reiteration of the other as in manufactured testimony, but bearing the stamp of individuality, and the vital impress of truth.

**The Witness.** Much depends upon the character of a witness; his antecedents, his life, the source of his information, all these must be investigated before his testimony will stand in court. Never in all the world had a claimant so unimpeachable a witness as the Apostle John brings before us, whom he introduces as "A man sent from God, whose name was John," "for a witness to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe." So important a case demanded a God-sent witness. We are glad John was not too timid to testify of his Master.

**Jesus Comes to John.** Up to this time Jesus and John had lived, one in the hill country of Galilee, the other in the hill country of Judea; the one in a comparatively secluded village, the other in the wilderness itself. Was is not a strange preparation for lives destined to the most wonderful greatness? Perhaps young people of today are too much before the public eye. Mary visited the mother of John the Baptist a short time before his birth, but we do not know

that the cousins ever met. Ever since August, John has been preaching and his fame has spread throughout Judea. It is now early in January, and he is preaching at Bethabara the coming of the Kingdom. Though we do not know just which ford of the Jordan is thus designated, it is supposed to have been only twenty miles from Nazareth, the home of Jesus. His preaching must have been known in the humble home of the carpenter's Son. Jesus knew for a certainty that it was now "time He was about His Father's business."

**The Meeting.** It may have been during one of those few intervals of rest so necessary to the strenuous exhorter. His disciples who remain with Him have fallen back that he may have a few moments' solitude. What a regal figure is the wilderness preacher there alone by the Jordan! Stern, gaunt and fearless He stands! We do not wonder that all Judea, Jerusalem and Galilee bow down in that kingly presence, and that even Herod feared Him. But, look! What causes the fearless John to tremble and bow in humble obeisance? Though John fails to recognize Him and at first knows Him not, there is something in the presence of the one sinless Man whom the world has ever known, which fills John with a rapture of humility. After all, the strongest influence is the unconscious influence of holy living.

**Comest Thou to Me?** John bends low before this obscure, nameless Man of Galilee. We know little of what passed between these two at this meeting. It could not have been a prolonged interview. Jesus did not even declare Himself. He left that to the Father; but He must have claimed the right of baptism, for John looks at the holy and sinless, sinless One, and says, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?"



**His Supreme Moment.** Jesus replies and "then he suffered Him." Surely no art of shorthand equals Matthew's directness and brevity. In four words he states a fulfillment of prophecy which required eight hundred years of fruition and records that which shall influence all eternity. So quickly and briefly Matthew tells of the supreme moment of John's lifetime; the prayers of a godly father and mother, the annunciation of the angel Gabriel, his birth and training in the temple and isolation in the wilderness were all converged in those four words. The solemnity of that moment! For John the Baptist bore this record for all ages. "He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John's hour has struck twelve. It were worth a morn in the desert and a short prison afternoon, with a long and final night to have the glory and honor of such a high noon.

**John's Testimony.** On His return from the temptation in the wilderness, Jesus again sought John, who seeth Jesus coming unto him and saith, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." His hearers understood the figure of speech. The words were exactly what any pious Jew would have said of the pascal lamb or of the lambs offered morning and evening at the temple for the sins of their nation, but it was so different from their preconceived ideas of the Messiah; that He whom they desired as an earthly King and avenger should come with the meekness, lowliness and patience of a lamb, in some mysterious way to suffer as the victims on the altar for the sins of the world! If the witness had said for the sins of His people, it would have been easier of acceptance, but to suffer for the sins of those outside Israel, it was inconceivable! Are there not some who are still as narrow as John's hearers.

**The First to Accept the Evidence.** Notwithstanding the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah with which Pharisees and Sadducees were familiar, we doubt if any of his hearers accepted that first broad statement of John's. Certainly the Apostle makes no mention of such acceptance, but again that next day John reaffirmed his testimony. He saw Jesus walking and pointing Him out to the two disciples that were with him, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God." The two disciples were John and Andrew, and in the Gospel

of the former we find John the Baptist's testimony recorded. Those beautiful words, "A man sent from God, whose name was John," are the Apostle's appreciation of his former master.

The two Galilean youths who wore the humble garb of fishermen from the sea coast of Galilee were struck with the remarkable testimony of John, as well as the kingly presence of Jesus, and reverently approached him. As they drew near, He turned toward them and gently asked, "What seek ye?" So sudden had been the inspiration to follow Him, that they hardly knew the motives that prompted them. But their answer showed their profound reverence. "Rabbi," they said, "where art thou staying?" Kindly Jesus replied, "Come and see." They accompanied Him to His temporary abode, which was probably a booth constructed of palm branches, and stayed with Jesus the rest of the afternoon and probably remained over night. During that interview they listened to the Great Teacher, and, ere they departed, the Spirit made it clear to them that the Kingdom, which John preached, had come, and they were in the presence of the King whose forerunner was John, the Baptist. Their career was determined: though they had been John's disciples, henceforth they would follow Jesus.

**"I Must Decrease."** Was it not a high privilege for John to be the forerunner of Jesus and to introduce Him to His ministry as the Lamb of God? The disciples understood, and left John to follow Jesus, but what did that matter? It was a noble minded and generous friend's last surrender to the One he loved. We can almost see him as he stands alone by the Jordan watching the receding forms of his former disciples and their new Master. It has been truly said that the character of John is one of the most exalted the kingdom of God can show. He who was the theme of the ancient prophets, whose birth was announced by one no less mighty than the angel Gabriel, the God-sent man, disparages self when he might have enlisted thousands to his cause by a single word; and with burning words seeks to win their loyalty to One they had not even seen. Self is so crucified in him that he joyfully predicts his own decline; points his own disciples to another. The grandeur of such unselfishness makes the declaration "I must decrease," a badge of distinction.

**Quiz.** 1. When did Jesus come to John? 2. Why did John at first decline to baptize Him? 3. What great prophet likened Christ to a Lamb? 4. By what sign was John to recognize Jesus as the Messiah? 5. Who were the first disciples to follow Jesus?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. All true greatness is bred in retirement. 2. The acknowledgment of one's superiors is a test of greatness. 3. Every saved soul is a witness sent from God. 4. It is not only a privilege but a duty to testify of Christ. 5. The first two disciples were the fruits of testimony.

MARGARET WINTINGER.

# THE FIRST MIRACLE.

And the third day there was a marriage in



and the



was there: And both Jesus was called, and his



to the



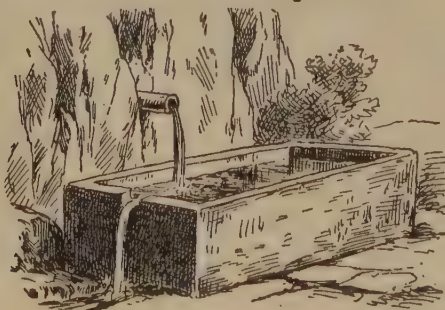
And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. His mother saith unto the



Whatsoever he  
saith unto you,  
do it. And there  
were set there



of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with



And



up to the brim.



# THE FIRST MIRACLE.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 2:1-10.

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee that Thou dost share our joys as well as our sorrows; that Thou didst come that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Increase our faith that whatsoever Thou dost command us we may do it, assured that Thy blessing will follow. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"How welcome was the call,  
And sweet the festal lay,  
When Jesus deemed in Cana's hall  
To bless the marriage day."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 27. Place, Cana. Persons, Jesus, Mary, marriage guests, and servants.

**Scripture Setting:** The Bride and Bridegroom. Christ the Bridegroom, Matt. 9:15. John the Baptist introduces the Bridegroom, John 3:29. The church, the bride, Rev. 19:7-8. The bride of the Lamb, Rev. 21:9-10. The marriage of the Lamb, Rev. 19:9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The presence of Christ at the marriage at Cana shows forth: 1. Jesus' sympathy with human joy. 2. His sanction of the marriage relation. 3. Mary's faith and the servant's obedience. 4. His power over the forces of nature. 5. His readiness to add to human enjoyment. 6. Manifests the human and Divine nature of Jesus; He appears as the human friend and as the Creator.

## JESUS A WEDDING GUEST.

**The Place.** It all occurred so long ago that the little town of Cana has passed out of existence and even the most learned travellers are unable to fix the site with certainty, though we know it was a few miles northeast of Nazareth, Jesus' home town. We may picture its houses rising on the terraced slope of a hill and presenting a view of a smiling valley famous for producing the best pomegranates in all Palestine. Cana was the home of Nathaniel, the disciple who was later known as Bartholomew, upon whose invitation Jesus came direct to Cana from Bethabara as his guest. And naturally enough Nathaniel invited his friend Philip, and Peter and Andrew of the same town, and John the disciple. What a blessed company!

**The Occasion.** There was a marriage in Cana. Now as you know, a wedding is always a very important event in every community and nowhere more so than in Palestine. On the evening of the marriage the bride was led from her home to that of her husband, followed by her friends; the guests of honor were accorded a place near the bride and bore myrtle branches and wreaths of flowers; others carried torches or lamps on poles. All wore festive array and the wedding party was preceded by music and attendants, who distributed presents among grown people and children. Every one who met it was expected to rise and join the marriage procession. It would have been very impolite to do otherwise, and it was almost a religious duty to praise the beauty, modesty and goodness of the bride. At her new home she was led to her husband, a marriage formula was repeated and bride and bridegroom were crowned with flowers. A legal instrument was signed which read not unlike our own marriage service; the hus-

band promised to work for his bride, to honor, keep and care for her. Then after the prescribed washing of the hands and benediction, the wedding festivities began, which sometimes lasted several days.

**The Wedding Guest.** The wedding was in the house of a friend, probably a relative of Mary's and "the mother of Jesus was there." Jesus and His disciples were invited. Indeed He was the prominent guest. There have been innumerable weddings since then, many thousands noted for their magnificence, lavish expenditure and great display; some have been royal marriages, others of international fame, occupying newspaper space and public attention, but interest in these affairs have long palled, while the simple marriage of a Galilean couple in a humble home in an extinct village has become, among believers and unbelievers, the most noted marriage in all history. Probably it was not given an inch of space in the columns of the society journal which archaeologists tell us they had in Jerusalem, but endless libraries have been written upon it. All because of the Guest who honored the occasion with His presence. How important it is as to who are our associates, friends and intimate companions.

**An Embarrassing Moment.** The festivities are on. Shall we pass through the court and enter the covered gallery leading to the feast chamber? Festive decorations are abundant. In the gallery are six water-pots in which the guests may wash their hands before and after eating. Though it is a modest home, the lofty ceilings give a spacious air to the feast chamber; for in Palestine the height of the ceiling was always half the sum of the length and breadth of the room. The dining room is brilliantly lighted with lamps and candlesticks; the guests are dis-

posed around tables on couches. A most awkward thing has happened. The wine has failed! Can you not imagine the embarrassment of those in charge?

**Mother Would Relieve the Situation.** Mary perceives the predicament. It is a testimony to her Son's devoted care that so naturally and freely she should come to Him in her embarrassment. We may be sure that He was a model Son or Mary would not have shown such absolute confidence in Jesus. During the years of their relationship as mother and Son, the mother has never known a care that the Son has not lifted; never has been confronted by a single difficulty, great or trivial, that He has not relieved. Just what He can or will do in this instance she does not know, but she is confident that He will not fail her; in some way He will relieve the situation. We wonder if every mother may turn to her son for support in her difficulties? Mary whispers to her Son, "They have no wine."

**Mother and Son.** Nowadays when we have "shop-ladies," "wash-ladies" and "society ladies," we are apt to wonder that Jesus should use the term "Woman" in addressing Mary, forgetful that the term is God-given. As He used the same term when commending Mary to John's care at the crucifixion, we may be sure He meant no disrespect. May it not be that He did not say "Mother" because henceforth no one woman was to hold that sacred claim? Hereafter throughout all ages in the humblest of His disciples He beholds His mother and His brethren. The poor old washerwoman who sings of Jesus as her Friend receives from Him the reverence and honor due a mother. As heretofore, Mary shall receive His tenderest care and consideration, but the earthly relationship must not interfere with His Divine mission. And Mary accepts the lesson. She does not always understand Him, she may not always comprehend her place, but she trusts Him and she knows He intends to help her. He would not use his Divine power to stay His own hunger, but was there a sick child, a blind beggar by the roadside, a leper despised and abhorred, was there even the joy of a feast interrupted; He does not hesitate to use His gift. In their straightened circumstances the givers of the marriage feast have counted too closely. The wine has failed. An insignificant thing surely, but no need of life is too small for His largess. Behold, He uses His wondrous

power to help out one of the little family difficulties begotten of poverty.

**The Fruit of Obedience.** Mary tells the servants, "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it." If every one of us were to follow Mary's advice, what wonderful things might be accomplished. When Jesus said, "Fill the water-pots with water," they filled them, not half full but to the brim. He said, "Draw out now and bear to the governor of the feast." It was a ridiculous thing to do; to fill those great stone pots full to the brim with water, when the man had asked for wine! But they did not hesitate. It was simply their part to obey Jesus.

**Illustration:** It reminds us of the unflinching obedience of the forever famous Light Brigade. Ordered to make a charge under conditions that meant death, they knew somebody had blundered; but not for a moment did they falter or hesitate. It was theirs to do or die, and though it meant death to the brave soldiers, it won immortality for the Light Brigade.

**Water into Wine.** What was the result? Jesus did the rest. It was wine they now poured out and carried to the governor of the feast. Some people wonder that Jesus made wine, others claim that by so doing Jesus countenanced the use of intoxicating drinks. But two kinds of wine were used in Bible times, the pure unfermented grape juice, which was spoken of as sweet or good wine and the red or fermented wine. One kind is blessed, the other is cursed. God Himself forbade the use of the latter in religious services. We know that the Jews regarded marriage almost as a sacrament. The pious fasted before it and confessed their sins. Among the simple and pure Galileans everything connected with marriage was planned to bear the impress of sanctity. There was no indecorum, levity or excitement and Jesus would not have created a wine that would have marred the sacred occasion by introducing these elements. We also know that the governor of the feast was surprised to find good (or unfermented) wine at the close of several days of feasting. We may be sure that this wine was the pure, unfermented juice of the grape so often served at marriage feasts in Eastern countries today. Thus "Jesus manifested His glory" as the Creator whose commands even nature must obey, and His first manifestation of this wonderful power was to add to the joy of others. When they saw His power and goodness, it increased their faith and His disciples believed on Him.

**Quiz.** 1. Name some of the events of the week preceding Jesus' visit to Cana. 2. Was this Jesus' first miracle? 3. Who was Nathaniel? 4. Did Jesus participate in other social events? 5. What criticism was made of Him? 6. Did this miracle increase His disciples' faith in Him?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Christian fellowship is one of the choicest blessings religion brings. 2. Wherever we cannot imagine Jesus as a guest, it is unsafe to go. 3. Obedience works miracles. 4. His servants must risk ridicule. 5. What He would not do for Himself, Jesus did for others. 6. Christian service should be full to the brim.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

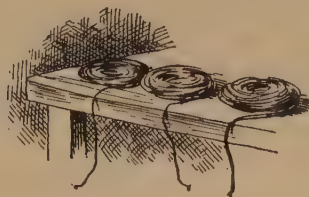


# CLEANSING THE TEMPLE.

And when he had made a



of small



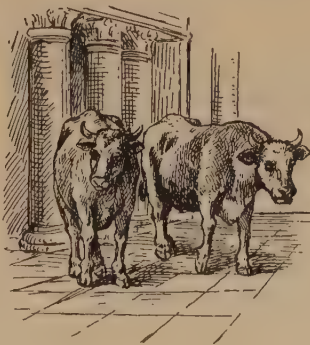
he



and the



and the



and



and



And said  
unto them  
that



Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 2:13-25.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for Thy house and for the hallowed associations connected with it. We thank Thee that Thou dost meet us there. May we ever come into Thy courts with reverence and with thanksgiving. Help us to cast out of our own hearts everything displeasing to Thee that we may be fit temples for the indwelling of Thy Holy Spirit. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"O Thou whose own vast temple stands  
Built over earth and sea,  
Accept the walls that human hands  
Have raised to worship Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, at the passover, April 9-16, A. D. 27. Place, the Temple, Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, the money changers and traders, rabbis and disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The House of God. Its goodness, Psalms 65:4. Reverence for house of God, Ecclesiastes 5:1. Behavior in house of God, 1 Timothy 3:15. Joyful worship, Psalms 122:1. A refuge and dwelling, Psalms 27:4-6. A choice, Psalms 84:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In cleansing the temple Christ declared: 1. The sacredness of God's house. 2. His authority as God's Son. 3. His zeal and devotion for God's house. 4. God's house a place of communion with God. 5. That worldliness has no place in God's house. 6. His power over death.

### HIS FATHER'S HOUSE.

**Jesus at the Passover.** This feast of the passover was the first since the beginning of His ministry, and it was to be as memorable as that one which thrilled Jesus with a desire to be about His Father's business. Indeed He was about His Father's business. The temple was the real heart of the Jewish nation. If it was defiled, worship became corrupt and faith in the Holy One died. In fact the condition of affairs Jesus found in the temple indicated that the people had long since ceased to think of God as in His holy temple.

The only son of a nobleman left home and failed to return. Upon the father's death, the title and estate were without an heir; the beautiful place was uncared for and fell into decay, while various claimants wrangled for its possession. Suddenly the real heir returned. He had been gone so long that even after his claim was legally established many doubted his identity, but when he began to restore the estate to its former order his knowledge of all his father's plans convinced them that the true son had returned to his own. So Jesus sought to restore His Father's house to the holy purpose to which the first temple was dedicated.

**Herod, the Builder.** We are very proud of our skyscrapers, and are apt to boast of our modern architecture, but it is doubtful if the world today contains a building equal to the temple in Jerusalem at the time of Jesus. The magnificent temple built by Solomon had been destroyed and replaced by a much inferior structure. To win the favor of the Jews, who feared and loathed him because of his wickedness, Herod rebuilt the temple in splendour as great as that of Solomon's. Many of the stones used were nineteen feet in length and four feet in height; the wheels of the stoutest wagon would have broken under their weight of one hundred tons each, so a thousand sledges drawn by men were used to haul the stone for the building. Ten

thousand skilled workmen were hired to build it. The area in which the temple stood was enclosed by massive walls, one of which extended nearly 1,000 feet long and 150 feet high.

**A Magnificent Structure.** The temple itself was built of a marble-like limestone ornamented with gold, so that Josephus tells us it appeared like a snow covered mountain, and when seen in the morning sun its gold so shone as to dazzle one's eyes. It sounds like a fairy tale to read a description of its subterranean passages, aqueducts, golden gates, beautiful courts and pillared arcades; its broad promenades with vaulted roof and mosaic floors; its marble and gold tables, and wonderful tapestries. The ceiling of the portico that led from the priest's court to the temple itself was 114 feet high, with a gilded vine and shining gold grapes of such immense size that they were visible all over the temple grounds! Yet it lacked the chief thing which God requires of a temple dedicated to Him—which is holiness.

**The Market Place.** The royal porch was noted especially for its four rows of forty columns each, with lovely Corinthian carving and so massive as to require three men to stretch around them. And in all these beautiful courts and arcades the self-righteous and exclusive Jews had hung tablets ordering strangers to keep out, with the warning that "Whoever is caught will be responsible to himself for his death, which will ensue." These warnings were placed every few yards, and yet this porch and other magnificent piazzas and arcades were turned into market places by the priests, who rented off spaces for the sale of everything needed for sacrifice and offerings.





## CHRIST CASTING OUT THE MONEY CHANGERS

BY F. KIRCHBACH

The ceremonies of the Jewish temple called forth the services of many people besides the officiating priests. There was a demand for animals to be burned on the altar of sacrifice, and for money changers to accommodate those who would make contributions. Usually such commonplace matters are attended to in the nearby streets, but at the time of Christ these small merchants had been allowed to settle themselves within the temple itself. They formed an offensive crowd, clamoring for trade, and indifferent to the proper services of this holy place. When Jesus came up to Jerusalem to attend the passover this condition of affairs shocked His sense of propriety. He took to Himself the authority to correct this evil. With a whip, as a badge of authority, He attacked these petty merchants and all were driven out with little consideration; just as they deserved.

The picture is full of incident. Having driven all the people out, Jesus stands on the top step of the temple door, conspicuous in a long white garment. Beside Him we see a multitude, some kneeling and adoring, others railing and abusive. One may study much the movements and the characters of these people. In the foreground, on the right and left, is a crowd of struggling humanity. Their money and goods have been ruthlessly spilled and confused. They are fighting, each for his own stuff, in danger of falling into other hands than the owners. The central group is full of motion: two that struggle together violently; one that tries to get away with more money than he can carry, spilling it as he loses his footing; the dove crates broken and the doves escaping. On the right is an old man and a young woman protecting manuscripts laid on a handsome table. Beyond is a group of butchers with lambs on sale.

All this confusion and trouble is repeated on the left, where some are trying to get away, while some are sitting in despair and disgust. The elaborate carving on the temple wall, and the huge pillars sustaining it, indicate a very rich edifice.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST CASTING OUT THE MONEY CHANGERS

## FRANK KIRCHBACH. 1859.

Frank Kirchbach belongs to those artists who come from families in which for many generations intellectual and artistic culture have combined to produce really great masters in art. In both his father's and his mother's families were men of distinction in military affairs, learning and art.

His father, Sigismund Kirchbach, a gifted artist, studied painting under Schnorr in the Academy of Dresden, and later beautified the ceiling of the art gallery there with the painting of "Phantassus."

He was made director of the fine arts of Santiago de Chili, and many of his paintings are to be found in Santiago, in America, England and Russia.

The second son of this highly gifted artist, whom his mother called a "possessed genius," is the well-known artist of Munich, Frank Kirchbach. Frank, as well as his brother Wolfgang, the poet, author and philosopher, was born in London, June 2, 1859. In 1860 his parents moved to Dresden, where his father was a very active and noted artist, until he followed the call to Santiago.

Since the father painted scenes from Shakespeare, and the children spent much of their time in his studio, they early became familiar with this poetic world.

These early years were full of artistic inspiration. Frank was permitted to be much in his father's studio, and to make sketches of his father's pictures. He was especially fond of being in the studio of the great sculptor Ritschel, in which the Luther Monument for Worms stood at this time.

During his father's absence in America, and after the loss of his mother, his friends assisted him in his first artistic attempts, and Prof. Leon Pohl gave him special instruction in painting.

A few years later the two brothers, Frank and Wolfgang, lived and worked together in their particular spheres. Wolfgang as author wrote a series of thirty fairy stories, and Frank illustrated them.

There came to him in Dresden the reputation of the grand school of painting in Munich, which induced young Kirchbach to go there in 1878. Here he stepped into an

entirely new world. In this thoroughly artistic atmosphere there lived and moved a peculiar kind of romance, which exerted a powerful influence upon the imagination of the young artist.

Frank wrote enthusiastic letters to his brother about the artistic life in Munich, and Wolfgang soon followed him.

Frank studied at the Academy with Prof. Alexander Wagner, who became to him a faithful "fatherly" friend. Under Wagner's directions came forth the illustrative painting, "The Last Days of Pompeii," also "Repenting Magdalene," "Duke Christopher the Fighter," the portrait of his brother Wolfgang, and various other genre pictures.

In a contest for the decoration of the Dragon Hall of Nibelungen, on the Rhine, Kirchbach came off victor. His years of apprenticeship at the Academy were closed with this, and he began the artist's years of travel.

In 1883 he went to Paris. Munkacsy, who had seen Kirchbach's works at Munich, invited him to become his pupil, in Paris. Here he painted the portrait of the Countess Kessler and the "Ganymede," which was in 1884 placed on exhibition in the Salon d'honneur. This success secured for him an order from a wealthy lover of art, Mr. Max Lowenstein, for a painting on a large scale, for which he already had formed his ideal, namely, "Christ Casting Out the Money-Changers." With this order Kirchbach returned to Munich, where he devoted two years to this grand picture. He was married the same year. On completion of this picture he founded the Kirchbach Art School.

Accepting an invitation from London, where this celebrated painting was exhibited, he there produced another religious picture, namely, "Suffer Little Children to Come Unto Me," and some time later "The Burial."

Kirchbach's celebrated painting, "Christ Casting Out the Money-Changers," has made his name famous in Germany, France, England and America more than any other of his works. Frederick Pecht says of the picture: "He has given to his Christ so much nobility and exalted majesty as to exhibit the most striking contrast between the highest ideal of a reverence for that which is holy and the lowest selfishness in human nature."

Kirchbach exhibits also a remarkable skill in decorative ceiling painting. The ceilings of churches and halls are to him an extended space, a painter's world, elevated above all architectural beauty. Like the old masters, he feels the intimate union of the fine arts in their manifold relation to each other. He is his own architect and sculptor.

Translated from the German by

PROF. F. WM. HEIDNER.



**A Doubtful Convenience.** It all began quite naturally and at first it did not seem wrong. Every male born a Jew had to pay a half shekel annual temple-tribute as an offering for a soul ransom, and it must be paid in money coined for this purpose. There must be offerings of doves and sheep and oxen also. It would be a great accommodation to many if they could exchange their foreign money for the sacred coin as they came to the temple; and since the priests must attest that the animals were without blemish before they could be offered in sacrifice, what better arrangement then to be able to purchase on the spot animals duly certified, with salt, meal, oil and frankincense, especially since the richly ornamented colonades afforded ample shade to the traders?

**How Evil Grows.** It has passed into a saying that if you give the devil an inch he will take an ell. So that which began as a convenience grew into a great evil and sacrilege, until on approaching the sacred temple the noisy bargaining and dicker of the money changers would have reminded a person of our times of an exciting day on the Board of Trade, and the exhibit of wares would have seemed almost like a department store, while the lowing of sheep and cattle might have transferred the scene to a stock yards. We are told that there were as many as three thousand sheep exposed for sale at a time. Worst of all, the exorbitant prices and advantage taken of the poor made the temple, Christ declared, a den of thieves. The temple was no more the place for such a scene than is the church the place for lotteries and questionable devices for money making.

**The Rebuke.** How it must have hurt the tender heart of Jesus, who came to save the world, to see the tablets warning those outside the pale of the Jewish religion not to enter God's house! Then to see sheep and cattle exposed for sale where a stranger may not venture to worship under penalty of death; when all the Mosaic laws particularly remembered the stranger. Four hundred years before Malachi had foretold that He would come with purifying power to His temple, "that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Then who would stand when He appeared? Certainly not the thieving money changers and dishonest market venders, when out of the cords lying about He quickly knotted together a formidable scourge and drove thence those who defiled His Father's house by making it a house of merchandise.

**Righteous Zeal.** Not a hand was lifted, not a word spoken to stop Him. His presence awed them. His words awakened their conscience. It was the only time Jesus ever used violence. But we may be sure that such bold denunciation of sin was keenly discussed that evening in Jerusalem. Some probably thought such a manifestation of wrath unseemly in a preacher; others pointed to greater evils upon which He might have spent His zeal, and there were some who thought that more tender suasion were wiser. We may be sure Jesus was criticised for this manifestation of zeal just as reformers are today.

**The Sign.** At length the demand is made that He shall explain His conduct. He has called the temple His Father's house. By what sign shall He prove His right to do these things? The sign He gives them is an enigma. "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." The man must be crazy with presumption. The temple had been forty-six years building already and was still uncompleted. Indeed, it was so gigantic a piece of architecture that the forecourts were only finished thirty years after the crucifixion.

**God's Word Ever True.** Jesus speaks of a greater temple, the temple of His body. Within a single generation the great temple built by Herod was destroyed and today the great pillared arcades from which Jesus drove the money changers, the market venders and their sheep and oxen, is buried under more than eighty feet of rubbish. The only feature associated with the temple as it was in Christ's day, which remains unchanged in our own, is a great pool on the side of the temple area opposite to where Jesus stood with the uplifted scourge. The beautiful, peerless and immortal temple they would indeed seek to destroy. Annas, whose family was enriched from the temple rentals, had his little moment of vengeance when he turned Jesus over to Caiaphas bound. He lived to see the Reformer on the cross; but the sepulchre could not hold Him. Within three days the living Jesus appeared in bodily presence to His disciples! With such a wonderful object lesson why should we fear to imitate Jesus in rebuking sin?

**Quiz.** 1. Upon what other occasion did Christ cleanse the temple of money changers? 2. What prophet foretold His coming to the temple? 3. What sign did Jesus give? 4. What happened in the temple at Jesus' death? 5. When was the temple finally destroyed and by whom?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The beginning of Jesus' ministry is always a purification. 2. Sickness, loss and disappointment are sometimes scourges to drive covetousness and greed out of the heart. 3. Jesus was never a silent witness to any wrong. 4. One soul will outlive all the brick and mortar in the world. 5. No washing save in His blood, will whiten our bodies into sanctuaries for the indwelling of God. 6. Jesus gives abundant proof to lead men to believe in Him. 7. Whatever destroys the spiritual power of the church should be driven out.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



For God so



the



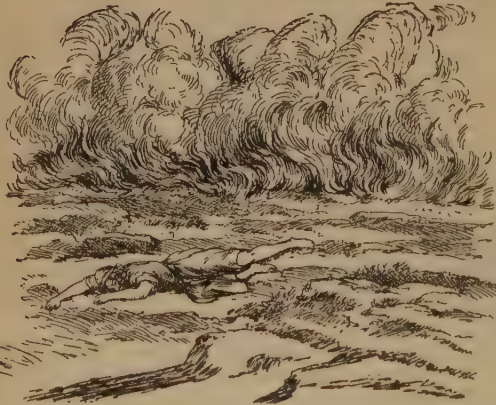
that he gave his only begotten



that  
whosoever



in him should not



but  
have  
ever-  
lasting



For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 3:1-21.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that Thou didst so love us as to give Thine only Son for our redemption. Grant us the experience of the new birth through which alone men may have access into Thy Kingdom, here and hereafter. May our eyes be opened to discern the things of the Spirit. For Christ's sake, Amen.

O ye who would enter His glorious rest  
And sing with the ransomed the song of the blest;  
The life everlasting if ye would obtain,  
Ye must be born again.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 27. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and Nicodemus.

**Scripture Setting:** **The New Birth.** Born again, 1 Pet. 1:23. Born of God, 1 John 3:9. Proof of new birth, 1 John 5:1. Born of Christ, James 1:18. Paul's new birth, 1 Cor. 15:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this remarkable interview Jesus declares, 1. The necessity of a new

birth. 2. The power of the Holy Spirit. 3. The Divine forgiveness and universal love of God. 4. His own pre-existence and Divinity. 5. He foretells the crucifixion and atonement. 6. He teaches that there is a Heaven and life and death. 7. God's love for us. 8. The terrible fruits of sin. 9. The way of escape. 10. The saving power of faith in Jesus.

## GOD'S GREAT REDEMPTION PLAN DISCLOSED.

**An Important Interview.** It was a night of that wonderful passover week; one of those wild, gusty nights when the wind sweeps through the narrow streets with such force that few pedestrians venture out to meet its onslaughts. But there is one, of tall stately figure who wraps his robe more closely about him while he peers on either side the street in quest of the modest house which is his destination. An upward glance reveals a lamp still burning on the roof of one; it is the guest chamber which holds the Divine Guest. With a feeling of relief he spies the outside stair—he need not go through the house to reach the simply furnished upper room. Though the wind rattles, shrieks and whistles, he does not need to knock twice; there is One within who knows.

There are some who have charged Nicodemus with cowardice because he timed his visit in the night; but Jesus is so quick to detect the good, that He saw beneath that timidity, sincerity, actual courage and intense earnestness. It is true he went by night, but he went, and if all timid souls who long to go to Jesus with all their doubts and fears, would only go to Him they would learn as wonderful things as Nicodemus did.

**Nicodemus Nonplussed.** There were none so proud as the Pharisees, but here is one whose pride melts as he declares, "Rabbi, we know that Thou art a Teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest except God be with him." It was an astonishing admission from a member of the great Sanhedrin. Instantly Jesus made it plain that His Kingdom is to be established not by midnight plotting and crafty diplomacy, but through a change in the hearts of men; and He reminded Nicodemus that the wilderness preacher testified of One to follow him who would baptize

with the Holy Ghost. Those who would obtain citizenship in the Kingdom of God must not only repent of their sins, but must receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God." It was all so new to Nicodemus that he thought Jesus meant that the full grown man must become a baby again. Surely the coming of the Kingdom was hopeless if it rested on such an impossibility! But Jesus spoke of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit, cleansing from every evil passion and so changing the heart that a new man is born in us. Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, men had been trying to improve themselves, and, by fasting, sacrifice and offering, to free themselves from sin, and always they have failed. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

**The Teacher Taught.** It is all so different to the teaching of the Pharisees that Nicodemus sits oblivious of the wind without until the great Teacher says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." The rabbis taught that God's favor could be purchased with tithes and outward rites, and that it extended only to the Jews, but here is a Teacher who declares that the operation of the Spirit is free and untrammelled as the wind and as mysterious. No man has seen it, but its influence on the heart is as plainly felt and as easily recognizable as the gusts that rattle the casement. No one can command its coming, but the human heart must hold itself ever receptive to its visitation.

"How can these things be?" questions Nicodemus. It saddens Jesus that a member of the Sanhedrin is so dull to spiritual

things. "Art thou a teacher of Israel and knowest not these things?" That night, in the upper room, the great Teacher taught the aged Jewish teacher truths upon which the salvation of the world rests.

**A New Light.** Though it was dark without, light was given to the world that night whose radiance shall never cease, and that shall illumine the uttermost parts of the earth, and bring redemption to all who sit in the darkness of ignorance and prejudice. Nicodemus had acknowledged that God was with Jesus; but as He sought His hearer's spiritual enlightenment, our Lord revealed Himself as the long-promised Messiah—the Son of man—who had come down from Heaven to suffer for the sins of the world.

Though that night in his spiritual dullness Nicodemus failed to comprehend the full significance of the wondrous statement, it was revealed to him later, under the shadow of the cross. For the uplifted Figure outlined against the sky was the fulfillment of the Master's words, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." And Nicodemus understood the meaning of Jesus' words spoken that night in the upper room. He had borne the cross and endured the shame to save a perishing world. Then all doubt melted away: he believed on the Son. Nothing was too costly to show his love, and with myrrh and aloes an hundred pound weight, with another seeker of the Kingdom, Nicodemus prepared the dear body of his crucified Lord for burial.

**A Revelation of Love.** Nicodemus' religion pictured an angry, wrathful God, to be placated with sacrifice and offering; a God who at best, only bestowed His favor on a chosen race. But Jesus proclaimed the love of God was so great that it needed not to be propitiated but furnished the Sacrifice in the person of God's only begotten Son. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." By that blessed declaration Jesus lifted the world out of the fog of error into the true light. God was not the enemy of the race. He loved not a chosen few, but the entire world. Then followed a statement that overthrew the rabbinic teaching which had substituted a wrathful, vengeful diety, for the God of the fathers. "For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved." While it was yet in sin; while the human heart was still wicked, God manifested His love for us in sending His Son to die upon the cross!

An old African king had an only son and heir

whom he loved devotedly. For his sake he strove to strengthen the kingdom which was soon to pass into his son's hands, and to increase his inheritance of elephant's tusks and leopard skins. One day the old king learned that a missionary had come to teach his people to worship a new God. He was very angry and at once sent for the missionary to appear before him. When the missionary came the heathen ruler demanded proof, under penalty of death, that the new God would care more for his people than the gods they had always served. The missionary began to quote the verse, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son—" "Stop!" said the old king, "Do you know that?" "Yes," replied the missionary, "the church of my God is built on this truth." "It is enough," said the king. "If you have a God who would give His only Son, my people must worship Him, for His love is greater than mine, or any god's."

**Increasing Light.** Nicodemus listens eagerly! Do his old ears hear aright? This wonderful salvation is not conditioned on burnt offering and sacrifice; the sole requirement is repentance unto salvation and faith in Jesus as the Son of God. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." God does not condemn, but man condemns himself.

In the temple whose gilded dome Nicodemus sees through the latticed window, sacrifice and offering is sold, and rich and poor alike must pay the price. But the true Sacrifice, which is His only begotten Son, is the gift of God; and he only is condemned who spurns the Sacrifice and scorns the Gift.

The night deepened, while Jesus revealed to His amazed listener the cardinal truths upon which His Kingdom was founded. Man has added to and overlaid the Master's words with creeds, but they are only the setting of the priceless truths Jesus gave to the world that night. As He spoke of light and darkness, Nicodemus must have felt His words regarding those who seek darkness as a gentle rebuke for his own cowardice in seeking Jesus under cover of night. Though Nicodemus carried but a tiny ray of truth away with him, we know that it grew until the darkness of doubt and disbelief were dispelled and the great ruler of the synagogue came to know that He who told him great and wonderful things was indeed Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

**Quiz.** 1. What event preceded Nicodemus' visit? 2. How and where does John mention Nicodemus again? 3. Was it cowardly for Nicodemus to seek Jesus by night? 4. Are you brave to confess Jesus? 5. What does Jesus say of those who fear to confess Him?

**Seed Truth.** 1. Those who seek the upper room and commune with Jesus receive light. 2. A night with Jesus will change a whole life. 3. The new birth brings new life. 4. It is the love of God for us which first begets love in us. 5. Jesus is the Divine revelation of God's love for a sinful world. 6. The crucified Christ is the measure of God's love for us. 7. John 3:16 is the Gospel in a nutshell.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

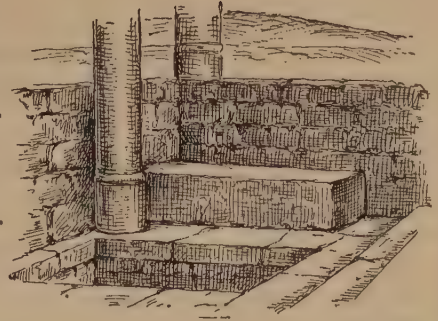


## JESUS AT JACOB'S WELL.

Then cometh he to a



of Samaria,  
which is called  
Sychar, near  
to the parcel of  
ground that  
Jacob gave to  
his son Joseph.  
Now Jacob's



was there.



therefore,  
being  
wearied  
with his  
journey,



and it was about the sixth hour. There



of  
Samaria  
to



Jesus saith  
unto her,



to drink. (For his  
disciples were gone  
away unto the city  
to buy meat.)



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 4:5-14. ALSO READ VERSES 15 TO 30.

**Prayer:** Dear Master, We too sometimes find the way weary and the journey long. Our souls thirst for the living water. Reveal Thyself unto us as Thou didst to the woman of Samaria and give us of that living water that shall be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life. We ask it that we too may tell others of Thy love, and for Thy name's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 27. Place, Sychar, a village of Samaria. Persons, Jesus and a Samaritan woman.

**Scripture Setting:** The Water of Life. The fountain of living waters, Jer. 2:13, 17:13. The virtue of the living water, Ezek. 47:9. Out of the sanctuary, Ezek. 47:12. Invitation to the thirsty, Isa. 55:1. Led to living fountains, Rev. 21:6. The invitation repeated, Rev. 22:17.

### ITS RELATIONS.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** At Jacob's well. Jesus shows: 1. His humanity as manifested by hunger, thirst and weariness. 2. His freedom from prejudice against a detested race. 3. His power to satisfy the soul's thirst. 4. That everlasting life is obtained through Him. 5. To this sinful woman that He is the promised Messiah.

### PASSING THROUGH SAMARIA.

**On the Way to Galilee.** Young people are apt to fancy that city life offers a larger field of service than farm, village or town, but the lure of the city never appealed to Jesus. He left Jerusalem when He found Himself becoming a popular preacher and went into the rural districts, where he gained His disciples and preached His greatest sermons to audiences of one and two hearers. The most direct route from Jerusalem to Nazareth was the great north road, through Samaria. Some very strict Jews would cross the Jordan twice and make a detour around to avoid contact with the Samaritans. But Jesus had come to save Samaria as well as Judea and He took the north road through that country.

**A Historic Landmark.** The close of a long and tiresome day's journey brought Him to Jacob's well, where the roads divide and where travellers were wont to rest and quench their thirst. It was the well two hundred feet deep which Jacob had dug nearly two thousand years before. Travellers in Palestine today may still visit this historic landmark, the veritable well on the stone rim of which Jesus sat while His disciples went to Sychar, less than a mile distant, to buy bread.

**A Woman Comes to the Well.** While He waited a woman came to the well to draw water. There was another well on the east side of the town much nearer than Jacob's well, to which the women of Sychar resorted, but it was less embarrassing for this woman to come to the well frequented by strangers than to meet the withdrawal and cold contempt of her townswomen. Social ostracism is the penalty one must pay for wrong doing and this is not the only instance in which it has driven the social outcast to the Saviour. How blessed that Jesus does not shrink from

sinners. He knew all about this woman, but "He saith unto her, Give me to drink." He puts Himself under obligation to her in order to help her.

A Christian worker once kissed a drunken, sinful woman of desperate character. The woman looked up in amazement. "Surely you do not know who I am, nor the life I have lived." "I only know my Jesus gave His life for you, and how could I do less than love the one for whom He died?" was the reply of the worker. Years afterward a Bowery mission worker was asked to tell the story of how she found Jesus. "I found Him through a kiss," she declared. The kiss had transformed the desperate character into a tender, loving missionary.

**An Unheard of Request.** Centuries of hatred and prejudice had formed a great gulf between Jew and Samaritan. It was more than one of those clannish feuds of which we read. It began more than seven centuries before when the conquered Israelites were carried into Babylonia, and colonists from Babylonia were sent to occupy their cities and land. During the interval between, wild beasts had multiplied and overrun the country, troubling the Babylonian colonists so greatly that they begged for an Israelitish priest who would show them how to appease the God of Israel, and thus get rid of the wild beasts. Their application was granted and the result was a mixed religion. They accepted a part of the Scriptures, kept the passover and other Jewish rites and looked for a Messiah. They even built a temple for the worship of God, but they retained many heathen customs, which to the righteous Jew seemed unclean, and they were treated as heathens. No Jew would ask a favor of a Samaritan. This Samaritan woman expressed surprise that one whom she recognized as a Jew should ask her for a drink.

**If She Only Knew.** She had come on a humble, ordinary duty so common that it may even have become irksome to her. Os-



tracized by her neighbors; with affections worn out; character gone and utterly weary and sick of life, she may often have longed to get out of its narrowness; to see some great person; to hear something worth while. Like so many of us, she did not know that the most important issues of life hinge on trivial, commonplace incidents. She had not learned that trifles are often the turning points of a life. The stranger replies, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water." Have wonderful spiritual opportunities ever come to us, and we not known, I wonder?

Springs of water have recently been discovered only a few feet under the surface in one of the deserts of Colorado where scores of persons have died from thirst. The water was there had they only known to dig a few feet deeper in the sand.

**Another Doubter.** The well was deep and the stranger empty handed. Where, then, would He get this living water? Then, she did not know who spoke to her. Who was this stranger? Proudly the outcast proclaims her relationship to Jacob; was the stranger a greater than he? The ignorant Samaritan woman understood no better than Nicodemus, the learned master in Israel. One does not need great wisdom to be a doubter.

**The Living Water.** Always a patient teacher, Jesus describes this living water. Pointing to the well, at His side, He says, "Whosoever drinketh of this water will thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him, a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." Is not this a beautiful illustration? Only one who has crossed a desert or endured a drought fully knows what a great blessing is a well of clear, cold water. But only think of having a well of water in our hearts; wherever we go we carry that well with us. We never thirst. Beautiful things may please us, we may enjoy nice clothes, a good home, influential friends and a great name, but the lack of them does not make us unhappy. We have something in our hearts infinitely more satisfying—the gift of eternal life.

**Convinced.** She cannot mistake the stranger's sincerity; without knowing why, she is convinced of His power. But she does not yet understand the meaning of this wonderful gift. She only seeks relief from her daily drudgery. If she could drink water like

that, she would never thirst: there would be no need to make the tiresome trip to the well. It would lessen the daily grind of life. What more natural than that she should exclaim, "Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." The water of which Jesus speaks means something more than relief from drudgery. It makes drudgery Divine to those who drink with real spiritual thirst.

**The Confessional.** The tender, compassionate Jesus is almost discourteous; He recalls to the woman some shameful facts of her life. We must all be made to feel the sense of guilt before we can feel the blessedness of this gift of eternal life. It is a part of the office of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit with its power to convict of sin. I fancy sin never looked so hideous to this woman as when she stood in the presence of the Holy One. It was not a mere fortune teller whom she saw. There was stern reproof in that Presence—but also forgiveness, infinite tenderness and love.

**An Hour with Jesus.** Then followed that wonderful hour when a woman sat at Jesus' feet as His disciple. With childlike, simple faith she laid all her problems before Him, problems that show that her mind had often dwelt on religious things. Like many, she was not so bad as others thought her. They were looking south, toward the great towering sacred Mount Gerazim. Hereafter she would want to pray. Should it be toward Gerazim or Jerusalem? Surely the prophet she has found can tell her. He answers her question with words that have transformed the religions of the world. "God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." She thirsts after righteousness. There are many things she longs to know which can only be told by the Messiah. Surely the prophet will know when He is to come; and Jesus saith unto her, "I that speak unto thee am He." Wonderful hour! The woman who came to the well as a part of the detested grind of a monotonous existence has found a noble thirst, and has discovered the new and eternal life of the spirit; she has found the Messiah. Fired with the missionary spirit she goes back to Sychar, telling its men, "Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did; is not this the Christ?"

**Quiz.** 1. How did the Jews regard the Samaritans? 2. What prophet and priest refused to let them help rebuild the temple? 3. What does Paul say concerning distinction of people and races? 4. What did Jesus mean by living water? 5. What call is given to those athirst in Revelation?

**Seed Truths.** —1. Prejudice is a rotten barrier. 2. Jesus was the great nature lover. He made all nature point upward. 3. That Christ was oftentimes hungry, weary and foot-sore makes it worth while to suffer these things for Him. 4. No other ever dared attempt to assuage the thirst of a world. 5. The daily grind oftentimes yields Divine grist. 6. The first work of the spirit is to convict of sin. 7. This world, its work, ambitions, pleasures, can never satisfy the soul.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# SOWING AND REAPING.

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh



behold,  
I say  
unto you,  
Lift up  
your  
eyes,  
and look  
on the



for they are white already to harvest.

And



and  
gathereth



unto  
life  
eternal:  
that  
both



and



may



together.



## SOWING AND REAPING.

### THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 4:35-42. READ MATT. 9:36-38, LUKE 10:2.

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee that we are privileged to be colaborers with Thee in the harvest field of the world. Help us to see the need and to heed the call for reapers.

Give us grace and wisdom to use the opportunities for service that lie at our door.

For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"It may not be our lot to wield  
The sickle in the ripened field;  
Nor ours to hear, on summer eves,  
The reaper's song among the sheaves.

Yet when our duty's task is wrought,  
In unison with God's great thought,  
The near and future blend in one,  
And whatsoever is willed, is done."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time A. D. 27. Place, Jacob's well, near Sychar. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Blessedness of Service. The service of manual labor, 1 Chron. 29:5. A reasonable service, Rom. 12:1. A condition of salvation, Phil. 2:12. Righteous service always acceptable, Acts 10:35. We labor with God, 1 Cor. 3:9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** From the lesson we learn: 1. The need of spiritual food. 2. The harvest is always waiting. 3. The rewards of Christian service. 4. Its blessedness. 5. The division of Christian labor. 6. God sends the laborers and prepares the field.

### READY FOR THE HARVEST.

**The Disciples Return.** When the disciples went to buy bread in Sychar they left Jesus sitting on the well, weary, faint and footsore. Judge their surprise on their return to find Him full of renewed energy; and in animated conversation with a Samaritan woman, which was more surprising still. The Jewish rabbis never talked to any woman in public, least of all a Samaritan woman, whom the Jews held to be always "unclean." Though they could not help wondering, the dignity of the Teacher and the humble earnestness of the woman forbade an interruption of the interview. Among themselves they might ask questions but not of Him. Meanwhile the woman whose heart was overflowing with this newly found well-spring of life, had risen, and forgetful of the unfilled water pot which she left at the Master's feet, hurried back to town with her wonderful announcement. The first desire of the convert is to bring others to Jesus.

**The Repast.** Can you not see the rustic group? After washing at the well they open their purchases, spread their simple repast on the grass and invite the Master to join in the meal. He who was so hungry is now oblivious of the food they have prepared for Him. "Master, eat," they plead. But Jesus' soul is full. One dead in sin has found life. Perhaps there was a touch of the pain that comes from the dullness and misunderstanding of those dearest to us; it may have disappointed Him that His disciples saw nothing in the conversation with the Samaritan woman except wonder at the violations of custom, and now they thought of nothing but bodily refreshment. He tells them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." The mystery deepens. Who has brought Him aught to eat? Gently and patiently He ex-

plains, that His meat is to do God's will and accomplish His work. They do not yet understand and withdraw to the out-strewn meal.

**A Survey of the Field.** The disciples are soon too busily eating to lift their eyes; their talk falls upon the crop prospects in the rich fields through which they have just walked. Jesus is the only one who sees the moving objects in the distance. He knows it is not a caravan of traders or even a group of travelers like themselves; it is the men of Sychar coming out of town to see the Messiah of whom the woman has told them. One of the disciples has just been saying that in four months it will be harvest time. But Jesus would turn their thoughts to a harvest more worthy of their attention, and pointing down the road to those approaching, He says, You say, "There are four months and then cometh harvest; behold I say unto you lift up your eyes and look on the fields." They had been looking down at the fields, Jesus would have them look up.

A young girl once said to a Christian worker, "I should think you would be discouraged by the outlook. There are so few good people and so many bad; so few care about religion while so many are indifferent." The Christian worker replied quickly, "The outlook may be discouraging but not the uplook. The Christian who does not obey the Master's command, 'Lift up your eyes,' when he surveys his field of labor, is sure to fail."

**Harvest at Hand.** The men of Sychar can now be plainly seen. The Master points down the road and says, "Look on the fields; for they are white already to the harvest." Ah, fertile and rich as the plain of Samaria; beautiful and bountiful as its promise of increase, here is a greater harvest. In this despised land which some of the disciples entered reluctantly and through which they

desired to pass on as quickly as possible to Galilee; in this unpromising field are souls waiting to be garnered for the Master. Why wait four months hence for a harvest which at most will only cheapen the price of bread, when you see the ripened grain in this eager crowd of Samaritans? I wonder if the Master would not have us lift our eyes and look on the field about us?

A young man in college was so busily engaged in fitting himself to preach the gospel in a land that had no Bible, that he never knew that his own room mate was wholly ignorant of God's word, and soul hungry for his chum to speak to him of sacred things, until the grim reaper Death had garnered in a soul that he might have led to salvation.

**Wages for Sower and Reaper.** Jesus continues the harvest lesson. "He that reapeth received wages." While they went to Sychar after bread, He had harvested a soul. The Samaritan woman was indeed the gathered fruit unto life eternal. She had gone back to the town a sower and so immediate was the harvest that the expectant Samaritans were now waiting like ripened grain to be garnered into the Kingdom. The sower, the Samaritan woman, would rejoice as well as the Great Reaper.

**Sent Into the Field.** "I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor." The disciples were good men and with intellectual breadth for Jews, which made them willing to trade with the Samaritan, but they went on to Sychar on business and never once dreamed of telling those with whom they came in contact through trade, that the Messiah waited outside the town to bless and to save. I wonder if they were not ashamed to find how much better a disciple the woman was than they? It was her blessed privilege to start the first Christian revival.

**The Field Prepared.** "Other men labored and ye are entered into their labors." The very neighborhood surrounding them was rich in associations. They could see, at one point, in the middle of the plain, the spot where Phineas, the high priest and grandson of Aaron was buried; at another the tomb of Eleazer, Aaron's son and successor. At the foot of Mt. Gerizim stood the oak under which Abraham pitched his tent on first entering the Holy Land. Altars had been built under the great oak to the living God by Abraham, Jacob and Joshua. Had all these godly lives been lived for naught? Surely a field with so many sacred associations was not altogether unclean or hopeless. We do

not know the forces hidden all around us; and for want of knowledge we miss life's greatest opportunity of service.

The heart of that hardened criminal was prepared years ago for our reaping by a mother's prayers. The saloon system we fear to attack has had its foundations washed away by the tears of countless drunkards' wives and children. The neighbor or playmate to whom we dread to carry the message, passed a wakeful night because her heart was being ploughed by the Holy Spirit for our sowing. An evangelist once passed through a certain portion of England and was everywhere gladly and attentively received. Upon his return to London he asked the secretary of the society which sent him out, why his ministrations had met with so much better results there than elsewhere. The reply was, "Fifty years ago, a man went through that country whose name was John Wesley."

**The Harvest.** The Samaritans were now able to judge for themselves. What they saw and heard carried conviction. Their testimony is even stronger than the woman's. "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard Him ourselves and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world." She had asked if it might not be, they know it is the Christ. How much more real anything becomes after we have seen it; how much better we understand a writer if we are privileged to hear him. How different the Christ we hear about, from the Christ whose voice we have heard in our hearts, and whom we have seen! These Samaritans were wise in that they did not take another's word, but tested Christ themselves. He remained two days. They did not demand miracles or signs as at Jerusalem, but accepted His holy word. If we were like the Samaritans,

"If our love were but more simple,  
We should take Him at His word;  
And our lives would be all sunshine,  
In the sweetness of our Lord."

**Quiz.** 1. How many times does Christ use the harvest field as an illustration? 2. What time of the year is the Jewish harvest? 3. Did the Samaritans hear the preaching of John the Baptist? 4. Why were the Jews prejudiced against Samaria? 5. In what parable did Christ use the Samaritan? 6. Have you asked God to show you the harvest field about you?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Jesus is the one true democrat. With Him there was neither Jew nor Gentile, male or female. 2. To the disciples the harvest meant more bread, to Christ, more souls. 3. The wages are the same though one soweth and another reapeth. 4. It is a mistake to judge men good enough to buy and sell with, but not good enough for the Kingdom. 5. The harvest is always nearer at hand than we think.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## THE NOBLEMAN'S SON HEALED.

So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain



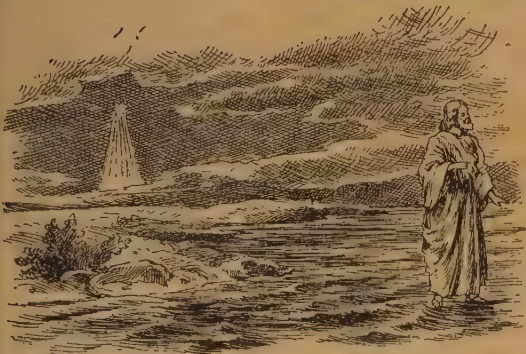
whose son was



at Capernaum.  
When he heard that  
Jesus was come  
out of Judæa  
into Galilee, he  
went unto him and



that he would come  
down, and heal his  
son: for he was at  
the point of death.  
Then said Jesus unto  
him, Except ye see



ye will not believe.  
The nobleman  
saith unto him,  
Sir, come down  
ere my child die.  
Jesus saith unto  
him, Go thy  
way; thy



liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.  
And as he was now



his servants  
met him,  
and told  
him, saying,  
Thy





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 4:43-54.

**Prayer:** Lord, We rejoice that Thou art ever ready to help those who seek Thee in distress. May we believe Thy word more fully. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet  
A present help is He;  
And faith hath yet its Olivet,  
And love its Galilee. —Whittier.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Cana of Galilee. Persons, Jesus and nobleman.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Help in Trouble. He will speedily help. Isa. 65:24. His readiness to answer, Matt. 7:9-11. His continual deliverance from trouble, Job 5:19. God a very present help, Psa. 46:1. A help to faith, Mark 9:24. Help in His name, Psa. 124:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** The incident of the healing of the nobleman's son illustrates: 1. The father's belief in the power of Christ's presence. 2. Jesus' demand for a higher faith. 3. Jesus' disregard for the rank of the petitioner. 4. His readiness to help. 5. His power is not limited to His presence. 6. The wise and tender method of Jesus, which leads the slender faith to higher ground.

### THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.

**In His Own Country.** How capricious a thing is fame! Jesus left Galilee an obscure and comparatively unknown peasant, to return a popular hero. Although He had lived among them for thirty years, His own countrymen had to go up to Jerusalem to discover the greatness of One who dwelt in one of their villages, and bring back an account of the miracles and the things He has done in the distant city. No sooner do they hear of the sensation He has created in Jerusalem than they feel proud of Him. But the enthusiastic reception they accorded Him on His return did not spring from a genuine regard for His mission; it was only an echo of the recognition and applause He had won in the South. Subsequent events show that they were no more ready to accept His teaching. Small wonder that Jesus sadly exclaimed, "A prophet hath no honor in his own country." It is a sorrowful statement that they to whom the Gospel is most accessible are often the least ready to receive it. How slow were Lincoln's fellow townsmen to recognize in the raw-boned, awkward and simple Lincoln the greatest statesman of his age.

**A Nobleman's Visit.** Accounts of Jesus' miracles had reached even the household of Herod Antipas. No sooner had He again arrived at Cana as Nathaniel's guest than a nobleman and officer of the royal household sought Him. It is supposed that this nobleman was Chuza, whose wife's devotion to Jesus was afterward so manifest. When the news of His arrival reached the nobleman, he came to Jesus. His errand was so urgent that he did not send a messenger, but travelled twenty miles himself to appeal to Jesus in person.

**At the Point of Death.** No place is free from sickness or disease. The nobleman's son was very ill with one of those intermittent fevers so very common in a hot country, and lying at the point of death. Capernaum,

like all the other towns of the day, must have had many versed in the healing art as it was understood at that time; for the physicians of that day resorted largely to charms, magic spells and sorcery. Roots, medicinal stones and the secret names of angels were relied on for cures. What a contrast between these "hakims" and Jesus, before whose word or touch disease fled! To this nobleman Jesus was merely a healer, greater possibly than any of His time, and more successful in His use of the sorcerer's art, but still a healer. He was not actuated by any belief in Jesus as the Son of God. One method of the Oriental healer was to lay the hand on the troubled part. Perhaps he can persuade Jesus to lay hands on his son; he "besought Him that He would come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death."

We all remember the instance of the multimillionaire who sent all the way from Chicago to Vienna, Austria, to secure the services of a noted surgeon in behalf of his little daughter who was lame. And we know how the eminent surgeon made the long journey across the sea and continent to perform an operation which won the wonder and admiration of the world.

**The Great Physician.** Had Jesus been just an ordinary man, or even a very extraordinary healer of all ailments and disease, He would have been moved by the father's plea to go to Capernaum. It afforded a splendid chance to make a favorable impression on Herod's court and of getting on a footing with the fashionable and great. Why, if He was to found a Kingdom it was absolutely necessary to secure great names and powerful influence for the undertaking! But the Great Physician's mind is not bent on the boy's physical malady, nor on furthering His own interest or any enterprise, however worthy. His research goes farther and He sees that the father is in greater danger than the boy. With a single thought He can restore that young life and bring the glow of health to feverish cheek and wasted form; but what of the father who so little under-



## THE NOBLEMAN'S SON HEALED.

stands the Divine gift and power he would call to his son's aid?

**The Diagnosis.** The Great Physician has been sent to prescribe for the sin-sick soul as well as to heal human ailments. This man was asking for some wonder of the miracle-monger when he needed a glimpse of the Son of God. He must learn that the Divine Life-Giver could restore life at a distance as easily as by His presence. Jesus therefore speaks to the nobleman without any regard for his rank or influence. "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe."

**The Father's Plea.** Something new is springing in the father's breast. The proud nobleman is almost as humble and importunate as the Syrophoenician woman, whose faith Jesus tested by failing to immediately grant her prayer for her child. The agonized father cries out, "Sir, come down ere my child die." Jesus never trifles with us. He may not answer our prayer in just the way we ask, but He never fails any who call upon Him, so now He relieves the father's anxiety and lifts the burden from his agonized soul. "Go thy way; thy son liveth."

**Confidence in the Great Physician.** Ah, when those words were spoken there was a look of kingly authority which the father caught. He could no longer doubt. Before the Master's feet a wicket gate opened, at which he cast all the burden of anxiety concerning his son. The man believed the word Jesus had spoken. He did not even haste back to Capernaum as he had hastened to Cana, for we do not find him returning till the next day. He may have given his jaded horses time for rest, or he may have transacted some court business pertaining to his office, we know not; but the leisurely return is abundant proof of the father's faith. Would it not make life easier if we could all have a like faith and cease to carry our worries and anxiety after they have been brought to Jesus?

One of the greatest records for rapid travel was made by a wealthy Westerner who was recalled from a business trip East by the illness of his son. Great expenditure of money placed at his disposal one of the fastest engines at the railroad yards. His private car was attached; the train was given right of way. Everything was in readiness at every division point and the trip to Colorado lowered the world's record for fast railway travel. The nobleman did not need to make such haste. His child was in the hands of the Great Physician.

**Thy Son Liveth.** His servants knew how anxious the father would be to hear, so they met him. We may be sure he was not surprised at the tidings. "Thy son liveth." The father had known it would be so, for he

asks them the hour when the boy began to amend. "And they said unto him, 'Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.' " So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said unto him, "Thy son liveth." The cure outran the father. It was a simple but very satisfactory way of verifying the miracle.

**The Miracle.** And this is the meaning of a miracle; we may call it a marvel that is foretold. It was not impossible that the boy who lay at the point of death should have recovered; it would have been a marvel; though it would not have proved there was anything supernatural in the case. But when this marvel followed the word of Jesus who commanded the child's recovery, and without any other intervention, it became a miracle. If we study the miracles Jesus did, we will find that His word never failed to heal the sick, to make the lame walk, to give sight to the blind, health to the leper, sanity to the demoniac or to restore the dead to life; for He is the Great Physician.

**A Happy Family.** No wonder the nobleman believed and all his house. How he must have hurried homeward to receive ocular proof of this wonderful miracle. And when home at last he embraced his son with a feeling of peculiar love and tenderness. Had the boy not been restored to him almost from the grave? Then as the happy family gathered about him, the father must have told them about his interview with Jesus, of His tenderness, authority and Divine power. Doubtless they all longed to thank Him for this manifestation of His goodness. And if, as Bible students think, the nobleman was Chuza, king Herod's steward, we do not wonder that his wife followed Jesus during His tour of Galilee, and in the hour of His trial went up to Jerusalem to minister to Him of her wealth. For at His mere word, had not the flush of fever vanished from her boy's face? At His command death had loosed its hold upon the emaciated body; health had come with flush of joy, and her son had been saved to her. Moreover, in the very household of Herod, Jesus had manifested His power and had proved His word greater than that of the Roman king. No wonder that ever after the tyrant king watched the career of the Carpenter of Nazareth.

**Quiz.** 1. From what country did Jesus return to Cana? 2. What disciple lived at Cana? 3. What was the distance between Cana and Capernaum? 4. Why did Jesus refuse to go to Capernaum? 5. What resulted from His refusal?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Christ has the power to annihilate distance. 2. He only refuses a request to grant something better. 3. The man who believes does not need to make haste. 4. The word of God outruns the swiftest steed. 5. The cure of sin is always followed by faith in the Healer.

MARGARET WINTINGER.

# JESUS REJECTED AT NAZARETH.

And he came to



where he  
had been  
brought up:  
and, as his  
custom was,  
he went



on the



day,  
and



for to read. And there

was delivered unto him the



of the



Esaias.  
And when  
he had



he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to



the  
gospel  
to the





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 4:16-30. READ MATT. 13:54-58, MARK 6:1-5.

**Prayer:** Our Father: We thank Thee that we have grown up surrounded with Gospel privileges and blessings; that from earliest youth we have known and heard of Him who came to set at liberty those in bondage to sin.

O help us that the abundance of these blessings may not make them commonplace in our eyes. May Thy goodness lead us to repentance and not to hardness of heart. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"He comes to break oppression,  
To set the captive free;  
To take away transgression,  
And rule in equity."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, April A. D. 28. Place, the synagogue at Nazareth. Persons, Jesus and townsmen.

**Scripture Setting:** Rejection of Christ. Despised and rejected of men, Isa. 53:3. The rejected corner stone, Psa. 118:22, Matt. 21:42. Rejected of His generation, Luke 17:25. Rejected by His own people, John 1:11. Christ foretells His own rejection, Mark 8:31. We are judged for rejection of Christ, John 12:48.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jesus' visit to the synagogue at Nazareth discloses: 1. Jesus as an habitual worshipper in God's House. 2. As a reverent reader of God's word. 3. As the consolation of the poor. 4. As the liberator of the sin-bound. 5. As the light of the blind. 6. The prejudice of His townspeople. 7. The immovable composure of the Lord over against the blind rage of His enemies.

### JESUS IN HIS HOME TOWN.

**The Return to Nazareth.** The stay in Cana was probably of short duration. With interest we follow Him to the city in which He has spent His childhood and early manhood. It is only a few months since He left Nazareth, and yet how much has passed of importance not only to Himself, but to His people and to the world. Never before or since has history been made so rapidly. He left the little town known only as the carpenter's Son, and returns with a following who recognize Him as the Messiah—Israel's King. Day after day He had labored at the carpenter's bench, unnoticed and unknown, but now His mighty works are heralded throughout the length and breadth of the land. How will His former townspeople receive Him?

**Home Again.** What must have been His thoughts as He again entered the well-known valley and once more beheld scenes familiar since a boy? As He watched the golden rays of Friday's setting sun cast their lengthening shadows across the still valley, He could hear the three familiar blasts of the trumpet which proclaimed the advent of the Sabbath. Early Sabbath morning and following the custom of His boyhood, Jesus goes to the synagogue where He has so often worshipped.

The synagogue or Jewish meeting house has been called the cradle of the church; it is certain that the church is the outgrowth of the synagogue. It is of interest therefore to know that the synagogue originated during the Babylonish captivity when the long years in exile in Babylon made a place of worship on Sabbath and feast days a necessity. After the restoration many of the returned Jews were ignorant of their native language, and these meeting houses were needed in which to read and interpret the Scriptures to the restored exiles.

Naturally prayers and then addresses were added, until at last services were held in the regular synagogues, and on all occasions, corresponding with the worship of the temple. A community numbering ten heads of families was permitted to build a synagogue. In addition to the temple, Jerusalem had four hundred and sixty synagogues.

**The Service.** Shall we follow Jesus, His mother, and His brethren into the synagogue on this memorable Sabbath in Nazareth? The building is of stone hewn from the surrounding hills. There are curious carvings on the lintels over the door we enter, and the worshippers face west so they may pray toward Jerusalem. The room is well lighted by windows, the floor is of slabs of white limestone; the roof is flat and supported by heavy columns, making a colonnade which forms the body of the synagogue. At the south end is a movable "Ark," where the sacred rolls of the law and the prophets are kept. Those conspicuous seats in front of the ark and facing the people are reserved for the elders and honorable. There is a gallery for women at the north end, which Mary enters, while Jesus and His brethren occupy the rear seats allotted humble worshippers.

**The Preacher.** All is quiet, for no one may joke, laugh, talk or behave lightly in the synagogue. The officials are all in their places; the chief ruler of the synagogue, who always has charge, even to naming those who shall read the law, conduct the prayers and deliver the address, calls the One in the rear seat to lead the services. Rumors of His wonderful deeds in Cana and Jerusalem have found their way here, and as He steps forward to ascend the "Bimi" or platform in the center of the

synagogue, He is the target for all eyes. Though all the faces about are well known, He seems a stranger among His own people, to be looked at, listened to, criticized and accepted or rejected by those who have known Him as a boy.

**The Hearers.** We may be sure there was not an empty seat in the synagogue that eventful Sabbath morning. All were present to hear the carpenter Joseph's Son, who had always been a favorite despite poverty and lowly station. We know that Jesus' heart always went out in compassion for His hearers, but never had He another audience whom He so loved and for whom He so yearned. What joy if He might lead these old friends into the Kingdom! His own family had not yet accepted Him. He who has felt the same spiritual yearning for loved ones will surely answer our prayers for the conversion of relatives and friends.

**The Test.** The ancient prayer service could never have seemed so sacred, and the congregation, strangely moved, respond with a solemn Amen. The Chazzan approaches the ark, takes from it the roll of the law, from which at least seven readings must be given; the concluding portion is handed to Jesus. It is the book of the prophet Esaias. Wonderful privilege accorded the Nazarite congregation, that of hearing God's own Word read by God Himself. What a new meaning must have been given the text.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
Because He anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor,  
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,  
And recovering of sight to the blind,  
To set at liberty them that are bruised,  
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

**The Sermon.** Closing or rolling up the book and handing it back to the attendant, Jesus follows the custom of the rabbis and sits down to deliver His discourse. The beginning of the sermon is not reported, but we learn that His auditors were astonished at His gracious words. They are spellbound. He has shown them a different world—or is it only what this world would be if He who is love were crowned its King?

The discourse is ended. The members of the synagogue discuss the merits of the ser-

mon. All agree as to its marvelous power. While Jesus waits with unutterable longing for one awakened soul, they turn from the discourse to the preacher. "Who would have thought to hear the Son of Joseph, the village carpenter, speak like that?" A wag-gish tongue suggests that if He has come to the poor, let Him remedy the poverty of His own family. He has been doing great things in Jerusalem and Capernaum, let Him manifest His power in His own city!

**The Text Applied.** Jesus did not need to hear their criticism. He knows men's thoughts, and He shows them how even in the days of the prophets Jewish unbelief and hardness of heart compelled Elijah and Elisha to perform their greatest miracles for the Gentiles. He reveals Himself as the fulfillment of Esaias' prophecy! The comparison in favor of the Gentiles stings His hearers to the quick. They refuse to accept Joseph's son. They will not bear His presence any longer. Forgetful of the holy Sabbath day, the wrathful congregation threw Him out of the synagogue; they thrust Him out of the city, and with stones and curses they drive Him to the brow of the great hill, to crowd Him over the abrupt cliff to sure and certain death. "Away with Him," they cry, "Down with Joseph's Son." "Death to the Carpenter."

**Vanished but Not Vanquished.** In a spirit of sadness Jesus has permitted Himself to be driven by the angry mob dumb as a sheep to the slaughter! He may have been tempted to let them do their worst. What, after all, did life hold for Him but a few years more of suffering? Why try to live? But He knows His hour had not yet come, and suddenly the surging crowd is awed by His commanding majesty. That burly fellow in front finds his arm stayed; the foremost persecutor falls back; those cursing tongues are stilled. A strange spell has fallen on the mob; with holy calm and pitying silence Jesus of Nazareth passes by and pursues His way, while His townsmen shamefacedly return to their city, on the Sabbath day broken and desecrated by their wrath.

**Quiz.** 1. Did Jesus ever return to Nazareth? 2. On what other occasions did He escape the mob unharmed? 3. What accusations did the Nazarenes make against Him? 4. Why were His townspeople angered? 5. What did His own family say of Him?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Not all who have the greatest privileges profit by them. 2. We must have greatness in ourselves to acknowledge the greatness of our familiars. 3. Many admire the preacher's eloquence, but dislike the logic that drives the truth home. 4. They who are the most ready to throw flowers are the quickest to throw stones. 5. Calmness of soul is always a vantage point. 6. Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Gladstone, Bismarck, General Gordon, Garfield, McKinley and hundreds of others as prominent, have been churchgoers from their youth.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE DRAUGHT OF FISHES.

Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon

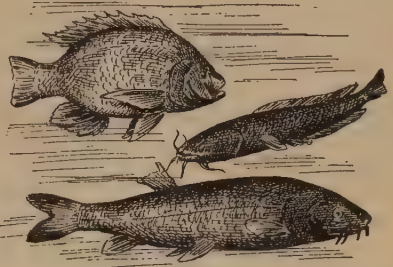


into the  
deep,  
and



for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have

all the night,  
and have taken  
nothing:  
nevertheless  
at thy word I  
will let down  
the net. And  
when they had  
this done, they  
inclosed a great  
multitude of



and their



And they



unto their  
partners,  
which were  
in the other



that they  
should  
come and  
help them.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 5:1-11, ALSO MATT. 4:18-22, MARK 1:16-20.

**Prayer:** Lord, we too would follow Thee. May we listen to Thy word and obey Thy call. Instruct us that we may become fishers of men, leading others to Thee. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"As the first disciples followed,  
As they went where'er He sent;  
So today we too may follow,  
On His leading still intent."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Galilee, by the lake of Gennesaret. **Persons,** Jesus, Simon and Andrew, James and John.

**Scripture Setting:** His Followers! Caleb followed God, Num. 14:24. David a follower, Psa. 63:8. Follow on to know the Lord, Hos. 6:3. Commanded to follow Him, Matt. 9:22. Reward to

followers, Luke 18:28-30. Follow His voice, John 10:27. Follow in His footsteps, 1 Peter 2:21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The call of the four disciples reveals: 1. Jesus, the Teacher. 2. The Friend and Helper. 3. The reward of faith in His word and obedience to His command. 4. The call to service. 5. Mission of His followers. 6. The conditions of absolute discipleship.

### JESUS AMONG THE FISHERMEN.

**A Noted Fishing Place.** Beautiful Lake Gennesaret is before us; its blue waters still dark and unquiet from the storm of the previous night. One of Joshua's ordinances made the privilege of fishing in the lake free to all, and ever since Joshua's time fishing has been one of the main occupations of those who live along the shores of Lake Gennesaret. Fish was a favorite food with the Jews; it was eaten in health and sickness; on week days, and was always a part of the Sabbath meal. We read of three hundred different kinds of fish forming a part of the menu at a dinner given by a noted rabbi; they were eaten fresh, dried or pickled, made into sauce and prepared in every conceivable way.

**On the Beach.** It is a busy scene. The fisher boats which usually flock its waters are drawn up on the lake shore. The fishermen, after a long and hard night's unavailing toil, are busily engaged washing their nets of the sand and in other ways repairing the damage done by the violent storm. We notice an especially busy group; the brothers, Simon and Andrew, who heard and responded to the call of discipleship during John the Baptist's preaching at the Jordan, and who were with Jesus at Cana, are busy at work, trying to mend the havoc of the past night. Farther down the shore, their partners, John and James, with their father, are quite as busy working and directing their hired help. John and James have also heard the call and answered it. Indeed, their mother and Mary were sisters, so on the human side they are cousins of Jesus.

It is early in the bright autumn morning — His days always began at dawn — and Jesus has come down to the lake. Early as is the hour, a great crowd awaits Him. Some have come from Cana and Capernaum, not only eager to see new miracles, but to hear of the Kingdom of which He preaches even

more confidently than did John the Baptist. The crowd pushes so close that He is forced to seek a better vantage ground from which He may address them.

**About Their Own Business.** Jesus sees His disciples. Their return to their home was an act of duty; the occasion had not yet demanded their entire service. But their gainful occupation has so crowded upon them that they have somewhat forgotten their higher calling. Indeed, they were so engaged in their fishing that they had failed to welcome Him on His arrival at Capernaum; amidst the mending of nets and their discouragement over the ill success of the night's toil, they have scarcely noticed the gathering crowd. They may have failed to remember Him for the moment, but Jesus has not forgotten them! He has come so early in the morning just to seek them.

How gently He recalls their allegiance; He sees Simon, who has not yet left his boat. Simon's boat shall be His pulpit. There is no word of complaint or rebuke as He asks for its use, not even a command, for He "prays" Simon to thrust out a little from the land. The request is granted, and Jesus assumes the attitude of teacher, by seating Himself in the boat, while His melodious voice reaches the people over the ripple of the waves. We have no report of that sermon, but we know that always "He spake as never man spake."

**Launching Into the Deep.** Simon Peter heard it all as he sat in the boat. Jesus finishes teaching the multitude and turns to tutor Simon and Andrew. "Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught." Very different is His tone from when He prayed for the use of the boat; gracious still but commanding. Simon realizes a higher will than his.

The fisherman and his boat are under the Master's control. Simon Peter, the man of



action, the ever-ready, answers almost before the command is finished, "I will let down the nets." Though he reminds Jesus of the night's fruitless toil, he does not hesitate one moment. There was no lack of decision about Peter. He has enlisted as a soldier in the new Kingdom, and it is absolutely essential that he shall obey his Commander. When the soldier hears the command, he becomes deaf to every other sound. Above the whirl of bullets, above the rattle of cannon and shell, above the noise of battle, he holds his General's command, "Charge!" I wonder if we are such soldiers, or would we have been afraid to launch out as Peter did?

**The Catch.** With the help of his brother, the more quiet Andrew, Simon pulls into the deep water and they let down the nets. "And when they had this done they enclosed a great multitude of fishes," of such weight that their nets begin to give way under the strain, and as it is beyond their power to life the catch, Simon beckons to his partners, James and John, whose boat was still drawn up on the shore. You may be sure that if you lend to the Lord you will be repaid. Peter lends his boat to the Master and his generosity is rewarded with a draught of fishes that fills his own boat and his partners' until there is danger of their sinking from the overweight.

**Illustration:** Off the shores of Cataline Island and Monterey Bay are beautiful marine gardens which grow far down under the ocean. There are great swaying trees, beautiful mosses, flowers more vivid in coloring than any on land, and fish as beautiful as the flowers. But to be visible to the human eye, one must enter a boat from which the light is excluded by a canvas cover and then one must look through the telescopic glass at the bottom of the boat. Without any such aids Jesus could look right down through the water to the bottom of the sea and He may at that moment have seen where were one of those large shoals of fish that inhabit Lake Gennesaret; or through the simple operation of His will, Jesus may have driven the finny tribes together to one point.

**The Simple Fisherman Awed.** What were Simon Peter's thoughts; what did it all mean to him? They had been among those "That go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; and they had seen the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep." Jesus had shown His dominion over the fishes of the sea. He had made "the

oars above and the fins below strike the waters in unison." Such knowledge was too great for Simon. He felt the purity and power of Christ, his own nothingness, his sinfulness and littleness. Indeed, the fear fell upon all of them. Such a sense of unworthiness is a real sign of fitness for service.

A young woman was urged to enter a certain field of missionary endeavor. "I feel so unworthy and incapable; if I felt I could do it, I would not hesitate." "I would not want you if you felt otherwise," was the reply.

**Fishers of Men.** Jesus stills the agitation of Simon Peter's heart and lifts its fear. "Fear not," He says, "from henceforth thou shalt catch men." Ah, the miracle of the fishes is not to recoup them for a night's futile toil; it is an object lesson, even though they may not understand the full meaning of that phrase, "fishers of men." "And when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him." Let others care for the fish, it was theirs to follow Him. After filling their boat, James and John probably returned to their former tasks, for Jesus comes to them a little later. With no word of explanation, or promise, He says, "Follow me." And they obey the command, leaving their father, the hired servants and the half mended nets.

Chrysostom says: "Admire the dispensation of the Lord, how He draws each by the art most familiar to him. The magi by the star, the fishermen by fish"; likewise the hungry by food, the woman of Samaria by water, the shepherd by his sheep.

**A Look Backward.** On the pebbly beach of Gennesaret the deserted boats and partly mended nets, and old Zebedee not at all understanding it, as he sees the four men following Jesus when they do not know where He will take them nor what He will have them do. He thinks Himself a King—the King, and He has persuaded these four simple fisher folk to help Him set up His Kingdom. How did it look to Zebedee, the old father? Did he think it all foolishness? Ah, Zebedee, it is foolishness, but the foolishness of God which is to confound the wise, overcome the mighty and redeem and reclaim the world.

**Quiz.** 1. What had Jesus been preaching? 2. How did the people receive His preaching? 3. When were these four disciples first called? 4. When did Jesus attach Peter to Simon's name? 5. To what did Jesus call the four?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The dawn of that morning when Jesus called the four disciples was the sunrise of a new world. 2. Most Christians would accomplish more if they launched deeper in. 3. One night's fruitless toil does not foretell failure. 4. Jesus did not seek big fish but a great draught of fishes. 5. One is never ready for service till he feels his own unworthiness. 6. His disciples are not called to be leaders but followers.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

And forthwith, when they were come



they  
entered



of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. But Simon's wife's mother



of a fever,  
and anon  
they tell  
him of her.  
And he  
came and



and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. And at even,



they



all that were diseased,  
and them that were  
possessed with devils.  
And all the city  
was gathered  
together at



And he healed many  
that were sick of  
divers diseases,  
and cast out many  
devils; and suffered  
not the devils to  
speak, because  
they knew him.





## CHRIST AND THE FISHERMEN

BY E. K. G. ZIMMERMAN

As Jesus was entering on His mission, He chose His disciples from among the poor people of the country. Walking along the shores of the sea of Galilee, He discovered Simon Peter and his brother Andrew casting their net, for they were fishermen. He called them away, saying that He would make them fishers of men. They at once followed Him. Presently two other fishermen, brothers, were found sitting in their boat mending nets; their names were James and John. They were working with their father, Zebedee. When He called them they left the ship and their father and followed His footsteps.

Zimmerman, the artist, is another painter of the German school; his work realistic and carefully finished. Nothing could be more natural than the old man's wrinkled face, his weather-beaten chest, his firm mouth and attentive expression. Jesus is talking seriously of His mission, his finely modeled hands on the father's wrinkled arm, while the two sons listen with all the avidity of their nature. The face of Jesus suggests the ideal preacher of the finer sort. The two sons have fine faces, particularly the one nearer to Christ, which is without doubt meant to represent John. In the background one of the other fishermen is coming ashore with an oar on his shoulder. Everything is very real; even the net seems actual.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST AND THE FISHERMEN  
CHRIST TOUCHES THE FISHMAN'S HAND

REINHARD SEBASTIAN ZIMMERMAN. 1815-1893.

ERNST ZIMMERMAN. 1852-1901.

"They are clever, yes, and wonderfully like. But the boy has his bread and butter to earn." So, in sober good faith for the youth's well-being, spoke the assembled uncles and aunts and family friends of the father and mother of Reinhard Zimmerman, called in counsel as to what should be done with the youth that with daily lengthening steps was striding toward manhood.

So, obediently enough—for obedience is the prime virtue of childhood in Germany—Reinhard packed away his pencils and extemporized brushes and went into the warehouse of an uncle in Hagenau, his birthplace. Here he handled sacks of corn and flour, tallied wine and oil casks, receipted for delivered eggs and chickens, learned the mysteries of single and double entry, and on a high stool kept faithful account of his master's business—for the artist slights nothing.

But the call of the spirit was too strong. The brushes and pencils came forth from their hiding place again. With the lake of Constance beneath his feet, its encircling mountains over his head, small wonder that the youth could not contain in quietness the response to beauty that stirred within him.

Not only the surrounding splendor of air, earth and water—the primal elements—found their way to his tablets, but quaint sketches of those about him. The village characters and dignitaries, the passing travelers, his fellow laborers in the arid desert of business, all were pictured with utter truth, yet with a queer humor—something quite apart from and infinitely more dignified than caricature—that made the uncle smile in spite of himself when one day he curiously viewed what his 'prentice clerk was doing.

A wealthy and traveled customer stood by. "That fellow will make a better painter

than a merchant," he observed. And so, at the instance of the interested customer, Zimmerman went to Munich and began to study painting in earnest. In 1844 he went to Paris, and after a short time in the studios, proceeded to England. In London he painted portraits with some considerable success and popularity. Returning to Munich in 1847 he exhibited the "Three Magi," and on this found his reputation firmly established.

Of numerous subsequent compositions, distinguished by a lively humor, excellent characterization and brilliant technique, may be mentioned: "Peasants at the Castle" (1853), "Beggar Musicians" (1854), "Corn-Market Day in Munich" (1861, Cologne Museum), "The Love Letter" (Karlsruhe Gallery), "Two Different Opinions" (1868, Bremen Gallery), "In the Antechamber Before an Audience" (Saint Gall Museum), "Visit to His Reverence" (1884, Hanover Museum), "Kindergarten" (1885, Brunswick Museum).

His son Ernst (1852-1901) born in Munich, was first instructed by him and afterwards a pupil of Wilhelm Diez at the Academy of Munich. After producing some clever genre scenes he turned to historical subjects, and in 1879 won a signal success with "Christ in the Temple." His principal subsequent works include: "Adoration of the Shepherds" (1883, New Pinakothek, Munich), "Satyr Giving Musical Instruction" (1884, Dresden Gallery), "Christus Consolator" (1888, Leipzig Museum), "Christ and the Fisherman" (Jubilee Exhibition, Berlin, 1886), "Christ Appearing to Thomas" (1892) and "Elector Max Emanuel Inspecting the Work at the Turkengraben" (1887, City Hall, Munich). He was appointed professor at the Munich Academy in 1886.

JAMES BEALINGS.



# A SABBATH IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 1:21-34. ALSO MATT. 8:14-17, LUKE 4:31-40.**

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee for Thy Sabbath. We thank Thee for its rest, for Thy preached word and the healing which it brings. Help us to keep it holy, and to delight in it that we may honor Thee and receive Thy blessing. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Sundays the pillars are  
On which Heaven's palace arched lies;  
The other days fill up the spare  
And hollow room with vanities;  
They are the fruitful beds and borders  
Of God's rich garden; that is bare  
Which parts their ranks and orders."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, the synagogue in Capernaum and Peter's home in Bethsaida. Persons, Jesus, Andrew, James and John.

**Scripture Setting:** The Authority of Jesus. Sermon on the Mount given with authority, Matt. 7:28-29. Enemies testify to power of His preaching, John 7:46. Power to forgive sins, Mark 2:7-10. Healing power, Luke 5:17. Power to give eternal life,

John 17:2. All powerful, Matt. 28:18. Eternal power, Rom. 1:20. Power of His name, Phil 2:9-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this Sabbath in Capernaum, Jesus has given us an object lesson of a Sabbath honored as God would have it, through: 1. Attendance at God's house. 2. Participation in Divine worship. 3. The cleansing of one with an unclean spirit. 4. The Christian home. 5. Healing and comforting the sick and afflicted.

## A WELL-SPENT SABBATH.

**An Object Lesson.** In this day of Sunday ball games, Sunday excursions, Sunday papers, Sunday theaters and widespread Sabbath desecration, the Sabbath which Jesus spent in Capernaum is truly a much-needed object lesson. More than once do His disciples mention Jesus' habit of worship and Sabbath observance. Jewish tradition had changed the Sabbath from the happy, holy rest day God had ordained into a day of weariness and tedium, through meaningless restrictions even more arbitrary than the old Connecticut blue laws. The temple service and that of the synagogue was uninspiring and void of spirituality, but Jesus did not make this an excuse for disobedience to the fourth commandment or absence from God's house. When the Sabbath day found Him in Capernaum, there was no deviation from His established custom. The ruins of the synagogue which He "straightway" entered may still be visited by travelers in the Holy Land.

**A Teacher of the Word.** Whenever a noted preacher, rabbi or stranger came to town, he was always accorded the privilege of addressing the congregation. Jesus was known in Capernaum; had He not healed the nobleman's son? We may be sure the area was crowded with men and the gallery filled with women, when He availed Himself of the privilege of speaking to the assembled worshippers. All the rabbis and teachers quoted the prophets for authority, but from Jesus they do not even hear a "thus saith the Lord." They straighten themselves to make sure they are not dreaming when He launches out with a "Verily I say unto you," and when He blesses the hearers and doers of "these words of mine," the

drowsy air of the synagogue is as if surcharged with electricity; the congregation is astir, heads are lifted and necks are craned to more plainly see the Teacher who speaks with an authority Moses never dreamed of. They are astonished. He teaches them "As One that had authority, and not as the scribes."

**An Unwonted Church-Goer.** While Jesus is still speaking, He is interrupted by a wild shout. "Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." It was the cry of one of those poor unfortunates, so numerous in that Eastern country, who were said to be possessed by an "evil or unclean spirit" or "devil." They were probably so called because the possession or obsession drove its victims to frequent unclean places, and often to make their dwelling in the tombs. A ceremonial ban was placed upon them, and they were never allowed to enter temple or synagogue; but this man breaks in upon Jesus' teaching and startles the congregation with his wild and defiant avowal of Jesus as the Holy One of God.

**Rebuke and Command.** Startled and fearful, yet curious, His hearers await the denouement. What will Jesus do? Will He withdraw Himself from the poor wretch, who is ceremonially unclean, and demand his expulsion from the synagogue? Like all evils, entrenched in society and in government, this evil spirit has asked to be let alone, even though it knows that the mission of Jesus and His disciples is to "destroy" the devil and all his works. Jesus does not even change His position, for now the authority of the Teacher is to be demonstrated.

In tones of supreme command, He says, "hold thy peace and come out of him."

**An Amazed Congregation.** Instantly the command is obeyed. The poor unfortunate falls on the floor of the synagogue, but there is "no hurt." The wild demented creature of a moment before regains his manhood, and surely there is no more grateful and adoring worshipper in all the synagogue on this memorable Sabbath than the former demoniac. No wonder all are amazed and that they turn to each other and question among themselves, "What new doctrine is this?" With what authority commandeth He even the unclean spirits and they obey Him?

**Illustration:** The insane were sadly neglected, cruelly treated and their places of confinement were little better than a habitation of the tombs, when less than a century ago two of His disciples, Elizabeth Fry in England and Dorothea Dix in our own country, continuing the mission of their Master, aroused the attention of the world to the inhuman treatment of these unfortunates, and the light, airy, wholesome and cheery asylums for the insane are a continuation of the good work Jesus began that Sabbath day. Yes, and in the Gospel missions of the great cities are found evidences of miracles as great; drunkards, once possessed by the demon alcohol, now reclaimed; men and women formerly in the bondage of an unclean spirit, now at peace and enjoying the liberty of the Gospel.

**A Guest in a Christian Home.** From the synagogue they leave Capernaum, and Jesus walks with His four lately chosen disciples a few miles along the shore to Bethsaida, where all enter Peter's home. It is the first Christian home of which we have any glimpse, and it bears all the ear-marks. It is not a pretentious structure, but an unassuming, comfortable, two-story house, standing a little way back on the beach, in a large yard. Selfishness does not reign, for its comforts and delights are shared with the husband's unmarried brother, Andrew, and the wife's mother. Husband and wife are one in the service of the Master, later in life the wife leaving its shelter to share the privations and perils of her husband's itinerary in the establishment of the Christian church. Moreover, Jesus is a welcome guest in the home.

**A Fever Patient.** Did Jesus hope to find rest in this hospitable home? No sooner has He entered the house than He is told how Peter's mother-in-law has been suddenly smitten down with a violent burning fever, such as is even now prevalent in that district. So little did even His most favored disciples know of His readiness to allay all human suffering and relieve all distress that

"they besought Him for her." Seeking the sick chamber, He bends over the sufferer, takes her by the hand and lifts her up, and immediately the fever leaves her, so that she ministers unto them. I fancy no deaconess ever since has rendered service with so grateful a heart. Saint Luke the physician tells us He "rebuked" the fever, just as He had rebuked the demon in the synagogue. It has taken the world nearly twenty centuries to learn that disease is the outcome of sin, ignorance or carelessness. Christianity continues to rebuke the fever by clearing the swamps, destroying the pestilential mosquito and demanding the thorough sanitation of every dwelling house.

What a sacred meal it must have been, having as a guest at the hospitable board the Teacher who had not only attested His authority by the miracle in the synagogue, but with Divine healing in the home; the meal prepared by the one who had been so marvelously healed. Surely it was different from the all too fashionable Sunday dinners of the present Lord's day, at which He whose name honors the day has no place or part.

**An Afternoon Clinic.** In every home the happenings of the synagogue were discussed. The miracles of healing that had taken place in the home of their neighbor Simon was also talked about. By the time the stars were out, new light had risen over every domestic hearth. There were homes of sorrow, care and sickness in Bethsaida and Capernaum, as everywhere, but the star of hope shone above them all. Surely He who had power to banish the evil spirit by a simple rebuke and instantly to restore to life one at death's door, will not find their case too desperate! So from all the populous neighborhood, they bring their sick children, wives, husbands, fathers, mothers, sisters and brothers. The whole city is hushed as its multitudes throng expectant at Simon's door. They lay their loved ones on beds and pallets and on the sands of the beach, beseeching the Great Physician to heal them. Was there ever before such a picture of the world's misery and need? Was He equal to it, did He fulfill their expectation that evening when a whole suffering city stood as a suppliant at His door? Ah, again Luke, himself a physician, tells us He laid His hands on every one of them and healed them!

**Quiz.** 1. How did Jesus' teaching differ from that of the rabbis? 2. Did the evil spirit desire to come out from his victim? 3. Is evil ever ready to restore its victims? 4. On what occasion does Paul mention Peter's wife? 5. What did Jesus afterward say concerning the responsibility of Capernaum because of the miracles performed in that city?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The authority of Christ and His religion has never been successfully disputed. 2. The devil always asks to be let alone. 3. Heaven, earth and hell sometimes meet in the same place. 4. In order to serve Jesus, we must first know His healing power. 5. Jesus is the only physician who heals every patient in a whole clinic.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE LEPER HEALED.

And there came



to him,  
beseeching  
him, and



and saying  
unto him,  
If thou wilt,  
thou canst make  
me clean.  
And Jesus, moved  
with compassion,



and saith unto him,  
I will; be thou clean.  
And as soon as he had  
spoken, immediately  
the leprosy departed  
from him, and  
he was cleansed.

And he straitly



and  
forthwith  
sent



And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man: but go thy way, shew



and offer for thy



those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 1:35-45. MATT. 8:2-4, LUKE 5:12-14.

**Prayer:** Thou, who art the Great Physician, we thank Thee that Thy touch hath still its ancient power: that Thou art, too, full of compassion and tender mercy. Have compassion on us and cleanse us from the leprosy of sin. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Touch me, and make the leper clean;  
Purge my iniquity:  
Unless Thou wash my soul from sin,  
I have no part in Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, an unknown city in Galilee. Persons, Jesus and a leper.

**Scripture Setting:** The Touch of Jesus. A woman touches the hem of His garment, Mark 5:27-29. Multitudes touch him, Mark 6:56. Children feel His touch, Mark 10:13-16. Jesus touches the bier, Luke 7:14. Thomas convinced, John 20:27-28. The Word of Life, 1 John 1:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson shows us: 1. The impetuosity, faith and fear of the leper. 2. Jesus' compassion for the most wretched and repulsive. 3. His readiness to heal and the power of His touch. 4. Jesus' regard for the Mosaic law. 5. That the leper's failure to obey hindered Jesus in His ministry.

### THE MAN WHO DISOBEYED ORDERS.

**A Pitiful Figure.** Nothing could be more dramatic than the scene before us. Naaman, the leper, who came to Elisha in a gilded chariot, drawn by prancing steeds, and accompanied by a retinue of servants, with credentials from an Assyrian monarch, was a masterful, imperious and lordly patient, despite his disease, altogether different from this pitiful creature. In all the clinic by the seashore there was no case so wretched, no one so hopeless as this grewsome, repellent figure. His rent clothes, disheveled hair, bandaged face of unnatural hue, and the mournful, raucous cry of "Unclean! Unclean!" proclaim the leper.

**A Living Death.** There is no existence so wretched as the life of isolation to which a leper is doomed. Death is far preferable. When Miriam, the sister of Moses, was punished with leprosy, Aaron interceded for her, "Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed," and Moses cried in anguish, "Heal her now, O God, I beseech Thee." So great has been the fear and aversion always to this dread, unconquerable and mysterious skin disease, that we find the leper proclaimed an outcast in ancient Egyptian papyrus writings fifteen hundred and fifty years before Christ. Fourteen hundred years before our Christian era the sacred writings of India declared his defilement, and in our own land a few years ago the mere suspicion of leprosy caused the one who was suspected, to be separated from wife and child, isolated from his fellow men, under Government detention and restraint, for a term of years, until it was proven beyond a doubt that he had no taint of the dread disease. In Jerusalem lepers were forbidden to worship in the temple and could not enter any walled city under penalty of forty stripes save one; they might

remain outside the gate and beg from travelers should any be so generous as to throw them a coin, but they could not live among their countrymen.

**"If Thou Wilt."** Repulsive and until now despairing, this leper pushes his way through the retreating crowd and kneels at Jesus' feet. Though they give many remedies for every known disease, the writings of the ancient rabbis do not contain the remotest suggestion of a cure for leprosy. In fact, the disease was regarded as little better than a living death; the leper was enjoined from all contact with the living and to bear the appearance of mourners. The possibility of any cure through human agency was never dreamed of by the Jews. But this poor leper must have heard Jesus preach, or possibly he had known of miraculous cures before Simon Peter's home. He has faith in Jesus' absolute power to heal, but the cruelty of man during those years as an outcast has made him doubt His desire to alleviate suffering such as his. In an agony of supplication he cries, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." How glad we should be today that we know Jesus is love.

**Illustration.** In India, mere children are married. Should the husband die at any time, the blame is always laid to the poor little child wife. In former times as a widow, she was burned on her husband's funeral pyre. English law no longer permits this to be done, but even now her fate is almost as pitiable as that of a leper. She is scorned and derided by her husband's relatives and her own and leads an existence so wretched that when Punditai Ramabai, a child widow, first heard of Jesus' love for her, it seemed impossible for her to believe that He was willing to love and care for her. But once convinced of His love she started a home and school for other child widows in gratitude for what Jesus did for her.

**"I Will."** The leper would have fled from a rabbi, for they only added to the burden



of his existence by their inhumane treatment. We learn that one rabbi boasted that he always threw stones at the lepers to keep them far off! Not a rabbi would salute a leper or would come within a distance of six feet of one, and if the wind came from that direction, the rabbi would not come within one hundred feet of the unfortunate. Not so Jesus! So infinite is His compassion, that though the ceremonial law made it defilement to touch a leper, Jesus stretches forth His hand and touches the poor wretched outcast kneeling at His feet. And He says, "I will; be thou clean."

We all know the story of Father Damien, who devoted his life to a colony of lepers, eating with them and living with them that he might tell them of the blessed Jesus, who was and ever is the leper's friend.

**Clean and Whole.** Gentle and tender as was Jesus' touch, it was all-powerful. As His hand rested on the poor leper, the diseased frame pulsed and thrilled with renewed health. The heart that had so long despaired of any help in this world leaped for joy. "Immediately the leprosy departed from him and he was cleansed." We who know so little of the dread disease can hardly realize what that healing meant to those around Him; the joy of the man who, after long years of uncleanness and banishment, was now as other men. Never again would children run from him, no more would his fellow men pass by on the other side, nor would he longer have to wander in mourner's garb, bewailing his deadly condition; from his lips will never again come the warning cry, "Unclean! Unclean!" And then the wonder of all the onlookers. Not since Elisha's time had such a thing happened. Surely He is the One of whom Isaiah prophesied. How it must have increased the faith of His recently chosen disciples. Have you ever thought of the wonderful touch of Jesus? He lays His hand on the leper, and lo! healthful life is imparted; on Simon's mother-in-law, and the fever is laid; upon the bier at Nain and upon the dead daughter of Jairus, and death departs and life returns. Thus His touch can cleanse our sins, touch our dead hearts and give them new life.

**Silence Imposed.** Had Jesus been a seeker after fame or temporal power, this cure and the enthusiasm it created might have led to His acknowledgment as King by the populace. But Jesus was so wholly averse to any-

thing sensational, and so avoided fame as a miracle worker, that He sent the man away, charging him to say nothing about what had happened to him. He did not wish to increase an excitement that would only hinder His work. There was an invaluable service the healed man might render his benefactor—the formal registration of his cure. Therefore Jesus tells him, "See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them." The priests in Jerusalem needed the leper's testimony, not the multitudes in Galilee, who were following Jesus so gladly.

**Too Good to Keep.** It was a wonderful opportunity of testifying for Jesus, but the former leper thought he understood better than the Master, and he went out and began to publish it much, and to blaze abroad the matter. The man may have meant well, but how much better if he had said,

"I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,  
I'll say what you want me to say."

Because of the publicity which came through his disobedience, Jesus could not enter the cities as before, and even in desert places He was beset by crowds of curiosity-seekers, more interested in the miracles He performed than in His teaching. "To obey is better than sacrifice."

A missionary returned to her home on a furlough. One day, while in her mother's house, she noted the peculiar appearance of her fingers. Without a hint of her fear to anyone, she hurried to New York and consulted a great skin specialist, only to have her fears confirmed. The tell-tale signs denoted leprosy. The missionary received the knowledge not as an affliction but as a call to the afflicted. She believed that she had become like them that she might go and testify of Jesus to the lepers, and returning to the missionary field, began her work among these outcasts. How different from the healed leper, who was willing to testify of Jesus' cure but was unwilling to obey Him or go where He sent him.

**Quiz.** 1. What was the Mosaic law concerning the purification of a leper? 2. What noted Bible character was a leper? 3. How was he healed? 4. What did leprosy typify? 5. What king disobeyed God and by whom was he told that obedience was better than sacrifice? 6. What king was smitten with leprosy for disregard of God's ordinances? 7. What servant for lying?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. No one ever besought Jesus in vain. 2. Jesus' cleansing touch frees from the leprosy of sin. 3. Jesus knew no "If." 4. He would not have us always on our knees, but sends us away to do His bidding. 5. There are always more persons willing to testify than to obey. 6. The leper is not the only one who accepts help and rejects advice.

MARGARET WINTINGER.

When



saw their faith,  
he said unto  
the sick of  
the palsy, Son,  
thy sins be  
forgiven. But  
there were  
certain of the



there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

And immediately when  
Jesus perceived in his  
spirit that they so  
reasoned within  
themselves, he said  
unto them, Why  
reason ye these things  
in your hearts?  
Whether is it  
easier to say to



Thy sins be  
forgiven thee;  
or to say, Arise,  
and take up thy  
bed, and walk?

But that ye  
may know that  
the Son of man  
hath power on



to forgive sins, (he saith  
to the sick of the  
palsy,) I say unto  
thee, Arise, and take  
up thy bed, and go thy  
way into thine house.

And immediately



and



and



before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 2:1-12, MATT. 9:1-7, LUKE 5:18-26.

**Prayer:** Lord, we rejoice in Thy power to forgive. Cleanse us from all our sins and make us completely whole. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

"Come ye sinners, poor and needy,  
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;  
Jesus ready stands to save you,  
Full of pity, love and power."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Capernaum. **Persons,** Jesus, the paralytic and his four friends.

**Scripture Setting:** Forgiveness and Healing. Health conditioned on obedience, Ex. 15:26. The forgiveness of the Lord, Psa. 103:3. Help in sickness and deliverance from sin, Psa. 41:3-4. Through His word, Psa. 107:20. Forgiveness and healing through His suffering, Isa. 53:5. Completeness of

His healing and forgiveness, Jer. 17:14. Promise of healing, love and forgiveness, Hos. 14:4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The healing of the one sick with the palsy manifests, 1. The perseverance and faith of the afflicted man and his friends. 2. Jesus as the searcher of the heart. 3. The thoroughness of His method. 4. The importance of removing the cause if results are to be obtained. 5. The free exercise of His love. 6. Jesus' power to forgive sins.

### A REMARKABLE ENTRANCE.

**A Crowded House.** When Jesus returned to Capernaum, His temporary home, the house was not large enough to hold those eager to hear Him. So great was the multitude that it crowded the house, blocked the entrance and overflowed into the narrow street, practically closing all possibility of further entrance. Jesus stood within the entrance of the guest chamber which opened upon the covered gallery that ran around the familiar Eastern court yard. Already the espionage of His enemies had begun, and those Pharisees, and doctors of the law from every village of Galilee and Judea, and from Jerusalem itself were spies sent out by the Sanhedrin to secure evidence which could be used for Jesus' overthrow. As usual they had obtained the foremost places and were "sitting by" Him, while the court was thronged out into the street.

**A Patient Arrives.** All were intent on the Master's teaching; the simple Galileans drinking in the new truths while the "scribes" quibbled over every word. Suddenly the appearance of four men carrying a bed created a stir on the outskirts of the crowd. It may have been one of those light portable beds for the mid-day sleep or for the service of the sick; or it may have been a simple mattress, possibly only a large sheep skin; any or all of these were in common use. Interest centers not in the bed but in its occupant, a confirmed paralytic. And yet it had become so common to see the sick carried to Jesus in this manner that it would have attracted no attention but for the persistence of the bearers of the couch.

**Down Through the Roof.** With a courtyard crowded out into the street and every passage-way barred by the people, they might have been pardoned for refusing to make further effort; but there was too much at stake to be dismayed. They believed that

Jesus could and would heal their sick friend. Deep down in his heart the paralytic cherished a hope so great that he dared not confide it even to his friends. What was to be done? Only those who have been ill beyond hope, only those who have seen a friend's vigor decay, and strength wane under an incurable disease, and then have dared hope; only these can realize the crucial anxiety of that moment. Something must be done, faith and courage made the impossible possible. Failing to find other entrance, they carried their burden down the street to the outer stairs that led to the roof of a house beyond the crowd and ascended. They carried the bed and its occupant from one roofed gallery to the adjoining one until they came to the one under which Jesus stood. Then they unroofed the covering of tiles, and having broken an opening through the framework supporting the tiles, it was only the work of a minute for the four strong men to let bed and occupant down. As the pallet swung slowly down before them, friendly hands from the audience must have steadied and guided its course to the ground.

**What the Great Physician Saw.** It was a spectacular scene. We can imagine the surprise of the congregation as they saw the sudden descent of the cot. Many looked on in wonder; the scribes in their chief seats doubtless shot angry glances at the intruder, but did Jesus show annoyance at this unceremonious interruption of His discourse? Ah, the men had judged Him aright when they decided that neither interruption nor startling surprise will count as much with Jesus as the appeal of the sick man. They knew He would heal their palsied friend, just as today we may bring our friends to Him knowing that He will answer our petition for them.

**Faith Rewarded.** As usual, Jesus rewarded the faith of the waiting group by bestowing more than they dared to ask. The face before Him was haunted with dread, fear and hope. Oh, he had merited all the suffering incurred through the misuse of a body whose nerves and brain had at last rebelled because of sins committed against it. Never had the paralytic more truly realized the justice of nature's punishment than as he lay in the presence of the one sinless Man. Never had those mis-spent years of his youth seemed so black. Would Jesus turn away from him and leave him to bear the result of his sin and folly? Suddenly the poor palsied brain realized that there was something more desirable than strength, a greater blessing than health. He realized that he was soul sick! He could not speak, but the tense upturned face, the yearning eyes, spoke his plea. Knowing all the man's past, fully conscious that the wrecked frame was only outraged nature's penalty, Jesus speaks, and words and tone never before sounded so sweet to human ears, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee."

**Silent Criticism and Open Rebuke.** Now all the Pharisees and doctors of law "sitting by" knew that God alone can forgive sins. He never delegated that power to man; who then was this blasphemer who claimed to forgive the paralytic's sin? Surely through His own words they would be able to convict Him. They would have something worth telling to the Sanhedrin whose spies they were. Jesus was as quick to read their hearts as He had been to read that of the sick man, and He asked them "Whether it is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk?" How He must have astonished them, not only by that searching question but by His knowledge of their very thoughts. Saying "Thy sins be forgiven thee" could not be put to the proof, but saying "Arise and walk" could be tested on the spot.

The great search light at the World's Fair grounds in Chicago threw a lighted path across the lake extending thirty miles. Every drifting spar, every foam-flecked wave athwart that path could be plainly discerned. But there is no miracle of science so great as Jesus' omniscience.

**The Son of Man Manifested His Power.** In his vision Daniel had seen come from "the clouds of Heaven one like the Son of Man," and before these spies and critics Jesus declares Himself to be that Son of Man. Perhaps it also reminded them of

David's psalm of praise of the One "who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." If they thought healing was a severer test, Jesus was willing to make it, to establish His claim as the Son of Man. Very quietly He turned to the sick man, "I say unto thee, Arise and take up thy bed and go thy way into thine house." And the healed man slowly and silently rose, folded up his pallet and we may be sure that this time a way was made for him through the crowd. They could hardly believe their eyes as there passed silently through their ranks the man who but a moment before was lowered down through the roof a bed-ridden paralytic. Truly such a thing had never been seen before. The Son of Man had proved His power to forgive sin and to heal disease. The multitude was filled with fear and awe; never before had they witnessed such a manifestation of God's power, and in their blindness they glorified Him but rejected His Son.

The record is silent concerning the healed man after he had carried forth his bed, but with what rejoicing he must have joined his four friends. They had seen the amused smile of the crowd; perhaps had heard gibes and sneers as they struggled to the roof with their burden. But they are pointed out now as the faithful friends of the healed man, and in the days that followed they doubtless told many others the story of Jesus' power over disease and sin.

**Illustration.** It is hard to cure the fatty heart of the drunkard, to mend the degenerate tissues and the poisoned liver, but it is still harder to cure the thirst that urges the man on to destruction. In all our large cities are specialists who cure nerves worn by evil living, but who, except God, can restore purity of heart, cleanness of soul and drive out the evil spirit?

**Quiz.** 1. Where is Capernaum? 2. Why did Jesus make it His home? 3. Why did the scribes follow Him? 4. What did Jesus consider the paralytic's greatest need? 5. How did He know the criticisms of the scribes? 6. Which is the greater, to heal disease or forgive sin? 7. How did Jesus prove His power to do both?

**Seed Truths.** 1. The greatest saints are not always found in the front pews. 2. The church which has Christ in it, will always be crowded to the doors. 3. Where there is faith, there is both the will and the way. 4. It is not possible to bar the earnest seeker from Christ. 5. Sickness and sin begin with the same initials. 6. Forgiveness is more essential than healing. 7. It is the easiest thing in the world to criticize another for what we cannot understand. 8. Most people view with suspicion those who accomplish what they cannot. 9. There have been untold physicians who have cured the effects of sin, but only One who can cure sin itself. 10. Jesus never made a statement He could not prove.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

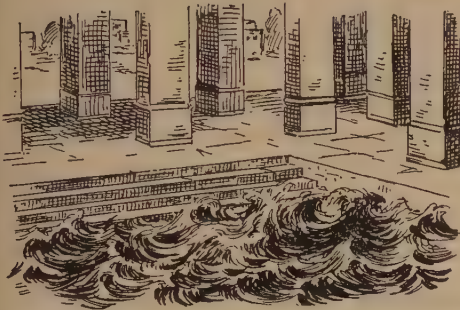


## JESUS AT BETHESDA.

And a certain man  
was there, which  
had an infirmity  
thirty and eight years.  
When Jesus saw



and knew that he had been  
now a long time in that  
case, he saith unto him,  
Wilt thou be made  
whole? The impotent  
man answered him,  
Sir, I have no man, when



to put me into



but while



another



Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and



and



and on the same day was the sabbath.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 5:1-15.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for the tenderness and compassion of Jesus; that He was and is ever the Friend of the friendless. Give us more of His Spirit that we may always be willing to help the suffering and lonely. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"As He spoke to the suff'rer  
Who lay at the pool,  
He is saying this moment,  
'Wilt thou be made whole?'"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, the pool Bethesda, in Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and the impotent man.

**Scripture Setting:** The compassion of Jesus. Never failing compassion, Lam. 3:22. Full of compassion, Psa. 86:15. Compassion for the individual, Psa. 34:6. Compassion for multitude, Matt. 20:34. Compassion for demoniac, Mark 5:19. Compassion for the hungry, Matt. 15:32. Compassion for the sick, Matt. 14:14. Forgiveness of sin a manifesta-

tion of His compassion, Ps. 78:38. His compassion for us, Micah 7:19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The healing at Bethesda manifests the great multitude in need of Jesus' touch. 2. Jesus' readiness to discover those in greatest loneliness and affliction. 3. The necessity of a desire for healing. 4. Jesus' power to heal without resort to outside aid. 5. The marvelous speediness of His healing. 6. The criticism of the Jews. 7. Jesus' forgiveness of and warning to the one made whole.

### BEFRIENDING THE FRIENDLESS.

**An Unknown Feast.** It was now early autumn. Very beautiful was the land of Galilee through which Jesus passed on His way to Jerusalem to attend what we call the "Unknown Feast," since we have no definite knowledge which feast this was. Every road was thronged with myriads of people coming, not only from the Holy Land, but from countries distant and foreign, to attend the feast. The countless multitude flowed like an unbroken stream toward the temple to witness its imposing rites and engage in its worship. They traveled in happy, laughing bands; there were family groups, and companies of neighbors and friends whose converse relieved the tedium of the journey. But Jesus traveled alone. Did He think of that other journey to Jerusalem, when His boyish heart was fired with the desire to be about His Father's business? For this journey was undertaken in the fulfillment of that desire. The challenge of the Jewish authorities is to be met with an open claim of His Messiahship. He goes forth to encounter that active persecution unto death which shall end in the cross. It was not a time for converse even with His chosen followers. We do not wonder that He should have gone up to the feast alone and unattended.

**The Magic Spring.** Jesus is again in Jerusalem and John brings to us one of the most beautiful and touching incidents in His ministry; the cure at Bethesda. All attempts to identify the spot have failed. We only know that Bethesda was a pool on the northeast side of the temple and enclosed by five of its porches. Its waters were clear and tranquil except when flushed by the inflow from the Pool of Siloam with which it was connected by a subterranean channel. This

sudden "in-take" caused a movement of the waters such as may be observed in any canal lock. The waters may have possessed some medicinal qualities for it was believed that the first person who stepped into the pool after "the troubling of the waters" would be cured.

**Awaiting Their Chance.** Though only he who was first to descend into the waters could obtain any benefit, each day a great multitude of afflicted and unfortunate ones thronged the place, each hoping that he might be the fortunate recipient of the "angel's favors" for that day. There were some who had been carried to the pool every day for years untold, only to be carried back home, disappointed yet hopeful of what the morrow might bring. Some lay on soft rugs, a painful exhibition of bodily sufferings, other poor crippled unfortunates solicited alms of the passersby.

The hour is at hand when as the superstitious waiting multitude believe an angel will step into the pool and stir the placid waters. Already the invalids are jealously watching one another. Each is calculating the effort that must be put forth for the plunge that shall bring the coveted healing. In some instances friends and servants stand ready to aid the sufferer to grasp the opportunity. Not one is aware that a greater than the angel has come upon the scene. How slow we all are to turn to the all-powerful One who is ever ready to respond to the call of suffering! Very silently and unpretentiously Jesus comes from the temple to the pool. No trumpeting herald precedes Him to proclaim His miraculous power. How His tender compassionate heart yearns as He comes into view of all this suffering. He alone can sympathize with them, for though



they know it not, He is carrying their sorrows and bearing their griefs.

**Friendless and Helpless.** Jesus singles out the most wretched of all the wretched group. For thirty-eight years the man has been a hopeless sufferer. The gay, roystering companions of youth have long since deserted him. In all the miserable, suffering multitude there is none so poor and wretched as to be his friend. For one knows not how long he has crawled his weary way to the magic spring; he has lain there, gazing drearily into the waters and watching the strife to be first down the steps to the bubbling water, until mind as well as body is now halting and benumbed. True he has made attempts to secure the coveted priority, but always ineffectually, for without the strong support of another, his inert, palsied dragging feet leave him far behind in the race. Jesus spies him out. He knows that the man's suffering and sickness have been caused by sin in early life; for one may not live a sinful, impure life without incurring the physical penalty. Yet Jesus goes to this man and asks him, "Wilt thou be made whole?"

**A Despondent Answer.** The man replies, "Sir, I have no man when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but when I am coming, another steppeth down before me." He is willing to be healed but what is the use? It has become a regular thing for another to step down before him. As well despair of healing and settle down to a life without hope. Surely the poor brain has become hopelessly dulled. It almost seems as though he must be blind as well, or hope would have come in response to the tender compassion of that face so gentle, so strong, so full of conscious power. He is startled from his apathy by the stranger's tone of command, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." There was power in that voice as well. What the magic spring has failed to do through all the long waiting years Jesus accomplishes in an instant. The man takes up his bed and walks away. Why remain at the pool when he is now every whit whole? Jesus would have him leave Bethesda, and away with the pallet which he no longer needs. The Great Physician always prescribed action for those healed.

**The Letter Killeth.** What does it mean? No angel has appeared to trouble the waters, and yet this man, for thirty-eight years known among them as a poor impotent, semi-paralytic, is now full of life and vigor, and is carrying his mattress on his back as

with long firm steps he makes his way through the crowd. Never had he known such a holy Sabbath day. Ah, the hypocrisy of it! The rabbis do not desire the Messiah; they seek to destroy Him and His works. Even now they are conniving to lessen the impression which such a miracle must produce upon the people. Their glance falls upon the man. So strong is he that the bed which he carries at Jesus' command is no burden; he does not even feel its weight, but the rabbis make it the pretext for criticism of the cure. They waylay him and pry him with questions. Does he not know it is not lawful to carry a burden on the Sabbath? When he tells of the command that accompanied Jesus' cure, they purposely omit all reference to the miracle and ask, "What man is it that said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk?" And strange to say the healed man had not been possessed of sufficient curiosity to discover the name of his Healer! How many receive His daily benefits and know not the Giver!

**Meets His New Found Friend.** Though the one healed has so little interest in Jesus, Jesus keeps him in view. Finding him in the temple, he congratulates the man on his restoration. Jesus knew human nature. Even the resultant life-long punishment does not break the power of sin over the body. Though the man knew what had caused all those years of suffering, the end of those thirty-eight years found poor human nature so prone to sin that Jesus sees that restored health will bring only fresh liability to fall. Just as He warns us to watch and pray, He warns the healed man, "Sin no more lest a worse thing come upon thee."

**Confession.** At the pool the poor unfortunate had been healed by Jesus; in the temple he was converted by Jesus' words. He who had been so indifferent to his benefactor as not to ask His name, now knows without asking that Jesus has made him whole, and he returns to the rabbis to testify of Him, and these self-righteous rabbis accuse Jesus of Sabbath breaking! For the first time Jesus publicly answers His accusers and declared Himself as the Son of God, who worked with the Father and to whom all judgment is committed. With majestic mien He turns to His accusers and declares that the Scriptures they claim to reverence, and Moses, whom they honor, "testify of Me." If they do not believe in Jesus they do not believe in the Scriptures or in Moses. Every word fell as a lash upon these proud, scornful rabbis, and more than ever did they seek to destroy Jesus.

**Quiz.** 1. Did the impotent man ask Jesus to cure him? 2. Did he manifest faith in Jesus' power to cure? 3. Was he grateful for the cure? 4. What did this manifest to Jesus? 5. What effect did the warning have?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The most credulous are often destitute of real faith. 2. True love always bestows its favors upon the most needy. 3. Many pray and go to God's house as the impotent man went to Bethesda, not expecting help. 4. Criticism of others is never a sign of righteousness of the individual. 5. If the benefits we receive from God do not result in conversion, they only enhance our danger.

# JESUS AND THE SABBATH.

At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day



and his  
disciples  
were an  
hungred,  
and  
began to



of corn, and to  
eat. But when  
the Pharisees saw  
it, they said  
unto him, Behold,  
thy disciples do  
that which is  
not lawful  
to do upon the



day. But he  
said unto them,  
Have ye not  
read what David  
did, when he  
was an hungred,  
and they that  
were with  
him; How he



of  
God,  
and  
did



which was not  
lawful for him  
to eat, neither  
for them which  
were with him,  
but only for the



But if ye had  
known what this  
meaneth, I will  
have mercy, and  
not sacrifice, ye  
would not have  
condemned  
the guiltless.

For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.



## JESUS AND THE SABBATH.

### THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 12:1-8. ALSO MARK 2:23-28, LUKE 6:1-11.

**Prayer:** Our Father, we thank Thee for the day of rest with it's hallowed memories and associations. Help us to find our delight in following the example of Him who went about doing good. Save us as a nation from the sin and dire results of Sabbath breaking. For Jesus sake, Amen.

"Millions within Thy courts have met,  
Millions this day before Thee bowed;  
Their faces Zionward were set,  
Vows with their lips to Thee they vowed.  
But Thou, soul-searching God! hast known  
The hearts of all that bent the knee;  
And hast accepted those above  
Who in the spirit worshipped Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Galilee. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and some Pharisees; the man with a withered hand.

**Scripture Setting:** The Sabbath. Origin of Sabbath, Gen. 2:2. Provision for the Sabbath, Ex. 16:23. The Fourth Commandment, Ex. 20:8-11. A day of rest, Ex. 23:12. A perpetual covenant, Ex. 31:16. A day of sanctity, Deut. 5:12. A bless-

ing upon those who keep the Sabbath, Isa. 56:2-7; 58:13, 14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson sets forth, 1. Jesus' patience under criticism. 2. His dignity before His enemies. 3. The fanaticism and sophistry of the Pharisees. 4. Christian freedom as defined by Jesus. 5. His care for the physical needs of His disciples, and justification of them. 6. The Lord as Master of the Sabbath.

### THE LORD OF THE SABBATH.

**The Sabbath Day.** Mankind has ever stood in such universal need of a day devoted to rest and worship that students of history find that all nations and peoples have their Sabbaths. In ancient Rome there were certain prescribed holy days when the business, pleasures and routine work of daily life were interdicted. The early missionaries found the people of the Hawaiian Islands held certain days so sacred that they would not light a fire or bathe on such occasions. In Borneo, the native savages were forbidden by their heathen religion to work or feast on certain days. The Jewish people were commanded to observe every seventh day as the Sabbath. When DeToqueville visited Mr. John C. Spencer, Canandaigua, N. Y., early in the nineteenth century, and saw the streets filled with well dressed, church going people, Sunday morning, the illustrious Frenchman was strangely moved and turning to his host, he said, "France must have your American Sabbath or she is ruined."

**In the Cornfield.** We have seen Jesus in city and village; in the wilderness and on the sea shore; in the temple and in the synagogue; in manger and palace, and we now see Him very near to nature. On this Sabbath morning their way leads Jesus and His disciples through a corn field. But the disciples were hungry; their life was poor and hard; they had to resort to any means of subsistence. So, as they pass through the corn field, they "make their way" by carefully pushing aside the long stems that bar their path, and to allay their hunger, they "pluck the ears" and then rub them in their hands to remove the chaff that they may eat the grain; a privilege accorded the hungry by the Mosaic law. "When thou comest

into the standing corn of thy neighbor then thou mayest pluck the ears with thy hand." And it was no breach of the Sabbath, for such an act could not be called "daily labor."

**The Sabbath of Man.** But the day of rest and worship had been so overlaid with tradition that observance of the Sabbath according to the code subjected the people to petty and intolerable annoyance. To the wholesome and scientifically economical restriction of labor through the Fourth Commandment, the rabbis had added thirty-nine meaningless prohibitions. For instance, it was forbidden to tie a knot on the Sabbath; if a rope was broken by which a pail was lowered into a well, the pail might be fastened by a band, but the rope could not be replaced because that would necessitate tying a knot! The famous Sabbath day's journey "must not exceed two thousand ells or steps from one's abode, but through the subterfuge of looking at a tree near where he wished to go and declaring it his legal abode, a man might travel the entire distance to his destination without violating the Sabbath!

Such evasion reminds one of the little girl who was sent to the store to purchase a loaf of bread on Sunday. "Carry it under your cape," her mother urged, "so people will not see it." "But mamma," asked the puzzled child, "isn't it Sunday under my cape?"

**Evil Minded Critics.** Even in Galilee Jesus was closely watched by emissaries of the Jewish rulers bent upon gathering evidence that could be used against Him. These Pharisees followed Him into the country and now they attack Him through His disciples, construing the act of hungry men into Sabbath breaking. Making a path through the grain is forbidden labor; plucking a few

handfuls of the grain is reaping, and separating the chaff is winnowing. In affected horror they cry out, "Behold Thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day."

**A Noble Figure.** It would have shown great forbearance if Jesus had answered such unjust accusation with dignified silence. But how patiently He reasons with those who would leave no stone unturned to compass His destruction. He endeavors to set them right by citing Scripture. He appeals to the law relating to the priests who were permitted to bake the shew bread and perform the ordinance of circumcision in the temple itself. He draws Himself up in the presence of His enemies and says, "In this place is One greater than the temple." Truly Jesus in the corn field is a noble figure! One can almost see the ripened ears of grain bowing low before the One who speaks with such Divine majesty that His startling declaration passes unchallenged by His enemies.

**Mercy Not Sacrifice.** Jesus would give them every opportunity of seeing their folly, wicked hypocrisy and inconsistency. Surely they have forgotten that God's only requirement is to do justly and love mercy, or they would not have condemned the guiltless. He says no word about abolition of the Sabbath, but would change a mechanical observance of the day into reasonable service. The Pharisees are not the only people who have made the sacred day a burden. The famous Blue laws of Connecticut would not permit a child to run in the garden on Sunday and no one might walk out on that day except to church.

**The Lord of the Sabbath.** Heretofore the Sabbath has been a strictly Jewish holy day; now Jesus broadens its scope and makes it a day of rest and worship for all the world. It becomes the people's Sabbath. Mark tells us Jesus' words were, "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath; therefore the Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath." Thus the Sabbath of the Jews became our Lord's day, changed the seventh to the first day of the week by His followers in commemoration of His resurrection day, and thus we honor the One whose love, by making the Sabbath no longer a burden, preserved for each worker in this busy world a measure of rest and time for worship.

In New Hampshire were two neighborhoods. The one of six families wholly disregarded the Sabbath;

in the neighborhood of five families the day was kept inviolate. Investigation forty years later showed that in the non-Sabbath observing community five homes had been broken up by the separation of husband and wife, and the sixth through the father's incarceration in prison as a thief. Eight or nine parents died drunkards, one committed suicide; all came to penury. Of the forty or fifty descendants, twenty were drunkards, gamblers or dissolute; four in states prison, one killed in a melee and one in the almshouse. Only one was a Christian. In the other neighborhood eight or ten children were Christians, one a minister and another a missionary to China. There were no criminals, and no poverty, while the homesteads remained in the family of the third generation.

**A Man Better Than a Sheep.** A week later Jesus manifests His authority over the Sabbath by healing a man with a withered hand in the synagogue in Capernaum. The man-made Sabbath laws would not permit a sufferer from a toothache to rinse his mouth for its relief on the Sabbath; or one suffering with pain to use a liniment or ointment, nor could a sprain be washed on the Sabbath day, for all these were labor. Knowing all this, the ever present Pharisees point to the man's crippled hand, and ask, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" Jesus aims a direct question in reply. "If you had just one sheep and it fell into a pit on the Sabbath day, is there a man here who would not lift it out? For according to the same Sabbath code, if an animal fell into a pit it was unlawful to lift it out on the Sabbath day. When Jesus asks: is not a man better than a sheep? He drives the nail home. The Pharisees are unable to answer; the hand is restored and they hold a council how to destroy Him.

**Quiz.** 1. What law justified the disciples in plucking and eating the grain? 2. What is shew bread? 3. Under what circumstances did David eat the shew bread? 4. From what prophets did Jesus quote? 5. What authority did Jesus claim over the Sabbath? 6. What miracle of healing did He perform the following Sabbath?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. "In the Sabbath, God has given us 52 springs in every year." 2. One of the secrets of long life is always to hold the Sabbath for rest of body and soul. 3. The Constitution which protects the President in his weekly day of rest, should afford a like protection to the humblest citizen. 4. Beer is the great Sabbath breaker. 5. Man is the highest unit of value. 6. Jesus, the source of all law, is greater than any law.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



And seeing the



he  
went  
up  
into a



and when he was set, his



came  
unto him:  
And he  
opened  
his  
mouth  
and



saying:

**BLESSED** are the poor in spirit: for  
their's is the kingdom of heaven.  
**BLESSED** are they that mourn: for  
they shall be comforted.  
**BLESSED** are the meek: for they  
shall inherit the earth.  
**BLESSED** are they which do  
hunger and thirst after  
righteousness: for they shall  
be filled.  
**BLESSED** are the merciful: for  
they shall obtain mercy.

**BLESSED** are the pure in heart:  
for they shall see God.  
**BLESSED** are the peacemakers:  
for they shall be called the  
children of God.  
**BLESSED** are they which are  
persecuted for righteousness'  
sake: for their's is the kingdom  
of heaven.  
**BLESSED** are ye, when men shall  
revile you, and persecute you,  
and shall say all manner of evil

against you falsely, for my sake.



and be  
exceeding glad:  
for great is  
your reward in  
heaven: for so



they the prophets which were before you.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 5:1-12. ALSO LUKE 6:20-22.**

**Prayer:** Lord, we thank Thee for the blessedness of Thy teaching; for the principles of Thy Kingdom as taught by Thee. Help us to be and to do that we may inherit Thy blessing, that we may gain an entrance into Thy Kingdom and help to bring peace on the earth and good will among men. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

"If only we strive to be pure and true,  
To each of us all there will come an hour  
When the tree of life will burst into flower  
And rain at our feet a glorious dower  
Of something grander than ever we knew."

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, probably Mount Karn Hattin, near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** The Blessed. Blessed are the undefiled, Ps. 119:1. The godly blessed, Ps. 1. Trust in God is blessed, Jer. 17:7. Blessed who die in the Lord, Rev. 14:13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Through the Beatitudes Jesus taught, 1. The virtue of humility, godly sorrow and meekness. 2. Of desire for righteousness. 3. The beauty of mercy, purity and peace. 4. The great reward of those who endure persecution and evil for Jesus' sake.

**CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM.**

**The Greatest Sermon.** A visit to a pastor's study will show rows of bookshelves filled with sermons, deep and profound, eloquent and witty, logical and persuasive, while we have but a meager summary of the greatest sermon ever delivered. Matthew's report is contained in less than twenty-five hundred words. Yet after nineteen hundred years those twenty-five hundred words are still as fresh, burning and inspiring as when they came from the lips of Jesus.

**The Place.** This marvelous sermon was preached in Galilee, probably on one of those mountain ranges near Capernaum. How frequently Jesus resorted to the mountains, to the sea and the plain. In the plains He found solitude; by the sea, peace; and in the mountains He found God. His great soul felt their uplift. On this occasion we are told "He went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." In the rosy dawn of early morning He called His disciples to Him and chose the twelve. A night of prayer is often a good preparation for the day's work. We are told that after a whole night spent in prayer, Jonathan Edwards preached with such power that five hundred persons cried out at once for salvation.

**The Occasion.** The people were beginning to find in Jesus a Friend, Physician and Saviour, so touched by their infirmities and so compassionate that they besought Him at all hours, and when He came down to a lower level of the mountain He found a great multitude of people from Judea, and Jerusalem, and even from Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and to be healed of all their diseases. How close they drew about Him, for so great was His power that if they could just touch Him, they were made whole. Some people regard the personal appeals that come to them as a hindrance to their public work.

Jesus never considered an appeal for help an interruption to His work; the little things as well as the great were included in His mission. Though about to preach a sermon whose message should gladden untold ages and whose words would weigh through all eternity, Jesus did not turn a single unfortunate away that He might hurry to His pulpit. He took time to heal them all before He began to preach to them.

**From Sinai to Karn Hattin.** Once a great prophet had ascended a mountain to deliver the law to Israel, and on that occasion the mountain seemed riven and torn by flashes of lightning that played around the top and descended to its base. The roar of thunder deafened the people, and smoke and fire and the quaking of the great mountain filled them with fear and terror. But fifteen hundred years lie between; lightning and thunder, fire and earthquake, have no part at Karn Hattin. There is neither fear nor suffering in all the listening multitude. His virtue has healed them all, and now, having retired again to the mountain height for better vantage ground, Jesus sits and through the clear air of a bright morning come the Beatitudes, the Gospel counterpart of the Ten Commandments.

**A New Revelation.** What an audience that must have been; they could not doubt His power for they had seen it manifested. Now He is to tell them of the Kingdom which He has been proclaiming for more than a year, and which John the Baptist preached before Him. What is the Kingdom? Who will belong to it? What has it to offer? What are its requirements? These are the questions Jesus must answer and when He opens His mouth the first word He utters is "Blessed." Now they listen intently. Whom will He bless? The world blesses the strong and dominant, the sleek, self-satisfied rich and powerful. But Jesus says, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." Later Jesus added force to this Beatitude through the picture of the two men praying. The



one seeks a prominent place in the synagogue and with hands pompously outspread, in sonorous tones thanks God he is not as other men. The other—poor in spirit—stands afar off and humbly cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

**The Mourners.** "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." There were mourners in the world then as now, and in the great audience were men mourning their sins; mothers mourning the waywardness of a son; there were still some faithful ones in Israel mourning the evils into which their people had fallen, and behold, their Comforter is no less a One than the Son of God. Through all the ages since, Jesus has been saying to those who mourn, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."

**Gentleness Crowned.** "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." For the first time is gentleness crowned. How foolish to be proud of a high spirit and temper when the invitation is "Come and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly." Intolerance and self-assertion have no part in the Kingdom of God.

**The Blessedness of Desire.** "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." The world is filled with men athirst for power, women hungering for pleasure. It is a world of rapacity, never satisfied, never contented; and how few cherish the one and only desire that may be appeased. No other desire does Jesus promise to satisfy. The prodigal had been hungry for freedom from his father's restraint, thirsting for adventure, but finding them all husks, hungering and thirsting for his father's forgiveness, he retraced his way homeward. And how his father feasted him. No one ever comes to God who is not filled.

**The Merciful Man.** "Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy." A man crossing the plains one day met a dog with a wounded foot. Careful examination discovered a thorn, which was removed. The foot was washed with an antiseptic and with his own handkerchief the man bandaged it and sent the dog on its way. Afterwards the traveller was an Indian prisoner under death sentence, when the Chief's favorite dog ran to the stranger, fondling his hands with every demonstration of gratitude, and he who had shown himself merciful obtained mercy, and was freed from captivity and death.

**The Pure in Heart.** "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." The heart has been called the lens of the soul, through which we may see the whole realm

of spiritual beauty. If the lens is not clean, then we look out upon a sin-darkened world.

On the occasion of an eclipse a body of scientists had gathered in a noted observatory to view the phenomenon through the great telescope, but to their disappointment nothing could be seen; it was like looking into darkness. The eclipse, which was of short duration, had passed before they discovered that a fly had found its way across the lens and darkened their vision.

**Peace Makers.** "Blessed are the peace makers; for they shall be called the sons of God." In the day when Jesus' words are rightly understood, nation shall cease to go to war with nation; men will no more go to law with each other; labor will no longer exhaust itself in strikes; and capital will never again intrench itself behind wrong; for all shall be the sons of God.

**A Song of Joy.** The multitude may not have ascended the mountain with Jesus, but they have been led up its heights, and now He carries them to the mountain top of vision, for the last two Beatitudes are a song of joy. The cross looms high before Jesus; He sees the day when the disciples shall be persecuted for righteousness' sake; when they shall suffer for His name's sake. Some among them are ambitious. Let them "rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward." We sometimes think of persecution as a thing of the past, forgetful of those glorious martyrs and valiant heroes, the forty thousand Christian Chinese who met death during the Boxer uprising in China rather than to disavow their Christian faith by trampling under foot a piece of paper bearing the name of Jesus in Chinese characters. They have gone to their exceeding great reward.

**The Last Beatitude.** Though there were ten Commandments, Jesus gave only nine Beatitudes. The tenth was enunciated after His work was finished and He had ascended to Heaven to sit at God's right hand and share His dominion and power: "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates of the city."

**Quiz.** 1. Upon what mount did Moses receive the Commandments? 2. What relation do the Beatitudes bear to the Ten Commandments? 3. What is the difference between the two? 4. What do the Commandments inculcate? 5. What do the Beatitudes exalt? 6. Which is the higher?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Virtue is more exalted than the law. 2. The world blesses what God condemns and despises what God blesses. 3. The earth will never be won by force, but will surrender to gentleness. 4. Suffering endures for a season, while joy is eternal. 5. Character is the cornerstone of Christian citizenship.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

Ye have  
heard  
that it  
hath  
been said,  
Thou  
shalt



thy



and



thine



But  
I say  
unto you,



your



bless them that curse you,



to them  
that hate  
you, and



for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.



## LOVE YOUR ENEMIES.

### THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 5:42-48. READ ALSO LUKE 6:27-37.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, fill our hearts with Thy love, so that we may love those who hate us and have that Spirit of the Master that will enable us to requite good for evil. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"How they mock Him in death,  
To the last laboring breath;  
But tho' lonely and faint,  
Still no word of complaint  
Fell from Him."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Karna Hattin, near Capernaum. **Persons,** Jesus, His disciples, and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** Treatment of Enemies. Consideration for enemy, Job 31:28, 29. Must not rejoice over enemy, Prov. 24:17. Kindness to enemy, Prov. 25:21-22, Rom. 12:20. Care for enemies' property, Ex. 23:4, 5. Examples of forgive-

ness of enemy, David and Saul, 1 Sam. 24:17. Joseph and his brethren, Gen. 50:17-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jesus reverses the rabbinic code and commands, 1. Love to enemies. 2. The requital of curses with blessing. 3. Recompense of good for evil. 4. Prayer for injury. 5. He cites the example of God. 6. Demands a higher code for His followers than that of the publicans. 7. Urges attainment of perfection.

### A NEW CODE.

**The Reign of Hatred.** Jewish life in Jesus' day did not reach up to the blue dome of the heavens. The Jew knew nothing of its immensity, its tenderness and depth; rather he seemed to live under a metallic sky, unyielding and unbending; soft, vernal zephyrs never opened up the springs of his heart, but scorching gusts of hate caused it to shrivel as wheat under the hot winds of the simoon. It was a life of fiercest hate, deadliest revenge and darkest curses. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth was the law. Shylock was not more vindictive than the Jew of that day. Israel had borne much and suffered humiliation and indignity, and its people bided their time till their promised King should appear and avenge every wrong.

**Thine Enemy.** The Pharisees had so perverted the ancient law of Moses as to teach that it sanctioned revenge and commanded hatred of one's enemies. And under the term "enemies" were included not only one's personal rivals and adversaries, but all Gentiles; for the Jew regarded every one outside of his own faith as an enemy. True, the Scripture commanded that if one should meet any stray animal belonging to his enemy, he should go out of his way to return it to the owner, and that relief should be given an enemy's beast, if one should find it in peril or suffering; but the rabbis decided that the command was only binding when its owner was a Jew. As late as the Middle Ages, rabbinical law forbade a Jew to rescue a Gentile from drowning, even though he might sink before the Jew's eyes.

**Love Versus Hate.** How startling, therefore, the new code enunciated by Jesus. "It hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse

you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." It must have seemed to His hearers as though the earth were slipping from under them. Were the old guides to be laid aside? Were they not to seek vengeance for the indignities they had suffered from those "dogs" of heathens? Were they not to be revenged for all those centuries of captivity and humiliation? Why, they had longed for the Messiah, more for the vengeance which His coming should heap upon their enemies, than because He should usher in a reign of righteousness. Truly He spake as never man spake before. "Before I was Christian," said an old Indian, "I scalp my enemy. Now I feed him."

**The Kingdom of Love.** The new Kingdom is to be a Kingdom of love. It shall be centered in love and every road and avenue its citizens may travel shall lead to love, whence all its laws shall issue. Love shall be written in its constitution so large that one must love even one's enemies. Love is to meet and conquer hate; blessing is to follow cursing, good to requite evil, and prayer to reward mal-treatment. It is so far beyond any previous teaching that we do not wonder that they cry, "Lord, teach us to pray," for only through prayer can such a miracle be wrought. Jesus found the human heart frozen and cold, but the law of love He proclaimed from the Mount has been as the melting, penetrating rays of the sun upon the frozen iceberg, and when all hearts shall have come under its genial influence, indifference and hatred, strife and spite, malice and revenge will be swept into the great gulf stream of divine love, to disappear forever. Impelled by Jesus' words, Mrs. Ann H. Judson, wife of the noted missionary, Adoniram Judson, nursed through the smallpox the

four children of the heathen jailor of the prison in which her husband was cruelly detained and wretchedly maltreated, contracting the dread disease herself and suffering months of serious illness.

**God So Loved Us.** "Like father, like son," is a pertinent saying, and Jesus reminds these Israelites who are so proud of being children of the true God, that relationship must be proven by resemblance. There is not a corner of the earth so remote that the rays of the sun may not penetrate it; there are none so evil as to be barred from God's sunshine. What would become of us if the rain fell only on the just, or if God reserved the pure, fresh air for those who deserved its life-giving power? So great is God's love that He has provided sunlight, water and air for all, and does not withhold His provision from those who revile Him.

"For the love of God is broader  
Than the measure of man's mind;  
And the heart of the Eternal  
Is most wonderfully kind."

**Not a Dream.** Doubtless disciples and hearers thought the words a beautiful rhapsody. "An iridescent dream" is what the world called the Sermon on the Mount for more than eighteen centuries. But Jesus' precept was soon to be proven by His example. The day was not far distant when some of His hearers should hear Him pray for His Roman executioners, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." They may even see Him restore the ear which Peter's sword-thrust has severed from one of the soldiers; and Peter, who is beside Him, eagerly listening to His words, is to experience the tenderness of His forgiveness after the denial. John, the disciple, who because of his rash temper and hot-headedness has been nicknamed the son of thunder, will remember Jesus' words to the day of his death, and when a feeble, helpless old man, carried to speak to the newly formed church, he will repeat its message in the quavering tones of old age, "He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love." And nearly nineteen centuries later, the world will be recalled to it by Tolstoi, the inspired Russian, until it shall come to mean universal peace and the brotherhood of man.

**The Comparison.** The questioning of Jesus was like a great searchlight, laying bare every sophistry and revealing the mind and soul. He turns to the anxious throng, many of whom are saying within themselves, "He asks too much. Is it not enough to love one's neighbor?" Slowly the words fall, "If you love them which love you, what reward have you?" Why, even the despised publicans do the same. And if you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? You despise and look down upon the publicans, you claim superiority over them, and yet you are contented to be no better than they. Thus Jesus makes it plain that He holds all His followers to a higher code than that of the world. It is not enough to be as good as anybody. The Christian must be better than every one else, and he must manifest his superiority by a greater love, a larger forbearance, a finer patience, and a Diviner forgiveness.

**As the Father.** Joseph forgave those who cast him into a pit and sold him as a slave to passing Egyptian traders. But these enemies were his brothers. Saul's unwarranted jealousy and murderous enmity drove David out as a wanderer, and it is an instance of the nobility of his nature that twice when he came upon Saul asleep, he refused to take the life of his sleeping enemy, even when urged by his followers that "God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand," and when Saul's death would have insured the kingdom to him. But it was the "Lord's anointed" that David spared, not his enemy. Jesus would inspire a greater love even than that of Joseph or David; He pleads for a love for our fellow men as perfect as that of our Father in Heaven.

**Quiz.** 1. Who is Jesus addressing? 2. What was the old law concerning one's enemies? 3. What did Jesus teach? 4. Name instances in which Jesus proved this teaching by His example. 5. Whose example does He cite? 6. Whom are we to follow?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The Christ life has no room for hatred. 2. Hate is a poison plant, revenge its poison fruit. 3. Love overcomes all things. 4. God's mercy is inexhaustible. 5. Christian character is the perfection of love. 6. Many an enemy is transformed into a friend through the alchemy of love.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## HOW TO PRAY.

And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray



in the  
synagogues  
and in the  
corners  
of the



that they may be seen of



Verily I say  
unto you,  
They have  
their reward.  
But thou,  
when thou  
prayest,



thy closet, and when thou hast



to thy Father which  
is in secret; and  
thy Father which  
seeth in secret shall  
reward thee openly.  
But when ye pray,  
use not vain  
repetitions, as the



do: for they think that  
they shall be heard for  
their much speaking  
Be not ye therefore  
like unto them: for  
your Father knoweth  
what things ye have need  
of, before ye ask him.



## HOW TO PRAY.

### THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 6:5-15. ALSO LUKE 11:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord, we thank Thee that we can come to Thee as children to a Father, with all our cares and desires. Give us faith that will enable us to believe that whatsoever we ask in Jesus' name Thou wilt grant it: that He who spared not His own Son will with Him also freely give us all things. For His sake who taught us to pray. Amen.

"Cuthbert, let us perish—hope is o'er.  
The furious tempest shuts the water path.  
He lifted up his reverent eyes and spake—  
'I thank Thee, Lord, the way is open there.  
No storm above our heads shall break  
And shut the Heavenward path of love and  
prayer.'"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, mountain near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** Prayers answered. Abraham's prayer for Lot, Gen. 18:23-32. Isaac given a wife in answer to prayer, Gen. 24:42-48. Jacob blessed through prayer, Gen. 32:26-28. Gideon's prayer answered by miracle, Judges 6:36-40. Heze-

kiah's life prolonged, 2 Kings 20:1-6. Paul's prayer answered, Acts 9:12. Dorcas restored to life, Acts 9:40.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Jesus warns against ostentatious prayer. 2. Enjoins secret prayer. 3. Reproves mere formal prayer. 4. Gives His disciples a model or type of prayer, by which all may be guided.

### A MODEL PRAYER.

**Prayerless Prayer.** Prayer without the spirit of prayer existed long before the advent of wireless telegraphy and the horseless carriage, and unlike these other innovations, the prayerless prayer was not an improvement on the old order. Such prayers were characteristic of the age of religious form in which Jesus lived, when too many sought notice by ostentatiously praying in the synagogues and even in the public streets. Whenever the Jew might chance to be when the hour of prayer arrived, he was expected to stand still and pray, with covered head, face toward the temple and eyes fixed on the ground. And there were many who would scheme to be caught on public streets at the hour of prayer, so they would have an excuse for praying in public. Some even went so far as to make a special show of devotion by saying so many prayers at one spot, walking a few steps and then saying several more. Jesus was ever the foe to all sham; He would not condemn prayer, but He did condemn such make-believe devotion as that indulged in by those who loved to "pray standing in the synagogues and in the street corners, that they might be seen of men."

**The Reward of Secret Prayer.** In contrast with such ostentation, Jesus would have His disciples practice secret prayer. What a beautiful picture is suggested by the advice, "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." Every Christian needs some closet of retirement, whence the door of mind and heart may be closed on every intruding and distracting thought, while he indulges in secret confidential talk with the Father.

Washington found a tree at Valley Forge where in the gloomiest days of the Revolution he "shut the door against all else and prayed for the success of the Colonists." All night through Lincoln knelt in the President's office of the White House, the door shut against all business, until God gave him the prescience of an answer to his prayer for the salvation of our republic, and the United States of today is the open reward for their secret prayer.

**Nothing but Words.** The Jew had eighteen prayers to recite daily, on fast days twenty-four, and to these were added many prayers for special occasions, as when a negro, dwarf, or cripple came into view, or a fine tree or beautiful face was seen. Most of these prayers were long and tedious, and there were so many that it was not always possible to repeat them all, so that the rabbis framed a summary which might be used, and thus prayer became a mere formula. They thought they would be heard for their much speaking. Jesus cautions his followers not to use vain repetition. When the heart is most moved, words are very feeble weapons.

The night before Luther was to appear before the Diet of Worms he was known to be in prayer. Two of his students who occupied the adjoining room, feeling they would be greatly edified, listened, but to their surprise they heard no eloquent plea; only sobs, groans and the exclamations, "God help," "Jesus strengthen me."

**Our Father.** Jesus struck a new note in religion, a chord that must have awakened a strange vibration in the hearts of His hearers. Of the many prayers recorded in the Old Testament, not one was made to the Father. Prayer was made to the Almighty, and Everlasting God, but never to the Father.

The laying of the Atlantic cable, which joins the old world and the new together, was accom-



plished only after a stupendous outlay of time and money; it required every known mechanical device and the aid of electricity, but so great is the power of Jesus that with those two words, Our Father, He bridged earth and Heaven and bound together all the peoples of the globe. What a blessed assurance is contained in the declaration, "Our Father which art in Heaven." The Father is not a creature of brain or an imaginary person. He exists in Heaven and He is our Father.

**Hallowed Be Thy Name.** His name is not to be used lightly, and we are to pray that its holiness shall be preserved. All good people are shocked at the profanity which greets them as they walk along the streets or ride in public conveyances; and yet every one of the forty-six states has a law against profanity in public places. Every city in the United States has special regulations against offensive language on the streets, and every policeman and officer of the peace has special instructions to arrest the guilty parties who violate the laws of state and city. Would it not help to answer our prayers if each one who prays daily, "Hallowed be thy name," should exhibit a spirit of good citizenship in aiding to enforce these laws against profanity?"

**A Heaven on Earth.** "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." The poet Milton truly declares that this earth may be a Heaven or hell, as we make it. God never delegated His authority and rulership over this world to another. Its sunlight, air, and water are His. Every tree and flower, its hills and valleys, its silver and gold, its flocks and herds, belong to Him, for He made them. Its people are His subjects; but the earth is in a state of rebellion. Every follower of His is one of God's soldiers, to pray and work for the restoration of His Kingdom, and to hasten the time when His will shall be done on earth, for then it will be Heaven on earth.

**Our Daily Bread.** Jesus came on earth that the poor might have the gospel preached to them. He was speaking to a people so poor that the problem of daily living intruded on their thoughts while they listened to His marvelous words. It was well to hear Jesus, but when the sermon was over and they wended their way down from the mountain, would it help them to get food for the family? A religion such as taught by the rabbis might be well enough for the rich, but it only laid added burdens on the already

overladen poor. After all, the main question is how to live; how to get bread for the little ones. Jesus knows what things they have need of and how truly He manifests the Fatherhood of God in the petition "Give us this day our daily bread." As their children come to them, so they were to make their wants known to the Father, even to asking for daily bread. Let them do their part and the great Caretaker will solve the problem of living.

**Forgive as We Forgive.** The ploughshare must be driven deep down into the rocky soil of the human heart, if tradition, prejudice and natural inclination are to be overturned. Out into the brightness of the morning come the words, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." The model prayer reaches out to all the world, but it is also so exclusive that bitterness, anger, hatred, malice and revenge must be excluded from the heart of everyone whose lips frame the petition, for we are commanded to ask to be forgiven as we forgive others.

A missionary once attempted to teach a converted Indian the Lord's prayer. All went well until they came to this petition, which the Indian stolidly refused to repeat. "Me back two moons, me kill Lone Wolf and Blue Dog; then me have no enemies and me pray him." Despite the missionary's expostulations the Indian started away. It was only one moon when he came back, returning with a glowing face and two braves. "Jesus in heart, no kill. No more enemy. Now we all pray him."

**A God of Deliverance.** Jesus knew the power of temptation, and with a recollection of those awful forty days and nights of temptation in the wilderness, He teaches His disciples to pray "Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." We may ask so much of our Father, because He is able to perform all that we ask, since His is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory.

**Quiz.** 1. Against what does Jesus warn His followers? 2. Name three Bible characters who were known for their habit of prayer. 3. Name three men of history who attested their reliance on God through prayer. 4. What would Jesus teach His followers?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Many prayers are weighed down with ostentation. 2. The closet of prayer is the vestibule of Heaven. 3. The truest prayer is often wordless. 4. With the plural pronoun, Jesus eliminated all selfishness from true worship. 5. The model prayer begins with an avowal of assurance and ends with a declaration of allegiance. 6. God is ready to supply us with bread, but many of His followers are like children crying for cake.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# OUR FATHER'S CARE.

Consider the



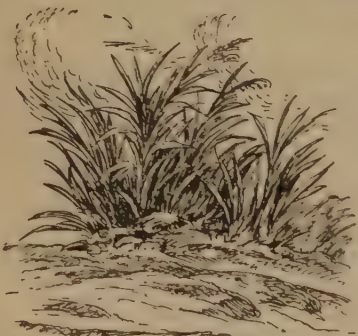
of the field,  
how they  
grow; they  
toil not,  
neither  
do they



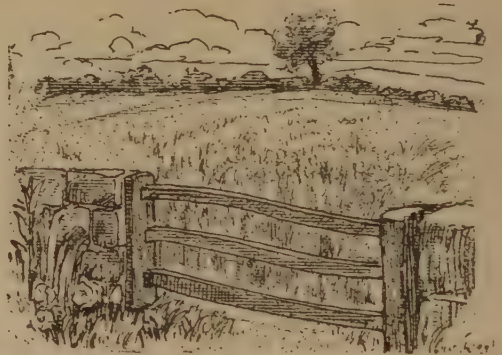
And yet I say unto  
you, That even



was not arrayed like  
one of these.  
Wherefore, if God  
so clothe the



of the



which to day  
is, and to  
morrow is cast



shall he not much  
more clothe you,  
O ye of little faith?



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 6:24-34; ALSO LUKE 12:22-32.**

**Prayer:** Lord, we thank Thee for Thy unfailing care; for the wise provision Thou dost make for all our needs, and for the knowledge that Thou carest for us with a Father's care. Help us to trust in Thee with all our heart and to commit our way to Thy keeping. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"The grasses are clothed  
And the ravens are fed  
From His store;  
But you, who are loved,  
And guarded, and led,  
How much more  
Will He clothe, feed you,  
And give you His care."

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, mountain near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** God's Providence for His Children. His provision for man, Gen. 1:29-30. Permanence of His care, Gen. 8:22. Gives the rain, Lev. 26:4. Wealth a gift of God, Deut. 8:17-18. Prosperity from God, Deut. 28:11. His care for those who fear Him, Ps. 34:8-10. His abundance,

Philip. 4:19. His universal providence, Ps. 104; 136; 145; 147.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jesus teaches, 1. The sin of worry. 2. That small importance should be attached to the things of this life. 3. God's provision for all His creatures as shown in nature. 4. The Kingdom of Heaven transcends all earthly comforts and values.

**THE LESSON OF THE LILIES.**

**The True Rest Cure.** At the time of the translation of the King James version of the Bible, to "take thought" meant to be anxious or worried. Some one has said that if every unnecessary anxiety were subtracted from the sum total of care, all other worries would be left without a leg to stand upon. Who that has ever occupied platform or pulpit has not been impressed by the haggard, anxious, careworn lines so deeply stamped upon the faces of the audience? Jesus must have been confronted by many such visages, and His tender love would wipe from all faces every such evidence of care. Therefore He says, Be not anxious for your life; cease the strife and worry over what you shall eat and wear. The loving Father meant life to be something better than a perpetual strife for the mere necessities of living. The Jews were forbidden care by the rabbinic saying, "Every one who has a loaf in his basket, and says, What shall I eat tomorrow? is one of little faith." Such a rule would banish care only while there is bread in the basket. Jesus has known poverty, and He would banish anxious worry when there is no bread in the basket.

**The Birds of the Air.** Jesus knew the feathered creatures of the sky; He was poorer than they, for though "The birds of the air have nests, the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Often He must have watched their happy, care-free life; content with the day's food, and trusting the Heavenly Father for the morrow, they slept calmly on the bough at night and welcomed every dawning day with songs of praise. Perhaps some tiny feathered creature winging its way across the sky while He spoke, suggested the illustration. He points up-

ward to the tiny speck against the blue and says, "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feedeth them." If He makes such generous provision for them, why need you worry? Will He not provide for those whom He created in His own image?

**The Height of Folly.** Will all your worry add one cubit to your stature or multiply your means of enjoyment? The multimillionaire can only pile up his wealth. Though he may be able to corner the world's wheat market, he can eat no more bread than the poor man with his one loaf. His wardrobe may contain a hundred suits, but he has but one body, so must wear them one at a time. Indeed, it is said that the two unhappiest men of our times are the Czar of Russia, who is the most powerful, and Rockefeller, the wealthiest man in the world. The one has become the slave to fear; the other is doomed by ill health to fare upon which the poorest could hardly subsist.

**The Sermon of the Lilies.** Palestine was a land of flowers in Jesus' day. The beautiful scarlet and red flowers of the pomegranate glorified the orchard. The oleander with its pink and red blossoms fringed every wady from one end of the land to the other; but Jesus honors the beautiful lilies of the field with special mention. Why be troubled by the problem of what to wear? "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." If in the great work of creation, the Creator tarried to fashion their cup-like form and lovingly paint the beautiful petals that are

perhaps only to be trodden under foot, He may be trusted to provide raiment for those He has endowed with eternal life. Shall we not then

"Leave it to Him: the lilies all do,  
And they grow.

They ask not your planting, they need not your care,

As they grow.  
Dropped down in the valley, the field, anywhere,  
There they grow;

They grow in their beauty, arrayed in pure white,  
They grow clothed in glory by Heaven's own light."

**The Great God.** The Jews thought of God as their national deity, but not as the God of the world. They looked on Him as a jealous God whom it was hard to please and easy to displease; a God who demanded much of His people and gave little in return; a high and holy Judge, ever ready to punish but slow to reward. They should have drawn a different conception of the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but they did not. To David, He was Shepherd and King, a Rock of salvation, shelter and help, but in all the Psalms of David we do not find the word Father applied to God. The idea had not dawned upon the prophets of the Old Testament. Yet this stern Jehovah was holier, purer and more tender than any of the gods conceived by the surrounding heathen.

**The Heavenly Father.** The darkened world needed a Father. Against the stern God who ruled over a few hundred square miles of territory, Jesus set the Father of all mankind. For three years Jesus labored to impress the fatherhood of God on the minds of His disciples. He drilled them as a music teacher drills his pupils running the whole gamut of the scales. Not only were they to pray to the Father; be perfect as the Father, but they are to rely upon the Father for all their needs, as little children look to their earthly father to supply their wants. To doubt His care and provision is to dishonor our Father in Heaven.

The story is told of a child of rich parents who became obsessed with the idea that it would not have enough to eat and wear unless it went out on the streets to gather what food it might find in the gutter. It would even drink from the horse trough and go from house to house begging rags for clothing. Those who saw the child's eager

and perverse acquisitiveness charged the father with inhumanity, for they thought he had failed to provide for his child's needs. It discredited the parent in the eyes of the whole community until a commission of lunacy declared the child insane. Jesus would drive the feverish insanity for material wealth from the minds of His children and teach them that "We cannot drift beyond the Father's care."

**The Chief Thing.** The man who achieves success is he who has some chief object in view, to which everything else must bend. If he would become a merchant, he does not spend his time reading law, but the market reports, and his experience as a merchant will give him sufficient legal knowledge concerning contracts, invoice, bookkeeping and payments to carry out a successful business career. So Jesus declares that His followers must make religion the chief business of life. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The evangelist Dwight L. Moody so depended on his Heavenly Father's care that when his wife came to him in the early days of his work with the disquieting information that there was nothing in the house for the noonday meal, Mr. Moody simply said, "We must ask the Father." The morning wore on, the children would soon come home from school; a second time Mrs. Moody reminded her husband of the situation. "Why, mamma, has it not come yet? Well, we must tell God it is a hurry order." And while they knelt in prayer a wagon drove up well loaded with flour, sugar, potatoes, ham and needful provisions, and at the same instant a neighbor entered the rear door with a carefully packed basket containing a hot dinner for the family.

"I know not where His islands lift  
Their fronded palms in air.  
I only know I cannot drift  
Beyond His love and care."

—Whittier.

**Quiz.** 1. On what other occasions did Jesus use the birds for an illustration? 2. What did Jesus call God? 3. Give two Old Testament instances in which God provided for the material wants of those in need. 4. What should be the Christian's greatest aim? 5. Why is it wrong for a Christian to manifest more than the necessary care for a livelihood?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. He who created our wants is able to supply them. 2. There is never a "corner" in God's supply. 3. Let us learn of the birds. 4. Each lily is a voiceless trumpet proclaiming our Father's care. 5. Life reaches beyond the meat shop and market place. 6. "God's care extends to the least of His creatures." 7. "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE GOLDEN RULE.

Or what man is there of you, whom if his



will he



a stone? Or if he



will he



If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your



how much  
more shall  
your  
Father  
which is in



give good things  
to them that ask  
him? Therefore  
all things  
whatsoever  
ye would that



should do to you,  
do ye even so to  
them: for this is the  
law and the prophets.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 7:7-12.

**Prayer:** Lord, we thank Thee that Thou art our Father. Thou hast given Thy Son for our redemption and Thy Holy Spirit for our comfort and guidance. Help us in love and gratitude to obey Thee, and to apply the Golden Rule in all our dealings with our fellow men. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"If he hath hidden the outcast, or let in  
A ray of sunshine to the cell of sin,  
If he hath lent  
Strength to the weak and in the hour of need,  
Over the suffering, mindless of his creed  
or home, hath bent,  
He hath not lived in vain."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, mountain near Capernaum. **Persons,** Jesus, His disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** Our Relation to Others. A great commandment, Mark 12:31-33. One body in Christ, Rom. 12:5. Love a fulfillment of the law, Rom. 13:8-10. Charity, a token of perfection, Col. 3:14. The end of the commandment, 1 Tim. 1:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Very logically and plainly Jesus shows that 1. God answers prayer. 2. The superiority of our Heavenly Father's love over that of our earthly parents is adduced as a proof that God will answer the petitions of His children. 3. The earnest seeker after God will be rewarded. 4. To do unto others as we would have others do unto us, is the sum of all the teachings of the Scriptures.

### THE GREAT COMPASS.

**Old Truths Told Anew.** In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus set the choicest truths of the old dispensation to the spirit of the new. On the lovely hilltop He found a natural sanctuary, and here the former Carpenter of Nazareth, preaching to a group of fishermen, mechanics and peasants, gathers up the sum of all the truths of the Jewish dispensation, and gives them new life, vitality and spirituality. Many of them had passed into disuse, others were forgotten, and many had been distorted from their original meaning by rabbinic tradition. The truths spoken on the Mount were not wholly new; their clear notes had rung out before; prophets and psalmists had set them vibrating centuries ago; but not until, like bells, the Master Musician set them in chimes, to ring in the coming of the Kingdom of God, did men realize their sweetness and power. Jesus gave to the multitude the truths of their fathers, freed from tradition and formalism.

**A Great Promise.** To the world of doubt and disbelief, Jesus promised, "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." It came as forcefully as though projected from a gatling gun, demolishing the disbelief of centuries. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah and the long line of prophets had found Jehovah a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God, but faith had so departed from Israel that men were taught to pray to a God as unhearing as the heathen gods of wood and stone. As if God could not hear, they would frequently for half an hour together vociferate a single sentence or just one word. Jesus taught that to ask was to receive. The earnest seeker would find God, and he who knocked would find the door of Heaven open

to him. In *Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan has drawn a beautiful picture of Christian who knocks at the Wicket Gate of prayer, and finds it opened.

**Bread or a Stone?** Jesus sees incredulity written on the faces of His hearers as He speaks with such certainty of God's goodness, and He again turns upon them the searchlight of His marvelous logic. Is there a man among them would give his child a stone when he called for bread? Or if the boy asks a fish, will the father give him one of those poisonous, venomous serpents that lurk in the grass and herbage of a tropical country? Jesus always reached His hearers by a direct appeal to the heart. Every man there knew he would not do a thing so cruel.

A native of the West Indies was once travelling on a sturdy mule through one of his native jungles. His young son rode just in front of him astride another beast. With horror the father saw a deadly python lowering itself from the branch of one of the great trees and ready to spring upon the boy. Quicker than it takes to tell it, the father gave his son's animal a cruel cut, forcing the mule and its rider on, though it hurried his own forward just in time for the python's folds to entwine the father, who had saved his child at the cost of his own life. Such is a father's love.

**Better Than an Earthly Parent.** After such an appeal to the father heart, they can no longer doubt when Jesus puts the direct question, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" With Jesus, God and the Father were the same. From the manger to the cross, the love of the Father was Jesus' refuge and trust, and He would have us look to God as the great, tender-hearted universal Father. He teaches us to trust and not fear. We need only to reason: What my father on



earth would not do, lest it should imperil me, my Father in Heaven will not do: What good my father on earth would do, that and more will my Heavenly Father do for me.

**A Negative Command.** A heathen once came to a great Jewish rabbi and said, "Make me a proselyte, that I may learn the whole law standing on one foot." Shammai, the rabbi, struck the man with his staff for his impertinence and irreverence. But the questioner went on to the more considerate and merciful and greatest of all rabbis, Hillel, who answered his demand by saying, "Do nothing to thy neighbor you would not like done to thyself, for this is the whole law." And the answer and the spirit in which it was given converted the heathen into a follower of Hillel. Hillel, who was so superior to all the other rabbis of Jewish history, could only preach a negative virtue, to be applied in a very narrow circle. For we know that "neighbor" referred only to those of the Jewish faith, and Hillel's saying only meant that the Jew was to do nothing to another Jew that he would not have done to himself. Even heathen leaders, Socrates, Menander and Confucius taught their disciples that they were to do no wrong to their fellows.

**A Greater Law.** The Son of God has a broader mind, a wider vision than any earthly teacher! Jesus proclaims all men brethren, children of one Father in Heaven, and He would broaden the former conception of the law and the prophets through the command, "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." We have seen how narrow and small was the religious life when these words were first uttered. The immensity of love had never been penetrated. The very word was seldom heard. Liberty was unknown, men dwelt in slavery to tradition and form, and in actual slavery to masters who claimed ownership of the bodies of their fellow men. War was the rule and peace the exception in the chronological tables of that era. Life was of no worth; in all the world there was not a hospital for the sick or insane, not a home for the friendless or fallen. Little children, deserted by their parents, were cast into the river or left to die by the roadside. There was no condition so pitiful as that of the poor, and woe betide the unfortunate who fell among his enemies! The hand of every strong nation was against the weaker nation; the great world of humanitarianism and love, of brotherly kindness and Christian fellowship, was an uncharted and undiscovered country.

**The Christian's Compass.** Jesus came to open up a new world, greater far than that

new world discovered by Columbus. Out from the darkness, desolation and wickedness of a world grown old in sin, Jesus sent His followers as voyagers in quest of the Kingdom of God; and the Golden Rule of conduct enunciated from the mountain that day in Galilee, and embracing in its circle the whole duty of man, was given as a compass to lead every explorer to the center and capital of the Kingdom, which is love. Its needle is the awakened Christian conscience, and the line of "ought" can be read at one glance by the veriest beginner. Are we in doubt what to do; how to treat a stranger, friend or enemy? We need only to make a short mental computation, "If I were in his place, what would I want him to do to me?" And we have found our bearings and are journeying in the direction of the Kingdom of God.

**An Ever-Growing Kingdom.** The One who said, "Lo, I am with you alway," has journeyed with His followers from that distant mount in Palestine, throughout all the intervening centuries and over all the world, carrying the beginning of the Kingdom into many lands. Slowly the Kingdom grows. The needle of the compass points the miser to deeds of charity; the man of hateful and vengeful spirit to the love that suffereth long and is kind; the selfish, it tells to sell all and give to the poor; the master of the sweatshop, to lighten the burden of those under him. The active, compelling "Do unto others" of the Golden Rule has built hospitals for the sick, homes for the homeless, refuges for the fallen. It has bettered the lot of the poor, improved the prisons for the erring, freed the slave, and strengthened the weak. Under its dominating power, the great Peace Tribunal of the Hague was conceived, arbitration has been ushered in and equality declared.

**Quiz.** 1. What is the Golden Rule? 2. Was it ever taught before? 3. What was the nearest approach to it? 4. What great difference between Jesus' teaching and the teaching of others on this subject? 5. What has the Golden Rule accomplished? 6. Are you making it the rule of your life?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. "Only the Golden Rule of Christ can usher in the Golden Age of man." 2. The practice of the Golden Rule is the most practical statesmanship. 3. Before you misjudge or mistreat another put yourself in his place. 4. The moralist's greatest edict is "Don't." Jesus' command is "Do." 5. It is well to refrain from evil; to do good is better.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

## THE TWO FOUNDATIONS.

And why call me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and

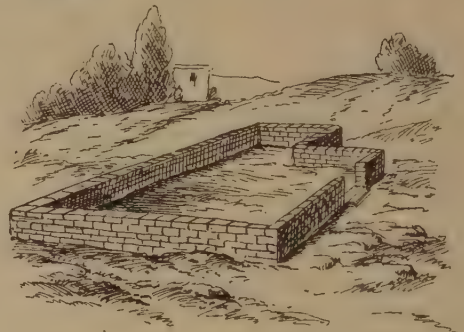
heareth my sayings,  
and doeth them,  
I will shew you  
to whom he is like:  
He is like a man which



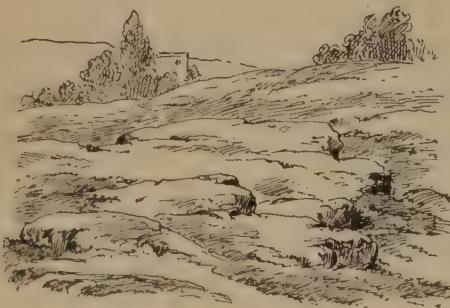
and



deep, and  
laid the



on a



and  
when the



arose, the



vehemently  
upon that



and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 6:46-49. ALSO MATT. 7:24-29.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we be not only hearers, but doers of Thy Word, and may we build our lives and characters upon nothing less than the rock of Thy Truth. Grant us that wisdom that maketh rich and addeth no sorrow, that we may be wise to know Thy plan for us and follow it in our building. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

“Behold the sure Foundation-stone  
Which God in Zion lays,  
To build our Heavenly hopes upon,  
And His eternal praise.  
The foolish builders, scribe and priest,  
Reject it with disdain;  
Yet on this Rock the Church shall rest,  
And envy rage in vain.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Mountain near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** About Foundations. An unsafe foundation, Job 4:19-21. Foundations of earth, Psa. 82:5. Foundations that perish, Psa. 102:25-28. An everlasting foundation, Prov. 10:25. A tried foundation, Isa. 28:16. Jesus the foundation, 1 Cor. 3:11. Laying a good foundation, 1 Tim. 6:19. A sure foundation, 2 Tim. 2:19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Through the illustration of the two foundations we are shown: 1. The distinction between hearers and doers of the word. 2. The wisdom of obedience to the truth. 3. The security of one who orders his life according to God's word. 4. The folly of enthusiasm without works. 5. The fatal result of disobedience. 6. The good foundation alone assures permanence of character.

### THE TWO BUILDERS.

**The Architect.** Every building must have an architect who makes the plans and specifications, estimates the cost, chooses the material to be used and supervises the erection. Jesus is the great Architect of the Kingdom of God, and the plans were laid as long ago as the Garden of Eden, when man was driven from Paradise for his disobedience. Long had the Jews looked for the King who was to usher in this Kingdom and on this immortal morn in Galilee, the great Architect King not only pictured the beauty of the Kingdom but gave its plans in detail to the people who are to be its builders. The contrast between the blighted peaks of Sinai, its surrounding gaunt and barren wilderness and the fruitful sloping ledges of Karn Hattin is great, but far greater is the contrast between the plans and laws there enunciated, and the plans of the Kingdom as unfolded by Jesus.

**The Plans of the Kingdom.** It is to be blessed, its purifying power and beauty are to be felt in every phase of life. Benevolence and justice will take the place of almsgiving. Love will be greater than force, rising above injustice and overflowing even to enemies. In fact, love and goodness will be the current coin of the Kingdom in which evil and ill-will shall be repaid. Over all its territory shall be the brooding care of a Father nobler and kinder far than any earthly father—Our Father in Heaven. All its citizens are His children, and the relationship is attested by their attainment of His perfection of love. The countersign by which all its citizens are known is the Golden Rule. Its boundaries include every nation and every land and extend to Heaven itself, of whose territory and dominion it is a part.

**Specifications of the Kingdom.** Jesus has given the underlying laws and rules of the Kingdom. There are the following specifications. Family ties must be held inviolate and family life sacred. The truth must be spoken in the love of truth and not through fear of an oath. Not alone the sinful act but its evil source is condemned, therefore a hateful, murderous temper will no more be permitted than the murder which is only the outward token of such a temper. Avarice and sordid anxiety must be banished, and the only riches which have a legal tender value are riches of character. Man is forbidden to judge man and every one is to guard his own fault and not the failings of others. Sweetness of spirit, heart sincerity, earnestness of soul and abiding peace and joy are to take the place of long face and solemn fasting. Humanity plays such an important part in devotion that one must adjust all unkind feelings and differences with one's fellows before prayer is allowable.

**The Builders.** The Kingdom is to be built by the followers of Jesus; not only those who heard Him outline its plans on the Mount, but every man, woman and child in all the world, through all the endless ages, is to have a part in building the Kingdom of God. In the building of brick and stone edifices, carpenters and masons, tinnners, roofers, plumbers and men of a score of trades have a part, but the builders of the Kingdom are the peacemakers, the humble, the pure in heart, those who endure for righteousness' sake, the merciful, those with loving hearts, and open, generous hands. Each has his part in the great work.

**The Foundation.** One who views a great building

sees only that which is above ground, and this is really the least important part of the structure. For more wonderful than the highest walls of the highest skyscraper or tower or steeple, is the foundation, for upon its strength and firmness the permanence of the building depends, and the foundation work must be done before a single stone is laid above ground. Who has not watched a group of workmen digging deep below the sub-soil to make an excavation for the building; perhaps one has been so fortunate as to see them sink great caissons, for no matter how great the depth or expense, no wise builder will rest his efforts until assured of a solid foundation. The land on which the Marshall Field building in Chicago is erected is so yielding and it required such work to get to a firm foundation, that the building is said to extend as far underground as its many stories above the earth.

**The Wise Builder.** Jesus knew the hearts and minds of those who heard Him just as He knows our hearts and minds today. He saw that man who came with murder in his heart and knows that his enemy is safe for hereafter he will do as Jesus says and forgive those who wrong him. He has watched the lines of care fall from the face of the mother who toiled up the mountain to hear Jesus, not knowing how to feed and clothe her little ones; hereafter she will gather them around her and ask the Heavenly Father for their daily bread. He sees them and says, Whosoever cometh to me and heareth my sayings and doeth them, is like a man that built a house and digged deep and laid the foundation on a rock, and when the floods arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house and could not shake it; for it was founded on a rock. They recognized the picture, for Palestine is seamed with what seem to be dry river beds; they are the beds of the winter torrents and during that season they become the channels of roaring floods, soon forming a flowing river whose rushing waters sweep everything before them. Of course no sane person would think of building in such a place. It is not always safe even to build on top of the wady and never safe to build too near the edge, for at times the flood not only fills the channel but rises above it, sweeping away every object it encounters. Rather than to risk building even on the slope of the hill, the houses in Nazareth, Jesus' own town, are set in recesses cut in the yellow limestone.

**The Foolish Builder.** There are others who have listened attentively, held spell-bound by His eloquence. "A fine sermon," some say, "well worth hearing," and that is all it will ever mean to them. They have been thrilled by His description of the Kingdom, but it has awakened no longing to enter into that state of blessedness. His denunciation of hypocrisy, selfishness, greed and cant

they have fitted to their neighbors, and Jesus' appeal for heart purity, singleness and sincerity of purpose has fallen upon deaf ears, while the Father whose loving care He has pictured, is but an idle fancy to them. They will hurry from the Mount to hear another popular rabbi, under whose eloquent spell the teaching of Jesus will be forgotten. Jesus made it plain that all hearers of His word who reject His teaching invite disaster. "He that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

**Speaking with Authority.** Brief as the admonition, it is impossible to conceive of any warning that could so have aroused the fervid oriental imagination of His hearers as this eloquent picture of a tropical tempest; following the simple and straightforward preaching of the Kingdom, it startled His hearers like a thunder-burst from a clear sky. Majesty and power succeed gentleness as He declares obedience to Himself and to His words a requisite of salvation. Standing there on the mountain-side, He is every inch Prophet, Priest and King. The astonished auditors feel they are in the very presence of God. They no longer doubt His right to speak of the Father. Never rabbi spake with such authority. There dawns upon His listeners the awful conviction that even under the loving rule of the new dispensation, to the disobedient, unbelieving and rebellious, there is still a Sinai, whose thunders and lightnings are no less to be dreaded than those of old. Many a one who had builded his hope of salvation on the tradition of the rabbis; many a one whose conduct failed to square with his profession, tested the foundations of a lifetime and found them sand. Some even left the old foundations and builded anew upon the rock of His teaching.

**Quiz.** 1. To whom does the illustration which closes the Sermon on the Mount refer? 2. How does Matthew say that Jesus spoke on this occasion? 3. Who does Paul tell us is the only foundation? 4. What is meant by the floods? 5. Did Jesus merely refer to a literal flood of waters? 6. Are you a doer of the Word?

**Seed Truths.** 1. The world is divided into hearers and doers. 2. Action is the proof of allegiance. 3. Enough time is devoted to building air castles to usher in the Kingdom of God. 4. Character is the best talker. 5. Christ is the only true foundation for character building. 6. The crucial test of our life's building is in the tempest of affliction. 7. Every one is a builder. 8. The deeper our religion, the firmer the character built thereon.



## THE CENTURION'S FAITH.

Lord, trouble not  
thyself: for I am  
not worthy that  
thou shouldest  
enter under my



Wherefore neither  
thought I myself  
worthy to come unto  
thee: but say in  
a word, and my



shall be healed. For  
I also am a man  
set under authority,  
having under me



and I say  
unto one,  
Go, and



and to  
another,  
Come, and



and to my  
servant,  
Do this,  
and he  
doeth it.

When Jesus heard  
these things, he  
marvelled at him,  
and turned him  
about, and  
said unto the



that followed him,  
I say unto you,  
I have not  
found so great  
faith, no, not  
in Israel.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 7:1-10. ALSO MATT. 8:5-13.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Thou who art the Great Physician, increase our faith; give us a clearer conception of Thy authority and power so that we may approach Thee in true humility and faith. Heal us and make us strong in body, mind, and spirit. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Faith lends to realizing light;  
The clouds disperse, the shadows fly;  
The invisible appears in sight,  
And God is seen by mortal eye.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, the elders and centurion.

**Scripture Setting:** **Blessing Received Through Faith.** Salvation, John 3:16. Made children of light, John 12:36. Life through belief in Jesus as the Son of God, John 20:31. Belief in His name, Acts 10:43. Salvation through faith, Acts 16:31. Live by faith, Rom. 1:17. Shall raise the sick, James 5:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson we have an example of: 1. The humility which characterizes real faith, and reliance upon God. 2. Of a merciful and considerate employer. 3. The unworthiness felt by those who have the truest conception of the power of our Saviour. 4. The value of humble application. 5. Faith which accepts the word of the Master without parley. 6. The exalted station of the faithful.

### A GREAT-HEARTED SOLDIER.

**Capernaum.** There is no more beautiful story than the one before us. The Sermon on the Mount was ended—its glorious message and gracious words had started on a mission which was to cover the globe and span eternity; and Jesus returned to Capernaum, which became His home after the expulsion from Nazareth. It was a busy, important place, situated on the highway of trade and only a short distance from Tiberias, the wonderful, new city built by Herod Antipas, ten years before. It was the seat of customs as well as a fish mart of no mean importance.

**The Captain of One Hundred.** A garrison of Herod's soldiers, probably recruited from Samaria and Galilee, was quartered at Capernaum. The Roman army was divided into companies of one hundred men each, and the captain of such a company was called a centurion. The chief character in our story is one of these centurions. Though his name has not been preserved, we know that this Gentile captain was more than the usual brave, blunt, bluff soldier. Where most of Herod's soldiers had made themselves detested, he was so beloved that even the strict Jewish rabbis were his friends. Indeed he had built the synagogue whose ruins still remain; and the rich and elaborate carving of cornices, capitals, pillars and tablets which have recently been excavated and now after nineteen centuries have passed proclaim the liberality of the donor, show that it was no mean structure. He was a born commander and when necessity arose exercised his military authority in a truly imperial manner, but he was no despot, and like the great Duke of Wellington, like Washington, Garfield and other great-hearted military commanders, the welfare of his subordinates was his supreme care. Even the slave found him a kind master.

**An Obscure Life.** "And a certain centurion's servant was sick and ready to die." This brief sentence is all the knowledge we have of the nameless one who in his humble darkened chamber was battling with death. He was probably a confidential servant, living in the same house and on the most intimate terms with his master, whose regard he could not have won, had he not identified himself with all the master's interests and been faithful alike in the great and the little things. Though inferior in station, he commanded the superior regard and love of the one so above him in rank. He was one of the many in lowly position who by their real manhood and nobility of soul have proven that all service is honorable. And how his faithfulness is rewarded! Poor and obscure, without rank or fortune, his torture and suffering are shared by the one he has served so well, and soldiers of the army, dignified Jewish rabbis, powerful and wealthy friends of his master, and even the Great Physician are in league for his succor.

**Appeal to Jesus.** Though he had never met Jesus, it is quite probable the centurion was acquainted with the nobleman of Capernaum, whose son Jesus cured without even paying a visit to the sick bed, and it is possible that the healing of the demoniac and the man with the withered hand occurred in the very synagogue his munificence had built; doubtless he had heard of that famous clinic in front of Peter's house when the sick of Capernaum and Bethsaida were brought to Jesus and healed. There must have been some brave enough and loyal enough to testify of Jesus in palace and military garrison, for we are told the centurion "heard" of Jesus. The term "palsy" was applied to many forms of disease in those days, and the dying man was probably suffering from inflammatory rheumatism. A



sudden relapse with increased paroxysms of pain decided the anxious centurion to send to Jesus.

**The Embassy.** It is the habit in the East and a sign of great respect to prefer a request through an embassy instead of in person. But the unusual thing on this occasion was that a deputation of "the elders of the Jews," the very foremost men of Capernaum, who were the governing body of the synagogue and the Jewish magistrates of the town, came as envoys of a heathen rulership, the military commander himself probably a Samaritan. They made the centurion's cause their own and when Jesus held back a little to test their sincerity, they besought Him earnestly, concluding their plea with an assurance of the centurion's worthiness, ending with the assertion "he loveth our nation and he hath built us a synagogue." Perhaps they thought Jesus would refuse a request in behalf of a foreigner or they feared the One who was known by His followers as a King would consider it beneath His dignity to exert His miraculous power for a servant. But the One who willingly took upon Himself the form of a servant, and worked as a carpenter at the bench, knew no caste distinctions nor accident of birth or rank. With Him

"A man's a man for a' that."

**A Second Request.** In their eagerness to serve their benefactor, the messengers omitted their commission. They forgot that proof had been shown in their own town of the power of Jesus to heal from a distance, and with less faith than that of the one for whom they interceded, started to fetch Jesus to the sick chamber. But when they came within range of the house and were seen by the centurion, he sent a second delegation, this time of personal friends, to meet Jesus and urge Him not to take any further trouble. Wonderful in its humility, faith and loyalty was the message which they delivered in the centurion's exact words: "Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say the word and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say to this one, Go, and he

goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it."

**The Message Reveals the Man.** Already we have seen him as a man of large sympathies and generous deeds, ruling a conquered and despised people with such consideration as to earn their love, and building them a temple at his own expense. Stern commander that he was, the bluff old soldier's tenderness of heart was manifested in his love and solicitude for his servant. But who would have dreamed of such humility, such absence of pride and assumption! Accustomed to imperious command, he addressed Jesus with the same or greater reverence than he would have used to august Caesar. An officer of a world-wide empire, he did not deem himself worthy to approach the humble Jesus. Others praised him, but the centurion saw only his own littleness and unworthiness. He was not worthy to even speak with Jesus, much less to have such a guest under his roof. Yet he was not a fawning courtier, but every inch a soldier, even borrowing his illustration from his military life. Crisp and sharp was his speech. His word was all powerful in the ranks under his command. He had but to say "Come" or "Go," and the soldier who heard the order dared not hesitate, even though the command led to his death. If he had such power, surely Jesus, who possessed superhuman power, needed but to speak the word, and the command would penetrate through space, even through the very walls and doors of the sick chamber, and death would be obedient to His order.

**The Greatness of Humility.** Upon the mountain top Jesus had declared "the poor in spirit" and "the merciful" were citizens of the Kingdom. This centurion might officially represent a foreign power, but he was no foreigner. He belonged to the Kingdom itself. And the marvel was that this living embodiment of the Beatitudes had not been found among the Pharisees with their long faces and sounding prayers, but outside of Israel. Matthew tells us that Jesus honored such humility and declared its greatness, by ranking the centurion "With Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven." And when the friends returned to the house, they "found the servant whole that had been sick."

**Quiz.** 1. What previous miracles had Jesus worked in Capernaum? 2. Which of His disciples lived near Capernaum? 3. What two virtues mentioned in the Beatitudes were manifested in the centurion? 4. What three centurions are mentioned in the Gospels in connection with Jesus? 5. With what great Hebrew characters did Jesus class the centurion? 6. How did the centurion manifest his faith? His humility?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. True greatness is shown in the treatment of an inferior. 2. With Jesus, there are neither race nor caste distinctions. 3. Every soldier of the Cross should be as obedient to his Captain as were the Roman soldiers to their centurion. 4. The true man lets another praise him rather than himself. 5. Faith is not confined to any quarter. 6. The qualities of greatness may be found in the small as well as the great.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE WIDOW OF NAIN.

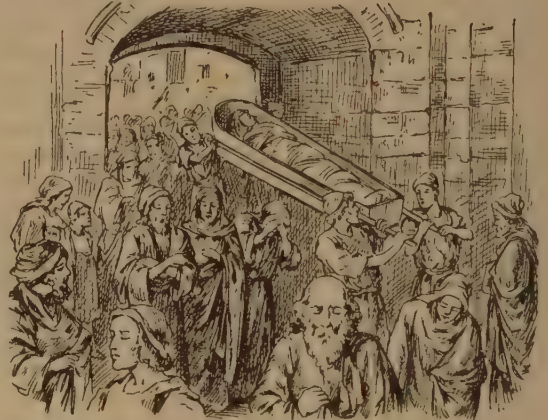
And it came  
to pass the  
day after, that  
he went into  
a city called  
Nain; and  
many of his



went with  
him, and much  
people. Now  
when he came  
nigh to the



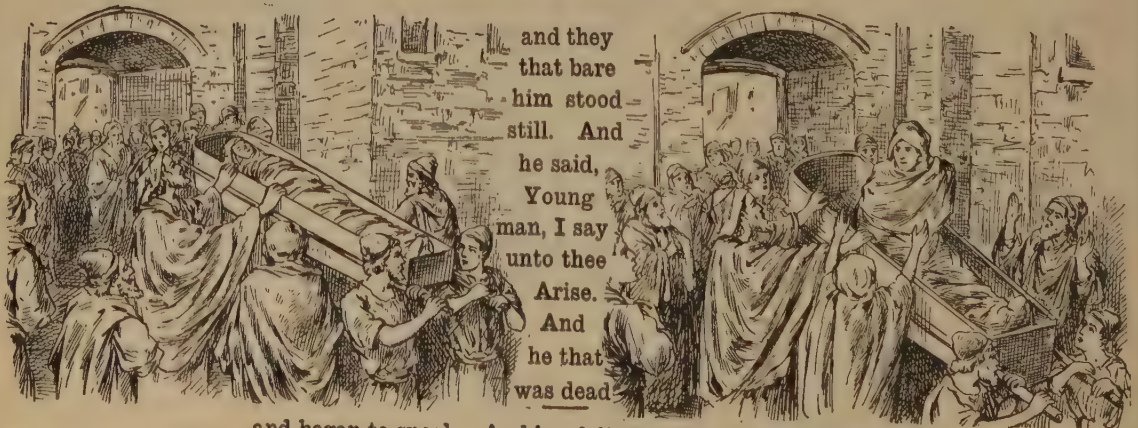
behold,  
there  
was  
a dead  
man



the only son  
of his mother,  
and she was  
a widow:  
and much



of the city was  
with her. And  
when the Lord  
saw her, he  
had compassion  
on her, and  
said unto her,  
Weep not. And  
he came and



and they  
that bare  
him stood  
still. And  
he said,  
Young  
man, I say  
unto thee  
Arise. And  
he that  
was dead

and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 7:11-16.

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee for Thy Son, for His sympathy, tenderness and love, and for His power over life and death. May we commit our lives into His hands, and may death lose its terror for us through Him. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Henceforth in Christ are no more dead,  
The grave hath no more prey.  
In Christ we live, in Christ we sleep,  
In Christ we wake and rise,  
And the sad tears death makes us weep,  
He wipes from all our eyes."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Nain, in Galilee. Persons, Jesus, the widowed mother, her dead son and Jesus' disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** The Dead Raised to Life. Elijah raises the widow's son, 1 Kings 17:20-24. Elisha restores child to life, 2 Kings 4:32-37. Christ raises Jairus' daughter, Mark 5:41-42. Lazarus re-

stored to life, John 11:41-44. Tabitha restored to life by Peter, Acts 9:36-41.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this miracle we see: 1. A Divine Providence in the meeting of the two processions. 2. Jesus ever present in the time of greatest need. 3. His tenderness and sympathy for the afflicted and His readiness to help. 4. Jesus demonstrates His power over death.

## AN ONLY SON RESTORED TO LIFE.

**A Common Heritage.** Jesus was passing through a beautiful country. At that season of the year cloudless skies were overhead. Each day brought new gladness and growing beauty, but over fair Galilee, as everywhere, fell the blight of sorrow, and Jesus, the Man of Sorrows, was peculiarly sensitive to the suffering everywhere present. Yesterday it was the sorrow of the centurion. Today the sorrow of a Jewish mother touches the heart so full of compassion and moves the Great Commander to exercise authority over death itself. For while the centurion's servant lay sick unto death in the grim garison, a similar scene was being enacted in a humble home in the pretty little village of Nain, where a widow watched by the bedside of her only child. We may be sure the mother's anxiety as she battled with death for the salvation of all that made life dear, far exceeded even the centurion's solicitude. And she must fight death's encroachment alone, for she had not heard of Jesus. No testimony had reached her of His authority over disease.

**The Battle Lost.** Around the humble home, neighbors clustered and watched while the village hakim exhausted his store of remedies, magical and real. Vainly the mother used all the known means of recovery; the battle was against her, and there came the day when her boy no longer knew her voice nor heeded her caresses; when the neighbors walked noiselessly and aimlessly about while the rabbis counselled submission. And then that dark, dark moment when the wings of the death angel fanned the boy's pallid face and froze it into immobility. And with the well-known blast of the horn by which death was always announced, was heard the anguished cry of a mother despoiled of her only treasure and the sole joy of her widowed and desolate

life. She had prayed to God as only a mother can pray when the life of her only son is at stake, and the great Jehovah had not deigned to grant her supplication. But were her prayers in vain? Did not Jesus know of that empty home and heart as with His disciples He turned from His course into Nain? Though she knows it not, and in her bitterness of soul regards herself as forgotten, her cry to Jehovah has reached the ears of the Father in Heaven and He has sent His Only Son with the answer.

**The Last Sad Offices.** The humble home became the abode of mourning. According to Jewish custom, the mother has rent her upper garment and sits on the floor, moaning and lamenting her son. She must eat no meat, and the little she may partake must be eaten in the house of a neighbor or in another room from her dead. It reveals their mistaken idea of God, that according to the rabbis prayer was not allowed at meals eaten in such sorrow. Neighbors and friends busy themselves with preparations for the funeral. The hair and nails of the dead boy were cut, and, after bathing and anointing it, the body, which has been lifted from the bed to the ground, is wrapped in the best the poor mother can afford. On such an occasion the poorest of the Jews deemed it a duty to provide at least two flutes and one mourning woman, and we may be sure none of these tokens of affection were omitted by the mother. At last the mournful procession starts from the desolate home. As now, a few neighbors remain behind to put the house in order; but they were charged with a duty unknown at the present time. As the funeral cortege issues from the house, every chair and couch is reversed and laid low.

**The Final Journey.** The body is carried on a bier made of wicker-work and gar-

landed with myrtle. The upturned face is uncovered and the hands are folded on the breast; the key so conspicuously placed on the bier proclaims the dead as unmarried. Following a strictly Galilean custom founded on the belief that woman introduced death into the world, the bereft mother, unaccompanied by a single friend, totters feebly in front of the bier. But the mother and son were favorites in a village whose people have turned out almost en masse, as a tribute of respect for the one who was dead and the one bereft. In fact, there are so many friends and neighbors anxious for the honor, that frequent shifts of the pallbearers are made and every now and then the funeral procession halts while new bearers, all unshod, exchange places with the old. During these pauses there is loud lamentation; weird chants of mourning women, accompanied by flutes, the melancholy tinkle of cymbals and blare of trumpets. Behind the bier walk the relatives, friends and neighbors.

**The Prince of Life Appears.** Just as the funeral train approaches the rocky sides of the hill where are the hewn burial chambers of the village, Jesus draws near. It is a meeting of Life and Death. The man who can witness a mother's grief unmoved is unworthy of a mother. We have seen that Jesus was a model Son. Perhaps He is reminded of the hour, not far distant, when His mother's heart will be rent; moreover, has He not claimed all women who call upon Him as mother? We know His loving eye and Divine sympathy were quick to recognize her, even though she did not recognize Him. "Beholding her, He had compassion on her." His first word was one of courage to the weeping mourner—"Weep not." As amid blinding tears she looked into that face so full of compassion, she knew that another shared her sorrow.

**Young Man Arise.** Jesus then laid His hand upon the bier. The dignity of authority rested upon Him and they who bore the bier stood still. Elijah and Elisha through much intercessory prayer and great physical effort had each raised the dead and restored to a mother her son. They performed the wonderful miracle of the restoration of life through God's power. But here is no ceremony, not even a call upon the Father, simply the sovereign command. "Young man, I say unto you, arise." And O, the wonderful power of Jesus, "He that was dead sat up and began to speak."

**The Mother Receives Her Answer.** Even in our much vaunted twentieth century civil-

ization, in only three states does the law follow the example of Jesus, who publicly recognized the mother's right to her child for "He delivered him to his mother." Happy mother, who knew her prayer for her boy was answered. Very wisely Luke refrained from attempting to paint that scene, where by the open grave, empty bier and discarded funeral bands, a mother received from the Giver of all life, her son. How tender must have been the tie ever after between that mother and son, and yet we wonder if it were closer than the bond which God has ordained between every son and his mother.

**Not An Accident.** The meeting of the two processions outside the gate of Nain was not an accident, but one of those special providences which we say "happen," but which are really a miraculous answer to prayer. It was not chance that sent our Lord out from Capernaum that morning, nor was it a coincidence that the funeral procession should be on its way at the same hour. Jesus knew of the mother's sorrow, and He came that way, that He might wipe away her tears. Though the meeting may have seemed accidental, it was a part of the great plan, or Providence of the One who has said, "Before you call upon me, I will answer." It was like Jesus to be close at hand in the hour of need, and to so plan His journey that He might turn sorrow and mourning into joy and gladness. How many sons dead in trespass and sin, have been given eternal life through the prayers of a sorrowing mother. The restoration of a dead man in the presence of such a multitude of witnesses produced a deep impression. It electrified the people, "And they glorified God saying, that a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited His people."

Jesus had shown His absolute control over the powers of life and death. Truly He might say, "I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

**Quiz.** 1. How many instances of the raising of the dead to life are recorded in the Bible? 2. In whose name was the miracle performed? 3. Why did Jesus come to Nain? 4. Is this the first time Jesus restored the dead to life? 5. What qualities of our Lord does this miracle illustrate?

**Seed Truths.** 1. The world avoids the sorrowful, but Jesus seeks them out. 2. Misery may be changed to joy in a moment through Jesus. 3. Every redeemed man is a son restored to his mother. 4. No boy can outlive a mother's prayers. 5. Life is victorious over death. 6. He who lives must die; he who dies passes into life. 7. No village is too small or mean for our greatest effort.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST.

When the men were come unto him, they said,



hath sent us  
unto thee,  
saying, Art  
thou he that  
should  
come? or



we for another?  
And in that  
same hour he  
cured many of  
their infirmities  
and plagues,  
and of evil  
spirits; and unto  
many that were



he gave sight.  
Then Jesus  
answering said  
unto them, Go  
your way, and tell  
John what things  
ye have seen and  
heard; how that  
the blind see, the



walk,  
the



are  
clean-  
sed, the



hear, the



to the



the gospel is preached.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 7:18-35. ALSO MATT. 11:2-19.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for that knowledge of Thy love and power that dispels all doubt and fear. Help us to be faithful under every trying circumstance of life and to tell Thee all our care, knowing that Thou carest for us. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Still though dead they speak,  
And trumpet-tongued proclaim  
To many a wakening land,  
The one availing Name."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Capernaum. Persons, Jesus and the disciples of John the Baptist.

**Scripture Setting:** Prisoners of the Lord. Joseph in prison, Gen. 39:20-23. Jeremiah in the dungeon, Jer. 38:6. Peter's deliverance from prison, Acts 12:6-11. Paul and Silas rejoice in prison, Acts 16:23-25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The visit of John's messengers sets forth: 1. The poisonous and numbing effect of doubt upon the most fearless of God's saints. 2. Jesus' consideration for honest doubt. 3. The miracles of Jesus are a proof of His Messiahship. 4. The exalted position of John the Baptist. 5. The greatness of even the least of the citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven.

### A GREAT PRISONER IN A GREAT PRISON.

**An Ancient Fortress.** All that is left of the old paved road to Machaerus today is a rugged line of upturned square stones. The site of the ancient town of Machaerus which once sat proudly on the shoulder of the hill surrounded by a fortified wall, is now marked by a square mile of ruins. The road is so obstructed that one must climb to the ancient fortress built by Herod the Great, whose immense stone walls more than a mile in length were flanked by towers two hundred and fifty feet high. Though the great king built cisterns, storehouses and arsenals, equipping the latter with every known weapon of defense and attack, in order to withstand prolonged siege; he was unable to make provision against the siege of time and the carefully piled up stones of which the citadel was built is all that remains of one of the most magnificent palaces and greatest military fortresses of history.

**The Dungeon.** Clambering over the stones, one comes to the eastern keep or citadel, whose foundation walls are still standing a yard or two above the ground. The keep is small, being just one hundred yards in diameter. Very little remains; a well of great depth and a deep cemented cistern with vaulted roof is still intact; but what is of most interest—two dungeons, one very deep down and in such a state of preservation that the small holes are still visible in the masonry into which staples of wood and iron had once been fastened. And this was once the prison of John the Baptist! For ten months, he was immured in this keep.

**Like An Eagle Caged.** Imagine a child of the desert who had roamed the wilderness at will; a man still young, whose eloquence had attracted kings and the great ones of earth to his preaching, now deserted by all save a few followers and caged in this dismal fortress with no outlook except the black lava crags and deep yawning gorges

that seemed to open upon a bottomless pit; and worse still on the other side is the luxurious palace of Herod and his wicked wife, the sinful woman whose murderous hatred he had incurred. Can we wonder that his confinement in this prison began to tell on his spirits? Was it for this that he prayed, had suffered and even denied himself all save the necessities of the wilderness? He had felt himself to be the Voice of God in denouncing Herod's wicked marriage; but if it were so, why had not God intervened in his behalf? Was that affront to the king who would otherwise have been his friend a mistake? Some one has said that every doubt is a poisonous adder. If so there were serpents in John's dungeon, for the sting of doubt was poisoning his faith not only in himself, but in the coming of the Kingdom, and the Messiah. Strong men have lost their minds in a dungeon before and since, and it only speaks of John's humanity, not to his discredit, that faith if not reason was unhinged.

**Strange Tidings.** He was not so closely guarded that his disciples could not have access to him. Though the multitude who had hung upon his words had forgotten him during the brief term of his imprisonment, there were still a few faithful followers whose visits relieved the awful gloom and monotony of his prison life. They alternated between Machaerus and Capernaum, bringing strange tidings of Jesus. John had kept every fast, Jesus never fasted; John had hurled threat and invective at his audience, Jesus told them they were the children of a Heavenly Father. Could it be that the Holy Dove and the Father's acknowledgment of the Son, referred to another? And yet—what of the miracles that attested a power greater than John's own, for he had never attempted a miracle? Do you wonder that John was perplexed?



**Messengers Are Sent to Jesus.** His disciples have just brought Him tidings of Jesus' restoration of the widow's son to life. Ah, it is hard to be confined in the Black Castle behind prison walls and to sit in stocks, when things of such momentous import are happening! A long time has elapsed since Jesus' baptism. He has not publicly declared His Messiahship. He has not organized church or army. Instead of marching with victorious banner toward universal authority, Jesus is spending precious time in Galilee and even in despised Samaria, teaching in the villages like a wandering schoolteacher. It did not accord with the Jewish ideas of the Messiah held by John the Baptist. But not one before had ever raised the dead, save Elijah and Elisha. Now John had never claimed to be the Elias who was to come before the Christ. Perhaps Jesus was that prophet and the Kingdom and its King were yet to come. He could not go to Jesus, but two of his disciples gladly agreed to carry John's message, "Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?"

**The Answer.** After all it was a blessed doubt that sent John to Jesus. How much better to put the question to a direct test, than to do as those who seek no light and sit in the darkness of doubt, until the eyes of faith are forever holden. John sent his doubts straight to Jesus to be settled. The messengers arrived in the "Same hour that He cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind He gave sight." Seeing is believing. Ocular demonstration is the strongest of all proof. Jesus knew the nobility of John's nature, and that he only needed to be brought in touch with such deeds to recognize their Divine origin, so He sent the messengers back with the command, Go, tell John what you have seen and heard: "How that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised." Yes not only these miracles of healing, but "To the poor the gospel is preached." John will recognize the significance of this last assertion. It meant a return to the unworldly and Divine humanitarianism of the Mosaic law, "There shall be no poor among you." Indeed during those years when Israel obeyed God there were no beggars and to this day there is no Hebrew word for begging.

**A Timely Caution.** John had not been forgotten. Jesus knew all his longings, all his sufferings, his doubts and even the criticisms which the darkness of the dungeon had wrung from that loyal soul, and He honors him with a special warning beatitude. "Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me." We may be sure never again did John doubt that Jesus was the Christ, and though his method was so different from that of the Baptist, never again did John question feasting or preaching or the spontaneous joy of the life of the sinless One.

**A Sincere Tribute.** Though Jesus sent back no message of personal encouragement to John, He only waited the departure of the messengers whose open question had published John's doubts and fears, when He delivered the highest eulogy of John which has ever been uttered. John's doubting agony of soul was not the fickleness of one as wavering as the tall Jordan reeds; nor was the gloom of the prison the physical fear of a pampered court sycophant. He demanded of them who they went out to see, during those days they flocked to the Jordan to hear John's preaching, and when they answered, "A prophet," Jesus declared John to be more than a prophet. He was the herald to prepare the way for Me, the Messiah. "Among those that are born of women there is not a greater than John the Baptist." And yet so great is the Kingdom to come, that the least of its citizens will be greater than he.

**Like Children at Play.** How those who had accepted John's baptism and preaching rejoiced in this eulogy, but there were others who cavilled at Jesus' words. Jesus turned to a group of children who had gathered on the public square for play and were disputing as to whether they should play at "weddings" or "funerals"; which, by the way, are still the only two games which the children of the land play today. To the cry, "Let's play funerals," some responded, "No, we will not play that; it is too solemn." "Well, then, let us play wedding." But nothing suited the sulky ones and the game had broken up in a wrangle. Pointing to the group, Jesus likened His audience's difference of opinion to these children. They would not have the recluse John the Baptist and they refused to accept Jesus, the Friend of sinners.

**Quiz.** 1. Where was John the Baptist imprisoned? 2. Why did Jesus show consideration for his doubts? 3. How did He show His tenderness in reproof? 4. What evidence of His Messiahship did He give? 5. What great tribute did He pay to John?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. It is easier to preach to a crowded house than to live out one's faith in a dungeon. 2. Things seen in the open appear darker behind prison walls. 3. The caged eagle cannot soar high. 4. God always answers the honest doubter. 5. We are never forsaken, though we may sometimes seem to be left alone. 6. The proof of Christianity is its beneficent effects on the world.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



and I will  
give you



Take



and



for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find



unto your souls.  
For my yoke is  
easy, and my





# THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 11:20-30.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Help us to use the privileges and opportunities Thou hast given us, for Thy glory and for the good of others. May we come to Thee with our burdens and our cares, knowing that in Thee we shall find rest. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"O to the weary, faint, oppressed,  
How sweet the bidding, 'Come to me!'  
When against sin I strive in vain,  
And cannot from its yoke get free,  
Sinking beneath the heavy chain,  
The words arrest me, 'Come to me.'"

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, Capernaum. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Warnings. Sodom and Gomorrah denounced, Gen. 18:20-21. Destruction of Tyre foretold, Ezek. 26:4-6. Destruction of Jerusalem, Luke 13:34. **Invitations.** Come, let us reason together, Isa. 1:18. To the thirsty, Isa. 55:1-3. To backsliders, Jer. 3:22. To hear His word, Ezek. 3:11. To the wedding, Matt. 22:4. To everyone, Rev. 22:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson shows:  
1. That those peculiarly favored by God are held accountable for their opportunities. 2. Exalted privilege incurs great accountability. 3. Jesus offers rest and tranquility to all workers and burden bearers. 4. The example of our Lord is a lesson of meekness and lowliness of heart. 5. His service is easy and the burden imposed upon His followers is never irksome.

## THE GREAT INVITATION.

**A Small Field.** Tender though He was, Jesus could also be stern! Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum, three cities on the shore of Lake Gennesaret were twice denounced for their unbelief. These towns were only five miles apart, and though He spoke in Galilee and even Judea, His most earnest efforts were expended on these communities and the surrounding neighborhood. In so small a circle was Jesus content to spend His life and exert His marvelous powers! Yet there are many who chafe under narrow environment and make a circumscribed life an excuse for failure, imagining that big and great things can only be done out in the big world.

Matthew lived in Capernaum. Here also lived the nobleman whose son was healed by a word from Jesus spoken at Cana; here the centurion's dying servant had been restored to health by the Great Healer, without so much as seeing him. Here the demoniac had been healed, and at Bethsaida, Peter's wife's mother lived to tell of the Great Physician, at whose touch the fever had vanished. Before Peter's door the multitudes had been healed, while in neighboring Nain, one had been raised from the dead. He had taught in their streets, from mountain top and plain, along the seashore and in fishing boats a few yards from the shore: there was hardly a person in the three towns who had not either profited by or been a witness to His miracles. Why, if the mighty works that had been done in Capernaum alone, had been done in wicked Sodom, Abraham's plea would have been unnecessary, for its regeneration would have ensured its safety.

**The Woe of Three Cities.** "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which have been done in you, had been done in Tyre and

Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." Not to the multitude did Jesus make this denunciation, nor even to the disciples who were alone with Him. It was a soliloquy greater than Hamlet's and spoken in a voice of more unspeakable sadness than that of the Danish prince. In the solemnity of the moment, Capernaum, His home, rose before Him. "And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted into Heaven, shall be brought down to hell." He had lived among its townsmen and performed His greatest works hoping, longing and waiting for their acceptance. "I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee." The words are indeed awful, but He had tried to win them by love, He had offered them mercy; and what it must have cost Him to foretell the impending doom of His home city! There was not wrath but tears in His voice, as he anticipated the woe which their continuance in sin entailed upon the three cities.

**The Woe Realized.** The prophecy was fulfilled. The woes were realized; not speedily as in the case of Sodom but as truly. In Jesus' day the beautiful lake was dotted with whole fleets of boats, there were coasters, ferry boats and fishing boats, the population was very dense and every spot was under cultivation. "Walnut trees grew on the hills and palms waved on the shores. Figs and grapes were said to ripen for ten months in the year, and the olives were famous." Solitude now reigns on hills and shore, and Capernaum has so wholly disappeared that the world is in doubt as to which of two wretched masses of ruins and debris represent the once flourishing city. The site of Bethsaida is also in doubt and Chorazin has been lost altogether.

**The Optimism of Jesus.** The day has been marked by the doubts of John, the thoughtlessness and dissension of the multitudes and the stolid unbelief of His townsmen and neighbors. New discouragements come; Jesus lets go of all these troubles and talks to the Father. And how the gloom is lifted. "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank Thee, O Father." Jesus was the greatest optimist the world has ever known. After such a chapter of discouragements and disappointments He could lift His voice in thanksgiving. What does He find to be thankful for? First for His Father, who is Lord of Heaven and earth; then for the Father's wisdom; that religion had not been given over to a few rabbis and teachers, but was for the masses of the people, the great, foolish, hungry multitude. No longer is His face clouded, no longer the sadness and sternness mingle in His tones. He sees the soul-hungry countenances of the poor, notes the broken-hearted ones, and those faint and weary, and with infinite pity and tenderness, in a voice which all the successive ages have not robbed of its music, He stretches out His arms, as though He would have gathered that great, unwashed, worn and weary multitude to Himself; He speaks the invitation which reaches out through the centuries and extends to every troubled and unhappy heart, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

**Bearing the Yoke.** Since steam and electricity have become common carriers one must go far to see oxen used as beasts of burden; but there are still some frontier points where oxen are used to draw heavy logs and loads of stone. In India their use is common still, and in Christ's day they were not only used to plough the fields, but oxen could be seen in every village. The yoke is the crudest of man's inventions, and strange to say it has never been improved upon, so that the yoke to which the ox bends his neck today is practically the same as that in use at the time of Christ. Looking beyond the burdened multitude Jesus sees a yoke of oxen patiently and lightly bearing their burdens by means of the yoke, and with His aptness for illustration, He invites His hearers to "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: For I am meek and lowly in heart: And ye shall find rest unto your

souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

**Yoked Together.** To train a young ox to labor, he is yoked with an older beast that has long borne the yoke. Jesus asks to be yoked with every burden bearer that He may teach us to carry our burdens easily; for whatever the sorrow, trouble or responsibility, Jesus has carried it, and knowing its weight He can adjust it to human hearts. Not in boast did He proclaim, "For I am meek and lowly in heart." A frontiersman will tell you that it takes a peculiar type of man to deal with oxen, and not for anything will he trust his team with any young Jehu. Few men have the necessary patience. Indeed the more gentle the driver, the more readily and easily the oxen yield to his yoke. Jesus only declares His possession of the qualities which any owner would demand of the one who is to yoke his oxen. He alone knows to fashion the yoke to the strength of each burden bearer.

**Illustration.** There is a story of a community that rose in rebellion against the Lord because of the burdens imposed upon them. One day the Lord appeared to them and consented that each should tie his burden in a sack and bring it to a certain place. When all were piled up, then each one could go and take from the pile the one he could easiest carry. The people eagerly consented. All day they came; some brought disgrace, others poverty, affliction, illness, until sacks containing every known sorrow were in the dump. Then each went and, weighing the various burdens, chose the one that seemed lightest. And lo, when they returned and opened their sacks, each had carried home his former burden, and thus they learned that the yoke of the great Burden-bearer was easy and His burden light.

**Quiz.** 1. To what cities did Jesus compare Chozazin and Bethsaida? 2. To what does He compare Capernaum? 3. Is the comparison to the advantage of the Galilean cities? 4. What fate overtook Sodom? 5. Who prophesied against Sidon? 6. What was the fate of that city?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. No city is great enough to withstand God's woe. 2. Cities and people pronounce their own woe. 3. The more exalted the opportunity, the greater the fall. 4. Earnest prayer always reveals some cause for thankfulness. 5. Jesus bows Himself under the yoke before He adjusts it to us. 6. Sorrow only yokes us with the Man of Sorrows.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



Thou gavest me no



but this



since the time I came in hath not ceased to



My



with oil thou didst not



but this woman hath



with ointment.

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. And they that



began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 7:36-50.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee that Thou hast made it possible that though our sins be as scarlet they may be as white as snow. Help us to realize the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the debt of love we owe to Him who shed His blood for our cleansing. For His Name's sake. Amen.

"O Jesus, at Thy feet we wait,  
Till Thou shalt bid us rise,  
Restored to our unsinning state,  
To love's sweet paradise."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 28. Place, An unknown town in Galilee. Persons, Jesus, Simon a Pharisee and a woman of former evil reputation.

**Scripture Setting:** Forgiveness. A song of gratitude, Psa. 13:5-6. Praise and gratitude, Psa. 22:24-25. Forgiven iniquity, Psa. 32:5. The contrite heart, Isa. 57:15. Joy over penitent, Luke 15:7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The dinner at the home of Simon, the Pharisee. 1. Affords a compari-

son of the reception accorded Jesus by the proud and indifferent, with that of the sinner seeking forgiveness. 2. Shows that Jesus is willing to suffer a sinner's approach and accept the unaffected homage of the unworthy. 3. Asserts Jesus' right to forgive sins. 4. Peace follows forgiveness. 5. The parable of the Two Debtors shows that all are debtors to Jesus; the greater our sense of indebtedness, the greater our repentance for sin and love for the Saviour.

### HOW SIMON LEARNED HIS LESSON.

**An Invitation to Dinner.** The invitation came from an unexpected quarter while Jesus was in a Galilean town; for the Pharisees were so rigidly exclusive that rarely were such courtesies extended to anyone outside their own narrow circle. It was a mark of great consideration, and when it seemed as though Jesus might not accept, the invitation was repeated; so deeply had Simon the Pharisee been impressed by Jesus' teaching and miracles. Indeed, Simon was among the constantly growing number upon whom the thought of Jesus' Messiahship was asserting itself; he invited Jesus to his house, hoping that the closer and freer intercourse might enable him to form a decision. But no sooner had Simon yielded to this impulse of hospitality than he began to repent of his action. What would his fellow Pharisees say and how should he account for such amazing conduct on his own part? The honor he had felt upon Jesus' acceptance gave place to fear of others' criticism, and he received his guest indifferently and somewhat patronizingly.

**The Uninvited Guest.** It is hard for us to understand the simplicity and freedom of the social life of the East. If we were sitting at the dinner table with a party of invited guests, we would be shocked to have any outsider enter the room; but in the East the door of the feast room is left open so that the uninvited, even comparative strangers, may pass in and out at their pleasure during the entertainment; seats by the wall are even provided for spectators and listeners, while raised divans or cushioned couches are arranged on three sides of a square around the table for the guests. Simon's guests were disposed comfortably on these—where they lay on their left arm, with their feet behind them outside. No

sooner had the feast begun than the usual company of uninvited began to take their places along the wall. From the open courtyard, up the veranda steps, and through the open door, a woman glides silently into the banquet hall. No wonder there is a ripple of excitement. She is the only one of her sex, for no women were allowed at such entertainments. Moreover, she was known to everyone in the little community for her sinful career.

**A Woman's Tears.** St. John tells of a sinful woman who was brought to Jesus and whose accusers shrank out of sight, because under His just code, they were unfit to cast the first stone. Left alone with the sinless One, she was dismissed with "Go and sin no more." Was this the woman? We only know that somewhere, somehow, the woman which was a sinner had met Jesus and had been an object of His Divine compassion. Somewhere Jesus found her out on the forbidden paths of sin that lead to death, and His had been the detaining hand to arrest her course. Jesus had found her dead in sin, and now she has come to Him for a clean bill of health. Under the glare of the lamps and the scornful eyes, she seeks Him and kneels at His feet. Her pent-up feelings of mingled gratitude, penitence, love and longing for entire forgiveness give way and she bursts into a storm of weeping, and her tears rain hot and fast upon the feet of Jesus. Immediately she stoops down and with the loosened tresses of her hair she wipes his feet, kissing them continually.

**The King Is Anointed.** It is customary to anoint a king as a sign of his Divine ordination to the office of rulership. Though many already accepted Jesus as the Messiah—Israel's King, He had not yet been actually anointed, as had been every king from the



line of David, before Him. This act of consecration was now to be performed—not in the temple by the high priest, while all the people cried “God save the king,” as Solomon had been crowned; but in the house of a Pharisee by a woman who was a sinner; for His mission was to extend from the highest ecclesiastic to the lowliest penitent. Taking the alabaster flask of ointment or perfume, which, according to the fashion of her day, she wore suspended from the neck by a chain, she quickly opens it and anoints Jesus’ feet with its costly contents, for the poor penitent felt herself unworthy to put her crown of fragrance upon the head of her King. And Jesus allows her to touch and even kiss His feet, though He knows her past, and though the others look upon her with scorn and loathing.

**An Unspoken Question.** The Pharisee was horrified and when he saw no sign of disapproval on Jesus’ face and heard no word of reproof from Him, Simon’s mind was clear, and this was his unspoken thought, “This man, if He were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him; for she is a sinner.” He thought of God only as an enlarged Pharisee, scorning the guilty and defiled, and consorting with a chosen few in a Heaven far removed from the earth.

**Question Answers Question.** Jesus reads His host’s thoughts, and turning to him, gently says, “Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.” His host tells Him to proceed, and Jesus propounds a question: If a creditor generously forgives two debts, one of fifty pence, and the other of five hundred, which debtor loves his benefactor most? In so striking and so powerful a manner does He depict the relations of Pharisee and sinner to Himself that when Simon replies indifferently, “I suppose that he to whom he forgave most,” the self-righteous Pharisee becomes a witness against himself. Very gravely Jesus says, “Thou hast rightly judged,” and again He plies him with a question, “Seest thou this woman?”

**Common Politeness.** Eastern hospitality was and is now marked by various courtesies, and attentions to the guest. To enter a house except with bare feet, was as much a sign of disrespect as it would be for a male guest to fail to remove his hat on entering your home. All shoes and sandals were taken off and left at the threshold. In the home of one so well to do as Simon, a guest had his sandals removed by a slave who poured water over his feet, both for the refreshment and to remove the dust from them, for no one wore stockings; the slave even wiping them with a towel which he carried girt about him for the purpose. Failure to salute a guest with a kiss was a sign of the utmost indif-

ference if not an insult. Indeed one may see Bedouin camel drivers kiss each other on the cheek five times in salutation. So general was the custom of anointing the head and beard of a guest with oil that David pictures God as “anointing his head with oil” when He had prepared a table before him. But Simon had omitted to show Jesus any of these common courtesies.

**A Striking Comparison.** Jesus contrasts Simon’s treatment with the woman’s to the Pharisee’s disadvantage. “I entered into thine house, thou gavest Me no water for My feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss My feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but she hath anointed My feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she hath loved much; but to whom little is forgiven the same loveth little.” How tender is Jesus even in rebuke. He credits Simon with a little love, and gently leaves the inference that he has little love because little is forgiven. Thus Simon learned his lesson. He who considered a sinner’s touch defilement saw the Holy One’s forbearance and love for the sinner, and learned of forgiveness of sin. He saw himself from the Divine view-point and learned that the greatest thing is love. May we not feel sure that he, too, learned a larger measure of affection?

**Forgiveness.** Turning to the tearful woman, Jesus said unto her, “Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.” She went in peace. What mattered it to her that Simon’s guests criticized the boldness of the One “that even forgiveth sins,” so she went out into the eternal peace of the Kingdom of Heaven? Others had come for healing for themselves; others with requests for friends, but a woman was the first to come to Jesus asking only forgiveness, and her penitential tears, the richness of her love, and the sweetness of her deed waft their precious perfume through all the ages.

**Quiz.** 1. Did Jesus ever refuse an invitation? 2. Name three other occasions when Jesus was a guest at dinner. 3. On what other like occasion was He anointed by a woman? 4. How does this case differ from the other?

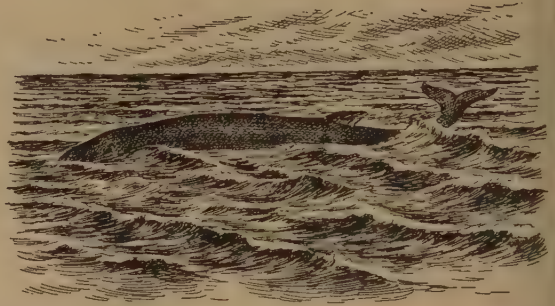
**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The costliest gift is not too costly for the Lord. 2. The loftiest eminence is at Jesus’ feet. 3. We may go to any social gathering where we may take Jesus with us and do His work. 4. Every sinner is a bankrupt and all sinners are equally unable to pay their debts. 5. Who treats sin lightly can have no deep love for the Saviour. 6. Faith in Jesus that leads us to forsake sin is the way of salvation and peace.



Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as



was three days  
and three  
nights in the



's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The

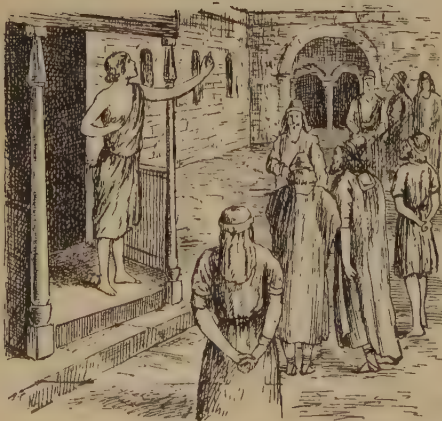


of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this

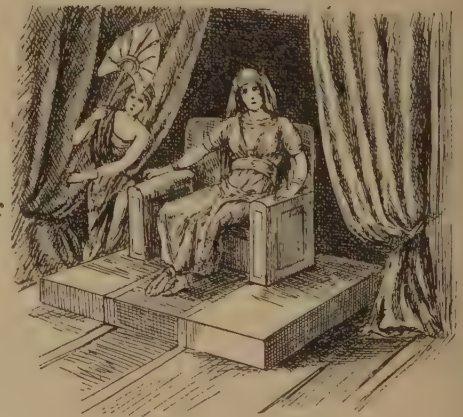


generation, and shall condemn it: because they

at the



of Jonas; and,  
behold, a greater  
than Jonas  
is here. The



of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 12:38-45. ALSO READ LUKE 11:29-32.

Prayer: Lord, we pray for the world, that it may not reject Thee, but that Thou mayest be more and more exalted until Thy rule shall be acknowledged by all. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"O who like Thee so humbly bore  
The scorn, the scoffs of men before?  
So meek, so lowly, yet so high,  
So glorious in humility?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 29. Place, Galilee. Persons, Jesus and certain rabbis and Pharisees.

**Scripture Setting:** **Rejected of Men.** God rejected for a king, 1 Sam. 10:17-19. The sin of rebellion, 1 Sam. 15:22-23. Despised and rejected, Isa. 53:3. Rejected by the wise, Jer. 8:8-9. Knowledge rejected, Hos. 4:6. Reject God's commandments, Mark 7:9. The stone which the builders rejected, Luke 20:17-18. Judgment of those who rejected, John 12:48.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson, 1.

Jesus rebukes those sign seekers who demand evidence only as a cloak to hide stubborn unbelief. 2. He makes Jonah's experience the type of His own death and resurrection. 3. Again Jesus emphasizes the sin of unbelief as exceeding any other. 4. His enemies are to be punished not because they disbelieve His words, but because they reject His works. 5. He illustrates the fact that the repentant Gentile world shall stand in judgment against the self-righteous who reject Him.

### SEEKING A SIGN.

**The Tour of Galilee.** Jesus was returning to Capernaum from one of those missionary journeys to the villages and towns of Galilee so frequently made during this period of His ministry. He was attended by the twelve and by a group of loyal, loving women who joyfully provided for the wants of Jesus and His disciples; some because of their relationship to Mary, His mother, and others in gratitude for His healing. It was not an unusual thing for a popular rabbi or great teacher to tour the country with a train of followers, but this party was marked by its earnestness, enthusiasm and consecration. There was not the ostentatious dress of the rabbis; for we cannot imagine that the One who praised John the Baptist for his simple attire would Himself wear the huge tassels which ornamented the garb of the rabbis, and certainly He who taught such simple approach of the Father did not use the leathern phylacteries which the others bound on their left arm and forehead at prayer. In the eighteenth century, John Wesley and his followers followed their Lord's example in a tour of England, stirring the hearts of multitudes.

**An Example of Humility.** Though Jesus was the King of all the world, and might freely draw from the inexhaustible riches of His Heavenly Father, no one ever lived so humbly. He always traveled on foot, thankful for a cup of water as He pursued His toilsome way up and down the hot white hills of Palestine and asking little more than a piece of bread of the villages He honored with His presence. He did not seek notoriety. If He did some mighty work of healing, He charged the one healed to tell no man; if He found Himself with a popular following, He fled to the wilderness: He would spend all night with an awakening

soul like Nicodemus; He gave an afternoon to the Samaritan woman; He would take young men home with Him that He might answer their questions. He lavished His miraculous gifts upon rich and poor, and healed those in high position and in servitude. He never repulsed the rich, but He sought the poor. In a word, He went about doing good.

**The Beginning of Conflict.** Looking back upon such a life, it seems strange it should have aroused personal enmity and the bitterest hatred. Yet outrages were heaped upon Him and He was rejected by a wicked generation, until at times His trials seemed too great for Jesus' own soul. True, the common people heard Him gladly; on one occasion the enthusiasm of the multitude rose to an uncontrollable height. There were times when Jesus and His disciples "could not so much as eat bread," for the press of the multitude. But the Pharisees beheld His growing power with envy and malignancy. They felt they were in danger of losing their authority and that the simple, pure religion He taught menaced the man-made religion of rites and forms which they had established in place of the solemn covenant Israel had received from God at Sinai. As long as He had little or no following, they were satisfied to treat Him with contempt; but when the people began to speak of Jesus as the Messiah and the promised One, they attacked Him with the bitterest hostility. Charges were laid against Him at Jerusalem, whence spies were sent out by the Jewish authorities to dog His footsteps and distort His sayings. It is the common heritage of the just. Possibly no one was more criticized than Abraham Lincoln during the period of the civil war. It is related that during a lull in the continual storm of criti-

cism and protest, Mr. Lincoln was congratulated by a member of his cabinet, and replied, "For the past few weeks I have felt my policy to be vacillating; now I know it to be so."

**Unfounded Charges.** Jesus was a model Jew. He revived the national spirit and renewed the patriotism of the multitude, who regarded Him as one of the prophets, if not the Messiah. To overcome this impression, the Pharisees and their emissaries called Him a drunkard, a glutton, a Sabbath-breaker, a blasphemer, a necromancer who cast out Beelzebub with Beelzebub. They declared He was in league with the devil. Jesus Himself answered these charges and proved their absurdity so conclusively that His enemies were glad to slink away. Then they skilfully changed their policy. It would not do to break with Jesus so long as the people were with Him. They would mingle with the crowd as friends; listen, and in a gentle way seek to entangle Him. No cat ever watched a mouse more closely than these Pharisees watched Jesus, only awaiting the opportunity to spring upon Him.

**Jesus Unafraid.** And how striking was the attitude of Jesus in the face of their dangerous hatred. His teaching became more powerful, His words stronger than ever before. He never struck wrong, never missed a stroke. He was growing stronger with the people, whose confidence they were daily losing. Those scribes who had followed Him so relentlessly were retired by their superiors at Jerusalem, and others appeared in their place. As if they could deceive Him, they tried to hide their feelings behind a mask of kindness and innocent wonder. They came to Him with an air of the greatest honesty. They wanted to be convinced, and if Jesus would show them a sign, they would believe. But He was not to be deceived by their humility. Calmly and sternly He unmasked them before the people, as a part of an evil and adulterous generation.

**The Sign.** No sign would be wrought for their purpose. But they should have a sign. And then Jesus foretells His death and resurrection in that remarkable parallel, "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Did His disciples remember it, we wonder, when He disappeared from their sight and their eyes were wet with

tears, and their hearts heavy because of His death and burial? It is not certain whether Jonah ever told the Ninevites of the miracle of his preservation from the sea or not. It is probable that the men of Nineveh accepted Jonah's message without any knowledge of the miracle of his preservation from the sea. The Jews refused the message of Jesus notwithstanding the miracles which were so palpable as to admit of no denial.

**Greater Than All.** "And behold, a greater than Jonah is here." If this seemed a blasphemous claim to the Pharisees, He would still more boldly proclaim Himself and denounce their unbelief. The heathen queen of Sheba shall rank above them in the Judgment Day, "for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here." Now, the Jews believed not only what is written in the Old Testament in regard to Solomon, but all that tradition had added to this, in reference to his magic words, his magic ring, and his knowledge of the secrets of the supernatural world. The orthodox Jews of Jesus' day regarded Solomon as above all who had ever lived, in his glory, power and wisdom; and Jesus declared that He is greater than Solomon! In rage and anger they leave Him with the multitude while they plot His overthrow. Every day fuel was added to the flame of their hatred, for Jesus manifested His power more and more, and declared Himself still more openly and boldly. Meek and lowly as was the Divine King, these gentler qualities were mingled with a courage which dared to meet the issue squarely, without evasion or retraction, and without fear, for Jesus knew that each succeeding century would bring but additional proof that His boldest claims were all too modest statements of His eternal power and glory.

**Quiz.** 1. Who was Jonah? 2. Why did he refuse to go on the mission to Nineveh? 3. How did he try to escape and what befell him? 4. Who was the "Queen of the South"? 5. What was Solomon's chief greatness? 6. What sign did Jesus say the scribes should see? 7. When was the sign given?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Hypocrisy always wears a mask. 2. The unbelieving desire a sign rather than salvation. 3. The insincere fear sincerity. 4. Hatred exhausts the poisonous soil upon which it grows and dies for lack of nourishment. 5. No one ever stones a weather cock. 6. Jesus' strongest statement of His power tells but a tithe of His greatness. 7. The common people are ever to be trusted in their choice of a favorite. 8. The evil may plot, but their plans can extend no farther than this world.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



Hear ye therefore  
the parable of



When any one heareth  
the word of the kingdom,  
and understandeth it  
not, then cometh the



and catcheth away that  
which was sown in his



This is he which



But  
he  
that



places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with



receiveth it;  
Yet hath  
he not



in himself,  
but dureth  
for a while:

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 13:3-8, 18-24. LUKE 8:4-15, MARK 4:3-20.

**Prayer.** Lord, we thank Thee for the good seed of Thy word, and for Thy Divine truth sowing. Prepare our hearts that they may become good soil for the sowing of Thy word and that Thy truth may spring up and bear much fruit in our lives. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"May we receive the word we hear,  
Each in an honest heart;

\* \* \* \*

To seek Thee, all our hearts dispose;  
To each Thy blessings suit;  
And let the seed Thy servant sows,  
Produce abundant fruit."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 29. Place, Lake Gennesaret near Capernaum. **Persons,** Jesus, His disciples and multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** Seed Sowing: Certainty of harvest, Isa. 55:10-11. God giveth the seed, 2 Cor. 9:10. Sowing in tears, Ps. 126:5-6. Sowing in righteousness, Hos. 10:12. The spare and the bountiful sower, 2 Cor. 9:6. Reaping what is sown, Gal. 6:7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Through the parable of the sower Jesus shows His disciples, 1. The indifference to God's word. 2. The seed is the word of the Kingdom. 3. The field is the world. 4. The hearts of the hearers are the soil, which may be hard, shallow, overcrowded, or good. 5. The good heart is the only fruitful heart.

### A NATURE PARABLE.

**Going Forth to Sow.** Were there ever such multitudes as thronged about Jesus? Small wonder that His disciples imagined their Master would soon proclaim His Kingdom and divide His Kingdom with them. Jesus wanted to warn His disciples against undue elation at the multitude, for no one knew so well as He the fickleness of an audience and the brevity of popularity. Then He also wished to caution His audience against slighting His word and to win the more thoughtful of His hearers for the Kingdom. Sitting in the boat, Jesus began the picture with the words, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." They did not have to look far to see that. Every one of His hearers had seen the sower sally forth on his beast, which he always rode bareback; or perchance walking to the distant field with his little plow on his shoulder. For, like the French peasantry of to-day, instead of living alone on the farm, the Galilean husbandmen dwelt in little clustering villages, going out each morning to work in the field.

**The Field.** His little patch of ground was quite unlike our broad, fertile fields. There were no roads, only a narrow path through tangles of thistle and thorn. There were stretches of bare rock and other places where the ledges of underlying limestone broke through the thin crust of earth above, with only here and there a bit of really good ground. It was before the day of discs, and cultivators, and seed drills. Seed was either sown by hand, or sometimes by means of cattle, when a sack with holes was filled with corn and laid on the animal's back, so that the seed was scattered at random as the cattle moved through the fields. In such unpromising field did Jesus send the sower out to sow.

**The Yield.** The seed was good; the sower faithfully did his work, and rain and sun did their part. The bridle path was always ploughed with the rest of the field, to be trodden hard later by passing travellers and their beasts. So careful was the sower to cover all his ground that he had gone close up to the boundary, and some of the seed had fallen on the edge of the bare and trampled path, and was left to lie uncovered and exposed. Now, the soil was just as rich in the path as elsewhere in the field, but it was so callous it refused to receive the seed, which lay unwelcomed and alone. There was nothing else for it but to be crushed by the passing feet, or to furnish a meal to the countless foraging finches which are the pest of the Palestine farmer. Some of the seed fell in the layer of earth above the limestone. The soil received it gladly, the rains watered it, and in an incredibly short time tiny blades appeared above ground, prophesying a good crop; but the soil was so thin it could not furnish sufficient sustenance for the plant, and when the tendrils sought to reach down that they might take firm root, they could not pierce the rock underneath, and the fiery shafts of the sun soon scorched the shallow root stems into withered stocks; the sower might as well not have sown his seed. Some seeds fell in a loam, rich and deep, but the soil was full of thistle seeds, and thorn, of which there are more than twenty varieties in Palestine. In the strife for the mastery, the young grain spikes were eventually choked by the thistles and thorn. Discouraging, was it not? Yet the sower had not labored in vain, for there was an amazing yield in a bit of good ground.

**Seeing and Hearing.** It was the first time Jesus had spoken to them in parable, and



not only the multitude, but even His own disciples, failed to understand the meaning of the parables. This one is really the most striking of the seven parables in which Jesus described the Kingdom of God. The multitude, who had not come out to be taught or for any really serious purpose, carried no lesson home with them, and dispersed without a thought of the wonderful message. But there were a few thoughtful ones who followed Jesus and His disciples to Peter's house at the close of the day to learn more concerning the mysteries of the Kingdom. This was just what Jesus wanted them to do and He received them with open delight, assuring them that He had spoken in parables in order to interest the really earnest ones. There were many who did not care to hear, and refused to see the truth. In fact, they purposely shut ears and eyes, for fear their hearts might be touched and they should be converted.

**The Teacher Explains.** He praised these truth-seekers because they were open to conviction, saying, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear." Then in the blessed, friendly intercourse of the home, the great Teacher explained the lesson to the few earnest students who desired knowledge. The field is the world. Hearts are the soil; Jesus is the Divine Sower, and His Word is the seed of the Kingdom. Those scribes and Pharisees mingled with the multitude only to criticize Jesus and impugn His word; yet in the wideness of His mercy and the broadness of His love the seed had been given them, though it might as well have been cast upon the wayside. So hard were their hearts that unbelief had stopped their ears.

**A Shallow Soil.** A large number who heard Jesus welcomed His message. Thousands upon thousands of those who hung upon His words believed in Him and were ready to shout Hosanna to the "Son of David." But when the time of trial came, "Many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him." They endured for a while, but when tribulation and persecution arose, they forsook the One they had promised to serve.

**Illustration.** When forsaken by his former generals upon whom he had lavished favors and by his

brothers and sisters whom he had made kings and queens, and even by his wife and son, Napoleon on the Island of St. Helena sat on the sea shore and watching the shifting sands said, "Humanity is more inconstant than they."

**Among Thorns.** "And the others fell among thorns; and the thorns grew with it and choked it." Many hearers of the Word have hearts like this soil. There are many who are capable of doing great things for God, but they are not whole-hearted; their attention and their energies are divided. Cares, riches and worldly pleasures choke the Word. The great Cardinal Wolsey, who had bartered principle and outraged conscience that he might retain the favor of England's king, was led to cry, before his head fell under the executioner's axe, "Had I but served my God half as hard as I have served my king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs."

**A Hundred Fold.** The other fell into good ground, and grew, and brought forth fruit an hundred fold. The seed was the same, the Sower was the same—the difference was in the soil, just as to-day the same Word of God speaks to all, the same loving Jesus extends the invitation; but some hearts are hard, others shallow and inconstant, others preoccupied with the world, and a few hearts are like good soil, bearing much fruit.

**Illustration.** Recently a South Carolina boy fifteen years of age raised 228 bushels and three pecks of corn on one acre of soil. It was not an extra soil. It was no better than hundreds of thousands of acres to be found all over the world. At the start it was poor sandy soil, but Jerry Moore kept it free from weeds and brambles. Then it was fertilized and cultivated, the boy himself doing all the ploughing, and hoeing, seeding and harvesting. But the reward was the world's championship for corn growing. Shall we not cultivate our hearts when the reward is an everlasting prize and eternal life?

**Quiz.** 1. Why did Jesus speak in parables? 2. Did it hinder any seeker from learning the truth? 3. Whom did He bless? 4. What three truths are taught in this parable? 5. Who is responsible for the condition of the soil?

**Seed Truths.** 1. There are none so blind as those who will not see, none so deaf as those who refuse to hear. 2. No sower ever had a harder field than Jesus. 3. Let three-quarters of the seed be lost, if only the last quarter thrives. 4. Thorns grow more quickly than wheat. 5. The thriving of the seed depends on the field. 6. A hard heart is more impervious than a rock. 7. We work with the Sower.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

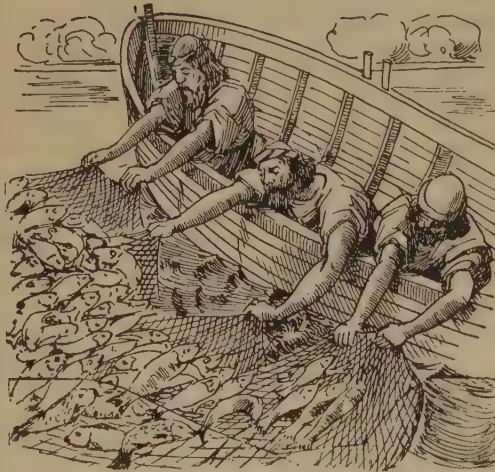
Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a



that  
was



and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was



they



and sat down, and gathered the good into



but



So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 13:44-50.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, May we seek the pearl of great price; may we search for the hidden treasure, and may we consider no earthly treasure or pleasure too great a price to pay for the joy of entrance into Thy Kingdom. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Jesus shall reign where'er the sun  
Does His successive journeys run,  
His Kingdom spread from shore to shore  
Till moons shall wax and wane no more."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 29. Place, The seashore near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** An everlasting Kingdom, Psalms 45:6. A glorious Kingdom, Psalms 145:11-13. An indestructible Kingdom, Daniel 2:44. A peaceable Kingdom, Isaiah 2:4. A growing Kingdom, Isaiah 9:7. A righteous Kingdom, Isaiah 32:16. A joyful Kingdom, Isaiah 35:10. A universal Kingdom, Isaiah 61:11. An immediate Kingdom, Matthew 16:28. Not of this world,

John 18:36. Entrance to the Kingdom, 1 Peter 10:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In a series of wonderful word pictures, Jesus shows that 1. The Kingdom of Heaven is an invisible Kingdom hidden from the world. 2. It is found by all seekers of the Kingdom. 3. He emphasizes its insuperable value. 4. Sacrifice must be made to obtain the Kingdom. 5. Proclaims the final sifting of the church, and segregation of the wicked.

### GREAT TREASURE.

**A Famous Lake.** Many lakes surpass Gennesaret in beauty, and though naval battles between Roman and Jewish galleys have been fought on its waters, it has never occupied a place of maritime importance, but it is doubtful if there is another in all the world of such interest to mankind as the little lake upon whose bosom the Son of God preached the marvelous Gospel of the Kingdom. The little strip of water, which is only twelve miles long and not seven miles wide at its widest point, commanded the admiration of the ancient historian, Josephus. Though nearly seven hundred feet below the Mediterranean Sea, its shores are not precipitous, and the west shore is edged with small plains, and there are stretches of beach composed of fine white sand, pebbles and shells. Reeds and rushes and the famous papyrus grew in favored spots along the shore; in some places maiden's-hair, luxuriant grasses, mosses, ferns and briars grew on the great projecting rocks in such profusion that the breeze would blow the long streamers of green out trailing on the water. Oaks, walnuts and other trees furnished grateful shade on many a place along the shore, while thickets of thorn trees and clumps of oleanders in rosy pink bloom added to the beauty of the scene. Within easy reach of Peter's house in Capernaum were such inviting places of rest.

**By the Sea.** It was at the close of an exhausting day's labor. The shadows were beginning to fall athwart the lake, and Jesus went from the house to such a retreat, and sat by the sea for prayer and meditation—to commune with nature and nature's God for Jesus was more than a nature lover. He discerned the times in the face of the sky; saw God's providence in the covering of the

hills; understood the mystery of the sea; read a lesson from the husbandry of the fields, and made a text of the casting of nets. But He did not remain long in lonely meditation. The great, eager multitude soon sought and found Him. They came from the fleets of busy fish boats that dotted the lake each morning and evening, as well as from the passenger boats that plied across the lake, and from the busy cities and towns along its shores. So great was the throng that He took refuge in a boat drawn up in an inlet. Pushing out a little, He again made the prow of a boat His pulpit, while the people lined either side of the inlet, and the rise of the ground in successive levels formed a natural amphitheatre for the accommodation of the multitude.

**Speaking in Parables.** "And He spoke many things unto them in parables." It was a common mode of teaching among the Jews, and one quite different from the fables of the Orientals, in which things are described that could not possibly happen. All parables bear reference to familiar scenes of daily life, or to events, either real or possible. In His parables, Jesus always drew a word picture or narrative which could be used in illustration of some Heavenly teaching or spiritual truth. Thus from His floating pulpit, Jesus began to instruct the people, who never wearied of His teaching, though they profited so little by it. How beautiful while He spoke was the Kingdom of Heaven! Now Jesus makes use of a current expression to signify the smallest possible amount, "small as a mustard seed," and likening the Kingdom of Heaven to a grain of mustard seed which a man sowed in the field, He pictures the growth of the least of all seeds into a plant so much greater

than the garden herbs that it is a tree in comparison with them. He makes use of their custom of using the mustard seed for food for pigeons and other birds, and so the birds of the air come to lodge in the branches of the mustard tree. As they crowded the shores to hear Him, did they know that of all that multitude, His memory only would remain? His words only survive the centuries? And that the Kingdom of Heaven, which He had planted so unpretentiously, and which seemed to them as the smallest seed, would outlast all of the kingdoms of the earth then extant, and grow till it had outstripped the anise and cumin of Judaism and given shelter to all the nations of the earth?

**An Inner Kingdom.** "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." It was one of the common processes of everyday life which every Galilean wife and mother could understand. But did they realize that the Word to which they listened was the leaven, which, if they would but receive it in their hearts, would gradually pervade and transform the whole life, working on through the community until every soul fed upon the bread of life?

In the middle west is a little village known throughout the state for the piety of its inhabitants and the potent influence for good which it exerts upon the surrounding communities. Every adult is a member of the little church; every child is in Sunday School. It is not only a "dry" town but its influence is relied upon to keep the county "dry." Yet this town was once a byword and known as Dog-town because it was said "There wasn't a man in it, as good as a yaller dog." One day a feeble old superannuated minister came to the little town and amid such unpromising conditions preached of the Kingdom of God. It was only one sermon preached in a cabin to an audience of a few women and children, but from that smallest of seeds, a great revival sprang, leavening and regenerating the town.

**Hidden Treasure.** "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a treasure hid in the field." A man comes along to dig in the field and finds it. According to the laws of the present day, the discoverer would have to share his find with the land owner, and in some states, the entire treasure would pass to the man who held the title to the land, but according to Jewish law the treasure belonged to the finder. So this man sells all he has to buy the field that he may dig for the hidden treasure. What are houses and land

and money worth in comparison to a heart which contains a living well of everlasting joy? What treasure to compare to peace with God? Every now and then expeditions are fitted out to go in search of the famous treasure of the voyager Cook.

**A Pearl of Great Price.** Often the fishermen of Galilee had searched for pearls, and Jesus recalls the familiar scene of the wandering jewel merchant "seeking goodly pearls; who when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all he had and bought it." One is not "carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," but Heaven is only won by persistent seeking.

Every year pearl seekers swarm the great Mississippi River and hunt its river bed for pearls. Excitement runs high when one of the pearl hunters finds a pearl of marketable value, but the entire findings of the season amount to less than the days' wages of the men engaged in the business. In the great sea of God's love, there are not a few prizes to be distributed among the few, but a pearl of great price for every seeker.

**The Net Is Drawn.** Again the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea and gathered of every kind. Ah, had not Jesus cast down the net, and as He looked over His audience, did He not see every kind? He had made it very plain that the Kingdom of Heaven meant sacrifice, and there were some in that company who would willingly part with all to secure the treasured Kingdom. There were earnest faces before Him, searchers for the pearl of great price, bound to have it at any cost, but there were many who would relapse into indifference. Some would bear His name and refuse the cross. But the time of separation would come when the net would be drawn and angel judges would sever the wicked from among the just.

**Quiz.** 1. What is the difference between a parable and a fable? 2. Which mode of illustration did Jesus use? 3. What characteristic of the Kingdom is set forth in the parable of the mustard seed? 4. What is the lesson of the leaven? 5. What great principle is emphasized in the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price? 6. What warning is conveyed in the likeness to the casting of the net?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The ship's mast was once embedded in a seed which a bird might carry. 2. The process of germination may seem long, but the evolution of the tree from the seed is sure. 3. As leaven must enter the meal, so truth must enter the heart, if it is to enliven the life. 4. It is not the knowledge that is proclaimed from the housetop, but that which is hidden in God's word, which is to be treasured. 5. The pearl of great price awaits the ownership of him who will sacrifice all for it.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE PARABLE OF THE TARES.

Then Jesus sent the



away,  
and  
went



and his

saying,  
Declare  
unto us the  
parable of  
the tares  
of the



He answered and said unto them, He that

the good seed  
is the Son of  
man; The field  
is the world;  
the good seed  
are the



of the  
kingdom;  
but  
the



are  
the



of  
the  
wicked  
one;

# THE PARABLE OF THE TARES.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 13:24-30.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We pray that we may not lead lives so useless and worthless, that we shall be as tares. Deliver us from the sin of hypocrisy. Make our lives abundantly fruitful of those rich graces that proclaim the true follower of the Master. Help us to watch and pray that no seed of the enemy's sowing may find lodgement in our hearts. And in the day of the great harvest ingathering, may we be as grain, golden and good, fit for the Master's garner. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Cold, heat, moist and dry,  
Shall foster and mature the grain  
For garnerers in the sky.  
Then when the glorious end,  
The day of God shall come,  
The angel reapers shall descend,  
And Heaven shout, "Harvest Home!"

### THE SUBJECT AND ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn of A. D. 28. Place, By the Sea of Galilee, near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, His disciples, and the multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** The Judgment. God shall judge justly, Psa. 98:9. The righteous and wicked to be made manifest, Eccl. 3:17. Inclusiveness of judgment, Eccl. 12:14. A day of judgment appointed, Acts 17:31. Judged by the teaching of Jesus, Rom. 2:16. All are to be judged, 2 Cor. 5:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The parable of the tares teaches us, 1. The activity of the enemy. 2. The close outward likeness that sometimes exists between the people of the world and of the Kingdom. 3. By their fruits ye shall know them. The ultimate barrenness of the false and the fruitfulness of the real Christian life. 4. The necessity of Christly forbearance and patient waiting for the final judgment. 5. The certainty of the final separation of the good and evil.

### TARES IN THE WHEAT.

**An Instructive Lesson.** Have you ever seen one of the experiment cars sent out by a state college of agriculture? Outside they look about like any of the numerous "special" coaches one sees attached to a railroad train; the inside is fitted up just like a schoolroom, only instead of boys and girls, great brawny farmers cluster around the teacher and the exhibit of seeds and other material he has brought with him from the agricultural college experiment station. For the government not only spends millions of dollars annually selecting and maturing seed from which to propagate a better grade of grain, but it also sends lecturers out in these special cars to impress upon farmers the importance of good seed and to warn them against the least admixture of bad seed. Nearly twenty centuries ago the Great Husbandman talked of the sower and the seed to an audience of humble folk in words fraught with the greatest spiritual significance, and though the lesson was not delivered from a specially-fitted twentieth century car, it is of as vital importance to-day as when spoken from a primitive fish boat.

**An Indefatigable Enemy.** The farmer Jesus pictures was as careful in his selection of the seed as any scientific up-to-date farmer of our day. He "sowed good seed in his field." Again the field is the world only in this parable the seed is no longer the Word, but the children of the Kingdom. The Sower has planted His seed which is to bear fruit for Him in this world; some in great cities and some in remote and lonely places. But the sunshine of His love, the blessed showers

of His grace are over all, and may we not be sure that the Great Husbandman knew just the soil and environment in which each child of His could be most fruitful? "But while the man slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way." It was not an uncommon thing in the East for an unscrupulous enemy to do such a deed. Doubtless many of Jesus' hearers had seen that part of the story enacted. Later Jesus told His disciples that Satan is such an enemy, seeking to ruin the harvest and possess the field by sowing the seed of evil even among God's children.

**The Tares.** In the Eastern countries a poisonous rye grass, which looks exactly like wheat until the ear appears, is very common. There is also a couch-grass known as "creeping wheat," because the roots creep underground and become intertwined with those of the wheat, so that one cannot pull it up without unrooting the wheat also. And it is probably to these grasses that Jesus refers when He speaks of the tares that appeared with the wheat. According to ancient Jewish tradition these tares were originally wheat. Where the seed of these poisonous grasses was sown, even if the crop should not be utterly ruined, it would cause much anxiety and entail vast labor in the harvest, leaving the soil unfit for wheat growing for years to come. Under the likeness of the tares Jesus pictures those who were once Christians and still remain with God's people, though they no longer love and obey God. Though Jesus, the Divine Sower, had only begun sowing the seed and choosing His followers, Satan, the enemy,



had sown tares right in the midst of the finest of the wheat, and among the twelve disciples was one who should all too soon betray his Master! Ever since Satan has sown the evil seeds of sin wherever they can find lodgment in the minds of God's children, until even the church of God has some evil and sinful members.

**The Discovery.** Tender blades shoot up through the earth and at first one sees no sign of the enemy's mischievous work in the soft, beautiful green of the growing wheat fields; just as it is hard always to tell the bad people from those who are good. Indeed, the man of upright moral life is outwardly so like the real Christian that he sometimes thinks himself as good or better than the children of the Kingdom. But soon the difference is manifest—tiny ears appear on the grain stocks, while the tares show no sign of fruitage. How like the difference between the true and false Christian Jesus has made the picture! While the hypocrite may for a time appear no different from his fellows, he lacks the real fruits of the spirit enumerated by Paul.

Greatly agitated, the servants came to their master with the question, "Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? From whence then hath it tares?" There can be only one explanation, which the master gives. "An enemy hath done this."

It is said that when the Christian religion was growing with such power that it seemed as though the whole world would be brought to Christ within a single generation, Satan held a council with his aids. One suggested persecution. "Ah," said Satan, "why are you so foolish? The church grows and prospers most under persecution." Another advised a deadly plague, which should sweep the godly into the grave. "Every Christian death-bed will make a thousand converts," declared Satan. Then one said, "Dress some of your majesty's followers in the garb of Christians and send us forth to join the church. Once inside, we will stop its growth and paralyze its usefulness." "Well said," declared his Satanic majesty, and the thing was done.

**Known by Their Fruits.** So anxious were the servants to keep the wheat pure and unmixed for the harvest that they offer to go and weed out the tares; just as with inconsiderate zeal some people talk of "weeding out the church" of all unworthy members, and wonder that Jesus should have permitted Judas to remain with the Twelve when He knew that Judas was a thief and a traitor. But far wiser than his servants was the master. "Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." If the tares had been one side of

the wheat it might have been done, but they were sown right in the midst of the wheat and roots and blades had grown so intertwined that it would have been impossible to separate the two without uprooting and destroying some of the wheat and perhaps doing greater ruin than already had been wrought. While the "zawan" or tares might never grow into wheat, false Christians who are the tares in the church may become true followers of Jesus if we exercise His forbearance toward them.

A bad boy was the cause of great trouble in Sunday school. He broke the rules, defied its discipline until his case came before the superintendent, who declared the lad should be expelled. When the teacher whom he had so mistreated urged that he might remain, the boy was retained, but he continued to be as unruly as ever until one day he learned of his teacher's unselfish forbearance, and he who had been the worst boy in the school became its best pupil.

**The Ingathering.** The master was a wise husbandman. The tares and the wheat must grow together till the harvest when he would command the reapers, "Gather ye together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." The harvest time would surely come when the separation of the tares and wheat could be accomplished with safety. Yes, such a separation would even be necessary, for only the good wheat, pure and unmixed, might be stored in the granary. So Jesus tells His disciples that the children of the Kingdom are wheat to be garnered in the Heavenly storehouse. At that great day the Son of man shall send forth angel reapers, and "they shall gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity." Then shall the tares be utterly destroyed and we turn from the picture to those who have humbly served in the Kingdom, who have labored in sacrifice and weariness for its upbuilding and have been its citizens, for "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father."

**Quiz.** 1. What special truth is taught in this parable? 2. Into what two divisions does Jesus divide the church? 3. What did John the Baptist prophesy of Christ that coincides with this lesson? 4. In what way does Paul use wheat as an illustration? 5. Which would you prefer to be, tares or wheat?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Even wheat may degenerate into tares. 2. Satan is always seeking to change a Christian into a hypocrite. 3. Men are known by their fruits. 4. An outward likeness is not always a sign of relationship. 5. Inconsiderate zeal often frustrates its own purpose. 6. Separation will surely come in the final great harvest.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# CHRIST STILLING THE TEMPEST.

And the same day, when the



was come,  
he saith  
unto them,  
Let us pass  
over unto  
the other  
side. And  
when they  
had sent  
away the



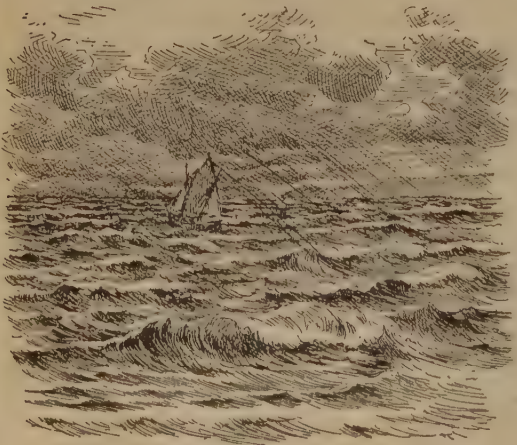
they took him even as he was in the



And  
there  
were  
also  
with  
him



And there arose a great



of  
wind,  
and  
the



so that it was now full.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 4:35-41. ALSO MATT. 8:23-27, AND LUKE 8:22-25.

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee that Thou art with us as with Thy disciples of old; that Thou dost go with us on every journey and art ready to help us in every storm of life. We pray that Thou wilt speak peace to our souls; that Thou wilt still the waves of doubt and unrest, and rebuke the winds of temptation, lest we perish. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"O Jesus, once tossed on the breast of the billow,  
Aroused by the shriek of despair from Thy pillow,  
Now seated in glory, the mariner cherish,  
Who cries, in his anguish, Save, Lord, or we perish.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn of A. D. 28. Place, Sea of Galilee. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The sea obedient to the Creator. The sea divided, Ex. 14:21. Jordan divided, Josh. 3:14-16. The waves are stayed, Job 38:11. Ruled by the Lord, Psa. 89:9. The Lord is mightier than the sea, Psa. 93:4. The waters obey Him, Psa. 104:6-7. Calms the storm, Psa. 107:28-30. Waters obey His commandment, Prov. 8:29. The storm calmed, Jonah 1:14, 15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In the stilling of the tempest, 1. The dual nature of Jesus is disclosed. 2. His weariness and sleep show Him as a partaker of our physical nature and weakness; while nature's obedience to His command reveals Him as the Divine Creator. 3. The futility of fear is shown. 4. Jesus declares fear is allied with a lack of faith. 5. We see His power to still the storm without and the storm within.

### A STORM ON GALILEE.

**Eventide.** What a wonderful day it had been! What a wealth of illustration Jesus had given; the day was ended, our Master was spent and weary, but the crowds refused to disperse. Peter's house which He so often sought offered Him no retreat from the importunity of the unfortunate and the curiosity of the idle. So Jesus ordered His disciples to carry Him to the opposite shore that He might find peace and rest for a time on the upland plains of the Jordan. Great truths had been unfolded to them, and it was better for the enthusiastic, thronging multitude and for His disciples that He should withdraw. So "they took Him even as He was," without the usual preparation for the journey; without even stopping for the evening meal, so eagerly did the disciples obey His behest. He was in the ship—probably the well-known boat of the fisherman-disciples which was always at His disposal. The light that lit the distant hills with resplendent glory and spread a silver sheen over the sea had faded into evening twilight. All that could be heard was the rustling of the reeds, the gurgling of the waters, the boom of the solitary bittern, the call of the fishermen at their night toil and plashing of the oars of the other boats bringing those who could not be constrained to remain behind. They were familiar sounds to Jesus' ears and lulled Him to sleep as He lay in the stern of the boat on the low bench where the steersman sometimes rests, with His head pillowed on the coarse leather boss of the steersman's seat.

**A Sudden Storm.** Girdled and sheltered by hills a thousand feet high, the Sea of

Galilee usually lies in its bed as calm and placid as a mirror, but it is also noted for its sudden storms, and woe betide the unprotected boat out in one of these gales. Such a storm now imperiled the boat in which Jesus lay asleep. The angry wind lashed the waters into a white foam, the waves rose higher and higher, beating against the boat, until the white spray washed His feet. Even the bronzed fisherman-disciples were filled with dismay. The boat was fast filling with water. Surely they would go down into the deep if help was not forthcoming! Yet never was the humanity of Jesus more manifest than in that dread moment which called for an exercise of power even greater than that of the Great Physician. Still, through all the tumult and danger Jesus lay in the stern of the boat in the heavy sleep of utter physical weariness, hunger and exhaustion; amid all the fury of the storm He slept as peacefully as when He lay cradled in the manger. It was like the God-Man: so often before the exercise of His Divine power He displayed the physical weaknesses which are the common lot of man; that in Him the man and God were equally displayed. He who was hungry vanquished Satan, and the weary and thirsty Traveler, in words that are immortal, declared Himself the Water of Life. So now the spent and weary Teacher is soon to prove Himself Lord of nature and Master of all its forces.

**Panic Stricken.** As long as they dared His disciples let Him sleep. But soon a storm of unreasoning fear swept over the sturdy fishermen. Peter is beside himself.

John and Andrew are filled with anxiety. The waves and the wind without are not in greater commotion than the little crew of His disciples, their boat cruelly "tormented" and buffeted by the waves with no sign of rescue, for is not Jesus asleep? Evidently He cares not that they perish. And with clamorous haste they waken their Lord. Yet the disciples were safe had they only known it. Even though the physical part of Him slept, His loving oversight and care slumbered not. If they had only known it was enough that Jesus was with them, for there can no real harm come to those who are in the company of their Lord. Luke tells us "They came to Him and awoke Him, saying, 'Master, Master, we perish!'" And it must have been blunt-spoken, impetuous Peter who cried out, "Carest thou not that we perish?" How different is the faith of the true believer.

Some years ago a vessel went down in mid-ocean. Among the passengers were a mother and her two little daughters. "Mamma, the sea is His, for He made it, and so we are not afraid to go down, for we shall not be beyond His care," said the eldest of the children as, with shining faces, they met death in the deep sea.

**Reassured.** It was a marvelous scene. Even before He arose Jesus reassured their hearts and gently rebuked the fear that had unnerved them. Then, as though it were a couchant, springing lion, ready to swallow the boat and its human freight in its awful maw, Jesus rebuked the angry roaring sea, saying, "Peace, be still." And as the wild beast of the jungle obeys its tamer and crouches at his feet, so the foam-flecked waves slunk back abashed by their Master's command, the wind ceased and there was a great calm. The muzzled sea heard the voice of the One who had gathered its waters together and obeyed its Creator. The waters commonly in a state of seething and commotion for hours afterwards grew calm as soon as the storm ceased. Tenderly and accusingly Jesus breaks the stillness with the question, "Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" They had even seen Him heal the sick, cast out devils and restore the dead, and yet they did not know that no harm could befall them while in His presence; that His power extended even over the wind and the waves and He could rebuke the sea just as He had rebuked the fever and the demons.

**The Sea Obeys Him.** Indeed it was one of those miracles of power so much greater than even the

miracles of healing which they had so often witnessed, that we do not wonder the disciples were awed. It manifested the sovereignty of their Master over the universe. There was only One of whom the Scriptures declared "the sea obeys Him," and that One was the great God who created land and sea. But before the majestic figure of Jesus, the agitated waters had slunk abashed. At His mandate there was a great calm, and at His word, the little lake became like a sea of glass. The pitiless elements and all material forces were obedient to His command. They did not know, these poor frightened disciples, that Jesus' power extended beyond the little lake on which their little boat was borne. That it was He who ordered the stars in their courses, the daily round of the earth, the flight of the seasons and the march of the centuries. But today every follower of Jesus sees His rule in the intelligent working of all nature's forces, and knows that the stilling of the tempest is no greater miracle than the creation of the tiniest flower that is trodden under foot.

**A Great Marvel.** They had seen the calm of the sleeping Jesus, they had witnessed the majesty of His awakening; so magnificent was His presence, so supernatural the calm which He had placed upon the raging sea, and so marvelous was nature's obedience to His command, that a new dread fell upon them. "And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" Slowly it was dawning upon them that the One to whom they had sworn allegiance was not a mere earthly king; that He whom they followed was greater than Moses the prophet, than David, and greater than any of His predecessors. They were only beginning to understand the meaning of the term, the "Son of God." But not yet did they realize His mastery over the universe, and His all-sovereign power. On our voyage of life, what do we think of Jesus, I wonder? If we make Him our Companion on the voyage of life, naught can harm us, for He is Master of the universe. He still rebukes the wind and stills the waves. In every upspringing flower, every growing tree, every sunset, in every tempest and lull of the storm, His power is manifest. His watchful care never ceases, though, like the disciples with weak and pitiful faith, we may think that He cares not. There can be no real difficulty, no storm too great for Him to assuage, if the Lord of sea and land sails in the ship with us over the sea of life.

**Quiz.** 1. How many instances in the Bible where God commanded the sea and it obeyed Him? 2. Which do you think requires the greater power, to raise the dead or command the sea? 3. What king of ancient Britain attempted to command the sea? 4. Was he successful? 5. What two characteristics did the disciples show?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The strongest saint is not above physical weariness. 2. He giveth His beloved sleep. 3. The calms of life often foretell a storm. 4. Though Jesus may sometimes seem to sleep, He is always awake to an appeal for help. 5. Jesus relieves all fears promptly. 6. Our Lord is never unconcerned. 7. The fearful disciple rebukes His Master. 8. Jesus silences the storm within and then rebukes the storm without. 9. No storm can swallow the ship where lies the Master of ocean and earth and skies.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



And they came over unto the other side of the



into the  
country  
of the  
Gadarenes.  
And when  
he was  
come



immediately there met him out of the



a man  
with an  
unclean  
spirit,  
Who had  
his  
dwelling  
among  
the tombs;  
and no  
man could



no, not  
with



Because  
that he had  
been often  
bound with



and  
the



by him, and the



neither could any  
man tame him.  
And always,  
night and day,  
he was in the



and in the tombs  
crying, and cutting  
himself with stones

**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 5:1-20; ALSO MATT. 8:28-34, AND LUKE 8:26-40.**

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Cast out every unclean spirit, word or thought that be in us. Let no evil possess or rule over us, but may we find in Thee freedom from all evil. Help us to choose Thee above worldly gain, and may our desire be that Thou wilt not depart from us. Help us to publish the glad tidings of Thy salvation among our neighbors and companions. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Jesus! the name high over all,  
In hell, or earth or sky;  
Angels and men before it fall,  
And devils fear and fly.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn of A. D. 28. Place, Gadara. Persons, Jesus, demoniac and Gadarenes.

**Scripture Setting:** True Values. A choice of life or death, Deut. 30:19. Wisdom preferable to gold, Prov. 16:16. The favor of God above gold, Prov. 22:1. Choice between God and Baal, 1 Kings 18:21. God's Word superior to gold, Psa. 19:7-12. The wisdom of God, Job 28:12-19. Man is precious, Isa. 13:12. The delight of God's house, Psa. 84:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The deliverance of the demoniac shows, 1. The power of an unclean spirit over man. 2. Jesus as the Deliverer from demoniac possession. 3. That even the devils acknowledge and beseech Jesus. 4. Greed for gain which outweighs the redemption of a soul. 5. A people who would retain their swine at the cost of Jesus' departure. 6. The mistake of one who would have followed Jesus abroad when his work was to publish the glad tidings in his home town.

## THE DEMONIAK OF GADARA.

**The Close of an Eventful Day.** It had been a day of marvels; the revelation of the Kingdom of Heaven; the wind and the waves obedient to Jesus, whose power was to assume a still more marvelous form. The distance from Capernaum to Gadara was less than five miles, and even though delayed by the storm, the boat landed on the other side late that same evening. How grand the scene, as the moon cast its weird beauty over the shadowy cliff, silvered the becalmed sea and even crowned with a halo of glory the majestic figure of its Lord.

**Tomb Dwellers.** The traveller in the Holy Land is able to locate the exact landing place of Jesus and His disciples, and the bluff which descends with such abruptness to the shore. The city of Gadara was built on the top of a hill twelve hundred feet above the shore and some distance from it. One may see the ruins of the long avenues of marble pillars which once lined its streets, the squared stones of once fine buildings, and masses of black basalt mark the sites of the three great amphitheatres and splendid public baths of which the city was once so proud. The hill is of soft limestone, burrowed with caverns large and small. These caves were often converted into tombs with massive stone doors. Indeed the most interesting remains of Gadara are these tombs which dot the cliffs for a considerable distance from the city, all of whose present inhabitants are troglodytes or "tomb dwellers" like the demoniacs of old.

**Possessed by an Evil Spirit.** Jesus had hardly set foot on shore when two madmen who made their abode in the tombs came to

Him. They were not merely madmen, they were possessed by evil spirits who spoke through them, and controlled them. Of the two unfortunates, the one mentioned by Mark was most violent, and had been a terror to the whole country. He had once been under restraint "now no man could any more bind him" even with iron upon feet and wrists. Night and day he roamed the hills naked and dwelt only in the tombs. Howling, shrieking and frenzied, the poor unfortunate mercilessly cut and lacerated his own flesh with stones. It must have been a desire for help that drove him to the feet of Jesus. The demons in possession of the poor wretch knew that Jesus was indeed the Son of God; that He was mightier than they and that the time was coming when they would be in subjugation to Him. So abjectly was the man under their control that even while he falls at Jesus' feet and worships and confesses Him as the Son of the Most High God, the poor wretch begs Jesus to leave him alone in his miserable state and not "torment" him.

**A Legion of Devils.** Soft and tender as the moonlight that silvered the hills is Jesus' face as He asks, "What is thy name?" It is always sobering to think quietly of oneself and Jesus would restore the man to a sense of his own individuality. Conscious of the cruel mastery he was under, the man cried in agony, "My name is Legion; for we are many." No regiment of six thousand Roman soldiers could have been more pitiless and conquering, more ready to trample and destroy than this legion of devils, dominating body and soul, trampling down every



holy impulse, conquering every high desire, and destroying even the soul itself. But they were confronted by One who had fought with the very prince of devils forty days and forty nights and had been victorious. No wonder that the legion of devils acknowledged His power and authority.

**The Devils Beseech Jesus.** Satan is always a coward and we find the self-same evil spirits that had rent their victim and defied Jesus now cringing before him, filled with dread of the future, supplicating for a refuge and seeking a last asylum among the brutes. A great herd of swine was feeding on the hillside. They were doubtless owned by some of the heathen citizens of Gadara (though the keeping of swine was an open breach of the law). "Send us into the swine," cried the devils. With a laconic "Go," Jesus gave them leave. And so great was the power of His word that the unclean spirits went out and entered into the swine. But not even among the swine could they find shelter from the One who was to conquer all the powers of evil. The whole frenzied herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea and was destroyed. So today He frees those under the control of Satan.

**Illustration.** A young man of refinement was possessed by the demon of drink. It drove him from home. No tomb of Gadara could have been more repulsive than the vile dens in which he spent his evenings. He became only a poor tramp, breathing curses and oaths, when one day, hardly knowing why, he followed a band of Salvation Army soldiers to their headquarters. As they sang of Jesus he wanted help and deliverance, but the demons in possession of his soul drove him from his seat again to seek his evil haunts, when a Salvation lassie said in broadest Scotch: "He will na torture ye, mon. Dinna ye ken. He'll drive the devils out?" He returned to the hall, the demons of drink and wanderlust, of blasphemy and hatred were driven out, and he became a saved man.

**The Men of Gadara.** It was a terrible scene enacted under the ghostly moon: the agony and cries of the demonized; the mad rush of the herd down the cliff into the splashing waters of the sea. Again Jesus had manifested His marvelous power and as the sea obeyed Him, so the prince of darkness fled at His command and a human soul was saved from destruction. From above, the keepers of the herd waited long enough to see it all and then they fled to tell what had happened, and in the morning the men of Gadara came with the infuriated owners

of the swine. Surely the sight which met them should have won their gratitude. In the healing of the maniac, a standing peril so great as to make a part of the country impassable had been removed. An unknown thing had happened: a once demonized soul had been delivered from its bondage and the former madman now sat at Jesus' feet, clothed and in his right mind. But on the other side was a loss of revenue—of two thousand swine! And the men of Gadara "began to beseech Jesus to depart from their border." They exalted money above the man. Alas that the same choice has been made many times since in many countries and by many men. Did they know, these men of Gadara, how much they blindly threw away when they preferred their swine to the Saviour?

**Jesus Departs.** With a sad heart Jesus returned to the ship. He had hardly landed when He was forced to leave without the rest and refreshment so sorely needed. As Jesus entered the ship, the man who owed all to Him came and earnestly pleaded that he might go with his Saviour. He could not bear to leave his newly found Friend and Deliverer. It seemed to him that if he were left behind, among the wild mountains, the evil spirits would return to him. He could not trust himself far from Jesus, and felt that happiness was only to be found in His presence. But Jesus suffered him not. Though the people would not allow Him to remain, the great heart of Jesus was so tender and free from resentment toward them that He would leave behind Him a witness of His power and compassion. So He bade the man go back to his own house and his own friends who would surely listen and to publish in his own city and through the ten cities round about, the great things Jesus had done for him. This was to be his life-work. So the man became an evangelist through all the region of Decapolis and prepared the way and opened the hearts of the people for the return of Jesus.

**Quiz.** 1. How many demoniacs does Matthew tell us came to Jesus? 2. Why do Mark and Luke only mention the one? 3. How many soldiers are comprised in a Roman legion? 4. Was the keeping of swine a legal occupation in Palestine? 5. Why? 6. Which was of the greater value, one man redeemed or the two thousand swine?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. An unclean spirit always gains the mastery of him who harbors it. 2. To possess oneself is better than to have great possessions. 3. The devil is willing to send a legion to capture one soul. 4. Jesus has always been victorious over evil. 5. No man has ever been so under possession of Satan that Jesus cannot free him. 6. It matters not how great or how numerous evil may be, it must yield to our Lord. 7. Every questionable financial deal resolves itself into a choice between swine or a Saviour. 9. Jesus can best place His workers.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

## SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS. MARK 6:1-3; JOHN 5:17; 2 THESS. 3:6-13.

**Prayer:** Put far away from us, O Lord, the spirit of sloth and idleness and give us to see how by useful and fruitful work alone can we bring in the Kingdom of God. And may our work be for something more than the bread which perisheth, even the will of the Father which nourisheth both body and soul into everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go,  
My Daily labor to pursue;  
Thee, only Thee, resolved to know  
In all I think or speak or do.  
The task Thy wisdom hath assigned,  
O let me cheerfully fulfill;  
In all my works Thy presence find,  
And prove Thy good and perfect will.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** As the lesson is topical rather than expository of Scripture, **The Time** is any time. **The Place** any place. **The Man** any man.

**Scripture Setting:** The great figures of Scripture history are all workers. Abraham (Gen. 13:1-12), Isaac (Gen. 26:14-15), and Jacob (Gen. 30:31-36), were shepherds. Moses was warrior (Exod. 14), and statesman (Exod. 20 and following chapters); as was also David (1 Sam. 18:5; 2 Sam. 5:1-4). Jesus was a carpenter (Mark 6:3). And Paul was a maker of tents (2 Thess. 3:8-10). Peter, Andrew and John were fishermen (Mark 1:16-19). Under the law even a Jewish boy was taught a trade.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Work is a law of life. Upon honest work all progress depends. 2. The man who refuses to work is a parasite upon society and a menace to the social order. 3. Work brings people together in a common enterprise, and where everybody works there is small occasion for friction. 4. It is the idler and the shiftless who make trouble. God can bestow no blessing upon idle hands; His reward is with the faithful and industrious. 5. There is a "labor question," and the only adequate solution is that of religion, which proposes as the fundamental virtues that men shall do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

### WORK THE RULE OF LIFE.

**The Scripture Paraphrase.** The three passages of Scripture given for study furnish the example of Jesus, who was a carpenter (Mark 6:3), who accepted work as a necessary condition of life and usefulness (John 5:7), and who, through Paul, declares the idle Christian to be a contradiction in terms and a menace to society (2 Thess. 3:6-13). The fact that Jesus was a working man is too often overlooked. His role as the world's Teacher has quite obscured His fellowship with those who work with their hands. And yet the fact has not been without its influence in the history of labor, and His example in a very real way has been a source of comfort to strugglers and toilers in all the Christian centuries.

**The Dignity of Labor.** The Hebrews, almost alone among the civilized peoples of antiquity, regarded labor as a law of life and therefore to be regarded as a duty and with honor. To the Greeks and Romans all mechanical trade was mean, vulgar, contemptible, and was therefore left to slaves. The Jews, with a true and noble wisdom, enacted that every boy should learn a trade and repeated as a golden maxim the words of one of their wise men, "Labor honors the laborer." Accordingly Plato in his "ideal republic" regards the worker as unfit to have a voice in its management, while the Bible everywhere exalts the fact that its chosen leaders are men with an independent occupation.

**Some Hebrew Workers.** Abraham moves from spot to spot to feed his cattle, Jacob serves Laban for wages, Moses herds sheep for his father-in-law,

and Amos herds cattle and cultivates the fig farm. Peter makes his living as fisherman and Paul maintains himself in the ministry by his income from tent-making.

**The Ideal Woman.** Perhaps the most striking and beautiful commentary on the Biblical view of work is found in the description of the "virtuous woman" in the book of Proverbs (21:10-31). "She seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands; she riseth also while it is yet night to provide for her household; she does the buying and the selling, the planting and the reaping, the weaving and the spinning; she exerciseth herself in the care of the poor and looketh well to the ways of her household; she even finds time to advise with less fortunate neighbors and toward them she openeth her mouth with wisdom, while in her tongue is the law of kindness." Others may acquire wealth or pride themselves upon their beauty, but such a woman as this is to be praised and prized, for her price is beyond rubies.

**The Duty and Virtue of Labor.** The Bible opens with the picture of our first parents at work in a garden to dress it and keep it; it closes with the picture of a city, the symbol of co-operative life and labor. From the first to last the book recognizes work as the normal rule of life—it has promise of good for industry and limitless woe for idleness. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich, it shall bear rule, it shall be made fat, it tends to plenteousness, it prepares a man to stand before kings." These symbols are material and much of the blessing in the Old Testament is identified with material good. The



doom of the idler is poverty and shame. The wise man pictures it in graphic fashion: "I went by the field of the slothful and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof and the stone wall thereof was broken down."

The parables of Jesus are drawn from the busy life of his time and land, and the prevailing teaching, as in the parable of the talents is that industry insures the blessing of God and idleness tends only to eternal loss. Paul, himself a worker, rebukes the Thessalonians for giving up work in anticipation of the impending day of the Lord. He tells them plainly that such conduct is disreputable and displeasing to God, who wants his children, first of all, "to walk honestly toward them that are without," and moreover to have a margin of wealth that they may be able to help those who are in need (1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:12, and Ephes. 4:28).

**Duty of Parents.** If work is the rule of the normal life, parents do well to see that their children are taught some trade, not only to which they may turn if need arises, but to encourage an intelligent sympathy with labor conditions.

**Think Well of Work.** The temper which looks down upon work as degrading is neither sensible nor Christian. All honest work is noble and ennobling; the true nobleman is the man who by honorable work honorably done makes a contribution to the welfare of the community of which he is a part.

**Employer and Employee.** Employer and employee are in reciprocal and not rival relationships. The employer's responsibility does not end when he has paid the wage scale. It is his duty and interest to make the best and most out of the manhood engaged in the work; and a prime condition of any good work is the good will which goes into it. The employer must see that a fair share of the profit is represented in the wages he pays, and the employee should be equally scrupulous about the whole-hearted quality of his work.

**Justice Fundamental.** Fundamental in this mutual relationship is justice. It is good to be kind; it is better to be just. The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in a recent pastoral to the Church at large made this noble declaration: "While we rejoice in the adoption of all such ameliorative measures as better housing and various forms of social insurance, we call for the more thoroughgoing emphasis of human freedom which will make democratic progress mean the enlargement and enrichment of the life of the masses of mankind through the self-directive activity of men themselves. We favor an equitable wage for laborers which shall have the right of way over rent, interest and profits. We favor collective bargaining as an instrument for the attainment of industrial justice and for training in democratic procedure. And we also favor advance of the workers themselves through profit-sharing, and through positions on boards of directorship. In the discussion of all such matters we urge all individuals and groups to hold fast the tolerance which comes out of mutual respect and to keep always in mind that the richest source of sound idealism is the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

**The Moral Value of Work.** To save a man from bad habits and to keep him from demoralizing temptations by all means set him to work. "Satan finds some mischief still, for idle hands to do." Idle thinking gravitates to immoral living. The hand of the diligent maketh rich not less in spiritual than in material wealth; the hand of the diligent beareth rule not only in the community but also in the realm of character and conduct.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Bring together some of the Bible maxims about Industry and Idleness. 2. What was the Jewish idea of work as contrasted with the Greek and Roman ideas? 3. Which idea is the better for the individual and the state? 4. Should the state require of every citizen work in a gainful occupation? 5. Should the public schools furnish instruction in the mechanic and domestic arts? 6. Has Jesus any message to the industrialism of our day? If so, what is it?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. All useful work is noble and ennobling. 2. One ought never to speak of any necessary work as "drudgery" or as "dirty work." 3. One ought never to become so absorbed in making money that he loses interest in the spiritual values of life. 4. Mary Slessor found time to study while working at the loom and to plan her campaign in Africa where she labored successfully for many years. 5. It is the duty of the Christian to see that labor gets its fair share of the fruits of labor. 6. He is the master after Christ's own heart who treats his employees as fellow workers in a worthy cause.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.

# THE POWER OF FAITH.

And, behold,



which  
was  
diseased  
with an  
issue of  
blood  
twelve  
years,



and



For she  
said  
within  
herself,  
If I  
may but



I shall be whole. But Jesus

and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good



comfort;  
thy  
faith  
hath  
made  
thee  
whole.  
And  
the



was made whole from that hour.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 9:18-25; ALSO MARK 5:21-43, LUKE 8:40-56.

**Prayer:** Lord, May we come to Thee with confidence. May we come so close to Thee that we too may touch the hem of Thy garment and feel Thy healing power. Increase our faith that in the throng of daily life we may find our way to Thee and seek Thy cleansing touch. In sickness and in death, be Thou our consolation and help. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

The healing of the seamless dress  
Is by our beds of pain;  
We touch Him in life's throng and press,  
And we are whole again.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn of A. D. 28. Place, Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, Jairus, the unknown woman, Peter, James and John and daughter of Jairus.

**Scripture Setting:** The Power of Faith. Faith as a grain of mustard seed, Luke 17:6. Faith that doubts not, Matt. 21:21-22. Healing power of faith, Acts 14:8-11. Justification by faith, Gal. 3:24. Counted for righteousness, Rom. 4:5. Abraham's faith rewarded, Rom. 4:20-22. Rewards of faith,

Heb. 11:4, 5, 7, 17, 18, 29, 30, 31. Accomplishment of faith, Heb. 11:32-34.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** In this lesson we have, 1. Two examples of faith. 2. Jairus' belief in the power of Jesus' touch. 3. The greater faith of the woman who believes in power emanating from Jesus' person. 4. Jesus' demand for an open confession of the woman's act of faith. 5. His recognition and reward of her faith. 6. His assurance to Jairus that faith is the only requisite for his daughter's restoration to life.

### TWO APPEALS.

**Home Again.** The other boats that were with Jesus the night before had returned to Capernaum to spread the wonderful tidings of His power over the storm and the morning found many on the shore eagerly looking across the sea for the well-known boat that bore Jesus and His disciples. As it came in sight on its forced return the multitude surrounded Him with curiosity and expectation of some new evidence of His power. The news of His return rapidly spread through the city and in at least two homes where all other help had proved unavailing, the tidings inspired hope and caused Jairus, the ruler of that synagogue in Capernaum, with which we have become so familiar, and a woman who had suffered from a most vexatious disease for twelve years, to go and seek help from the Great Physician. Indeed, Jesus had hardly landed when Jairus came to Him in behalf of his only daughter, who lay at the point of death. One has only to recall how Jesus had been treated by the rabbis in His home city to realize what an effort it must have been for Jairus to humble his pride and overcome his prejudice by asking aid from the One whom even he himself once may have treated with contumely. But Jairus' only little daughter, a girl of twelve, lay in the stupor of death; every other known remedy had failed, and in a time of such extremity what is pride of position or ceremonial?

**At Jesus' Feet.** Regardless of the curious throng, Jairus pressed his way to Jesus. He was so desperately in earnest that he came out not only as a suppliant, but just as slaves and inferiors prostrate themselves before those of superior rank in all Eastern

countries. The proud ruler fell at Jesus' feet and prayed for his little daughter; with a faith born of desperation and a father's anguish, the great strong man begged between sobs, "Come, lay Thy hand upon her and she shall live." Jesus was in the midst of important teaching with a large audience eager to hear, but His readiness to help at any moment is shown when in response to the father's petition, "Jesus arose and followed him and so did His disciples."

**A Second Patient.** As Jesus went with Jairus, followed by His audience, another applicant for help appeared. She probably had started on the quest for mercy at the same time Jairus did, but though the man had outdistanced the woman, her faith reached beyond his. She had suffered twelve years with an incurable ailment and Mark quaintly tells us she "had suffered many things of many physicians and had spent all she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." Any one can easily believe the statement who is at all acquainted with the ignorant and superstitious methods of the "hakims" of that day when the remedies used were often ashes of burnt wolves' skulls, frogs' livers and the eyes of crabs. After enduring all the tortures of such medical treatment for twelve years, might she not have waited a few hours longer till Jesus should be at leisure, instead of interrupting His progress in so imperative an emergency? But as she looks upon Him, the Master's face is incapable of such a thought. She sees the countenance of Jesus, so beautiful in its infinite patience, compassion and tenderness, she notes the love that beams from those pene-

trating eyes. Her years as a "shut-in" have made her as pale and delicate and shrinking as a lily; she would avoid attracting the attention of the crowd and despite His meek and lowly bearing, she is unable to summon courage to openly throw herself before Him as did the man; so the woman stills her beating heart and says within herself, "If I may but touch His garment I shall be whole."

**The Robe of Christ.** Jesus wore the least ostentatious form of a rabbi's dress, which consisted of five pieces, a headdress or kind of turban, the *kittuna* or inner garment, worn by all teachers and without which no one could read or teach the Scriptures in the synagogue; it was a close fitting seamless garment descending to the feet. A girdle at the waist, sandals, and worn over all, a square outer garment with a tassel at each of the four corners, completed the dress. The woman made no effort to arrest Jesus' attention; she was ceremonially unclean and under the Jewish law her touch meant defilement; therefore, stealthily but reverently from behind Him she reached forth a timid hand and just touched the tasseled fringe of His outer garment. Slight as was this appeal of distress, Jesus at once observes it, but important as is His errand to Jairus' house, He does not show the least sign of impatience, haste or desire to be rid of her. True, He "turned about Him in the press and said, Who touched my clothes?" but it was only to give the timid suppliant a chance to receive an open blessing. His disciples had seen nothing of this hasty pantomime, and they naturally pointed to the multitude with the assurance that in the press of the crowd some one must have jostled Him. But the woman knew that her presumption was discovered and shrank farther back in the crowd. Jesus turned about "and when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before Him, she declared unto Him before all the people for what cause she had touched Him." At last had come the courage for the open confession which Jesus desired, and His gentle heart stills her agitation. She is the only woman upon whom Jesus is recorded to have bestowed any epithet but the formal one of "Woman." But He honors her faith and calls this poor, timid, heart-broken woman, so pale and wasted with disease, "Daughter." With delicacy and tenderness He corrects the two mistakes of her faith. "Be

of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole." Then the woman who had touched His garment knew that it was not from the Christly robe, but from the Saviour that healing had come, and she learned that it was not the touch of the garment, but faith in the Divine Wearer that made whole.

**Jesus Again Victor Over Death.** The anxious father must have worried over the delay. Even as Jesus pronounced words of comfort to the woman a messenger from Jairus' home brought tidings of the hopelessness of their journey and in a lowered voice exclaimed, "Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master." Too late! Oh, in a case of such extreme need why did the Great Physician tarry for the woman? But Jesus' power is great enough for the healing of all who come to Him. He catches the servant's whisper and how is it that he reassures the agitated father? "Fear not; believe only and she shall be made whole." Death is only an incident to the Great Physician. They find the house a house of mourning, filled with relatives, hired mourners, wailing women and musicians, who laugh Him to scorn when He says, "Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth." Their worldly wisdom was so great that they **knew** she was dead.

It is not strange that He asked these unbelievers to retire and entered the death chamber with Peter, James and John and the father and mother, where, with the simple words, "Talitha cumi," Jesus took the little girl by the hand, and in obedience to the command, "Damsel, arise," straightway she arose and walked and partook of the refreshment which Jesus ordered given to her. And relatives and friends, hired mourners and musicians, together with the delighted father and mother, were astonished with a great astonishment. Through all the ages since, the record of the faith of this man and woman has inspired despairing hearts and longing souls to carry their burden to the Great Physician.

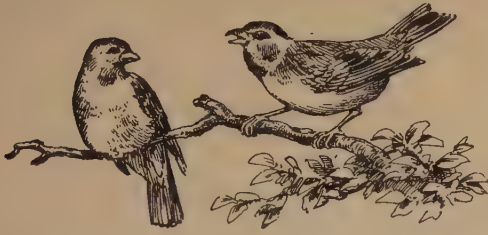
**Quiz.** 1. What was the difference in the approach of Jairus and the woman? 2. Which showed the greater courage? 3. Which manifested the greater faith? 4. Did the delay in reaching Jairus' house cause any injury? 5. In what other instance did Jesus delay going to the dead? 6. What lesson do these two instances teach us?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Jesus is ever ready to leave a multitude to reach one person. 2. One need not wait for a convenient time to seek Jesus. 3. The Ruler of the universe is never too busy to grant an audience to one. 4. Pride and prejudice sink in the storm of grief and loss. 5. The unspoken prayer of the unknown woman is granted as readily as the entreaties of the great ruler. 6. Through her suffering the woman became the daughter of Christ. 7. We have only to touch Jesus to feel His wholeness. 8. Open confession must follow unspoken petition.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



Are not



sold for a



and



shall not



without your Father. But the very



of your head  
are all numbered  
Fear ye not  
therefore,  
ye are of  
more value than



Whosoever therefore shall

him will I confess also before my Father



which is in heaven. But whosoever shall



him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT 10. READ MARK 6:7-13; LUKE 9:1-6.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May all Thy followers help to usher in the Kingdom of God. Increase our faith and courage that we may be more willing to sacrifice our own comfort for the promotion of Thy cause; and may we follow Thy instruction and fulfil Thy mission for us, confessing Thee in all things. For Thy glory, Amen.

A glorious band, the chosen few,  
On whom the Spirit came,  
Twelve valiant saints, their hope they knew,  
And mocked the cross and flame.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time, early in A. D. 29. Place, near Nazareth. Persons, Jesus and the twelve disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Twelve and Their Mission. Jesus appears to them after His resurrection, John 20:19-30. Called by the risen Christ, Mark 16:15. Instructed by Him, Luke 24:45. Given the Holy Spirit, John 20:22. Receive His parting blessing, Luke 24:50. Endued with power, Acts 2:1-4. They are witnesses of Christ, Acts 10:39-42. Their

sufferings, 1 Cor. 4:9-13. Receive Heaven's honor, Rev. 21:14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this address, Jesus defines the duties and privileges of discipleship. 1. To seek the extension of His Kingdom. 2. The sacrifice of personal comfort, pleasure and even financial reward for its advancement. 3. The endurance of persecution and hatred for its sake. 4. His followers must share His cross. 5. The Father's watchful care over His own. 6. The duty and reward of public confession of our Lord.

### A GREAT AMBASSADORSHIP.

We have only to study the lives of the twelve Apostles to find what crude material Jesus can use. They were mostly uncultured, illiterate men, often faint-hearted, irresolute and cowardly, but higher honors than any of earth were given them when Jesus sent them forth as His ambassadors. When an ambassador is appointed to any land, he is given special instructions before he departs on his mission. Sometimes these instructions are secret, but Jesus' instruction to the Twelve extends beyond their special mission and even that of the early church, for it sets forth the mission of Christ's church in the world and of His followers throughout all the ages.

**The Mission Field.** Jesus did not send these beginners far nor was the first journey to be among a hostile people. They were to avoid even the roads that led to the heathen and were forbidden to enter the cities of Samaria. Since Jerusalem and Judea were not to be thought of, they were restricted to Galilee—a territory not so large as a single county in many parts of the United States. Let it not for a moment be supposed that Jesus was less desirous for the salvation of the Gentiles or Samaritans, but they were not ready even for the simple truth which the Twelve might preach, while the Galileans were anxiously seeking help and enlightenment. Jesus sent these beginners to the easiest field of labor and that most apt to be overlooked—the home field. The day would come when they would be free to go to Samaria, but thus early in their ministry they had so little of the spirit of their Master that one would have called down fire from Heaven upon unbelievers, and it required a Heavenly vision to lift

prejudice and teach another the universal brotherhood of man.

A young girl once longed to be a foreign missionary. One day while getting a drink of cold water for her grandmother, she broke the handle of the pitcher at the pump and betrayed such irritation as to speak unkindly to the aged saint, when a voice seemed to say to her, "My child, if you have not learned to give a cup of cold water to one of my little ones, how could you give the bread of life to my enemies?"

**The Equipment.** The disciples were to go out two by two. Thus they could strengthen each other's faith and help each other's failings. How it steadied the fiery, impetuous Peter to be with the thoughtful Andrew. The emotional eloquence of John gained power from the commanding presence of his dignified brother, James. Philip and Bartholomew were kindred spirits; Thomas, slow in faith and slow in speech, was quickened by the devoted Matthew. The impassioned Jude continually gave new courage to his brother, the timid and retiring James; while only the zeal of Simon, the Canaanite, could have fired the halting Judas even to the half-hearted service which finally ended in betrayal. They were to go in trusting faith, with gentle and unswerving courtesy and self-denial. Salutation in that country was accompanied with much useless ceremony. Imagine a busy man taking time to exchange greeting by raising the hand from the heart to the forehead and then placing it in the right hand of the other, and repeating the performance a dozen times or more with each person accosted. If time devoted to business is too valuable to be thus wasted, was not time consecrated to the Master's business far too precious to be squandered in such useless and empty formality? So



Jesus forbade such salutation. Wherever they went they were to seek out a home noted for its piety and unless rejected abide till their mission called them elsewhere.

**The Mission of His Disciples.** An ambassador has authority far above that of any of his fellow countrymen abroad. He is given what are called plenipotentiary powers and is armed with credentials attesting his mission and authority. Jesus gave these ambassadors of His power to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers and cast out devils. Having invested them with such extraordinary powers, Jesus defined their mission. The times were exciting. Galilee had just yielded its martyrs to Roman cruelty. Never had risen such a nation-wide cry for vengeance. Jesus' teaching and miracles were on every tongue, and in all the cities and villages of Galilee the Gospel of the Kingdom was the well-nigh universal topic of conversation. The Twelve were to preach the coming of the Kingdom. The credential of their office was to be their simplicity. They were not even to encumber themselves with a change of raiment or a money girdle. The wearing of heavy shoes was not permitted within the precincts of the temple; every inch of ground covered in behalf of the King's business is as sacred as that of the temple and as a sign of the sacredness of their mission, the Twelve wore not the ordinary heavy traveling shoes, but the palm bark sandals used in temple service. Not even a staff was to hinder their hands from being outstretched to suffering humanity. Never before were ambassadors of a king sent out in like manner as the Twelve, without scrip or purse, staff or shoes, their sandaled feet exposed to the dust; their bodies to sultry heat and tropic storm; their natural wants to the precarious charity of the indifferent. Who would rule with Him must bear His cross.

**Dangers Attend the Mission.** Their office was without salary or earthly emolument. Even a money girdle was an unnecessary encumbrance and the services of one who did not carry even the ordinary scrip or receptacle in which to store gifts of food sufficient for daily sustenance could not be bought. They could only hope to share the poverty, contumely and sufferings of their King. The world would treat them no better than it did Him. He was sending them out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Then it was, tradition tells us, that eager, impetuous Peter interrupted the discourse with the

question, "But how then if the wolves should tear the lambs?" Smiling gently at Peter's fear, Jesus asked him, "Why fear those who could destroy only the body?" Rather were they to fear sin which destroys both body and soul.

**The Father's Care.** Jesus had stripped them of every earthly hope; cut them off from the reward and honors of men; denied them a scrip and purse, thus showing that His ambassadors are not to seek accumulation of property. He forbade them change of raiment for the gratification of personal comfort; they were not even to lean upon a staff, and by forbidding salutation a ban was placed on the frittering formalities of life. But for every earthly inducement taken away, He gave them a Heavenly reward. He sent them out as defenseless as the birds that fly athwart the heavens. Yet they need not fear. Could there be a life more insignificant in value than that of a sparrow? Why two of these birds sold in the stalls of the market-place for an assarion, or about a third of a penny. Yet not one of these tiny birds fell to the ground without the knowledge of the Father. If God's providence extended over even the smallest of His creatures, would He not care for His own? Are not the children of the Father the very hairs of whose heads are numbered of more value than a world of sparrows? What a lesson of God's care!

There is a Jewish legend of a pious rabbi who had been thirteen years in a cave hiding from his persecutors, when one day he observed that when the bird catcher laid a snare, the birds could only be caught when a voice from Heaven said "Destruction"; and when the Heavenly command was "Mercy" they escaped the snare. So the rabbi came out from his hiding place and served his God openly.

**The Highest Honor.** Ambassadors ask no higher honor than public recognition. Jesus offered His followers recognition before the Father in Heaven. Loyalty is the supreme test of service—confession of Him by act and word and deed before men. How different from the rabbis who tried to prove from the Scriptures that we might sin, if sin were necessary to save one's life. They had so far forgotten Daniel's brave example that even idolatry was allowed when public acknowledgment of God would endanger one's safety. But Jesus bade his disciples that the only thing to fear was disloyalty and denial of their Lord.

**Quiz.** 1. On what occasion in the Old Testament were twelve sent out? 2. Had the Twelve received any previous call? 3. When did they receive their final commission? 4. What was their special duty? 5. What great debt do we owe them?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. One need not go far to find his mission. 2. The field is His and He will care for its laborers. 3. Every follower of Christ is His ambassador. 4. Most of us have a larger field of endeavor than that assigned the Twelve. 5. The commission of the Apostles is our ordination to service. 6. The disciple who would share his Lord's power must endure His privation. 7. In Heaven's census, the very hairs of our heads are numbered. 8. God knows His own and cares for them. 9. If God be for us, who can be against us?

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



And Jesus went



and  
there  
he



And the passover, a



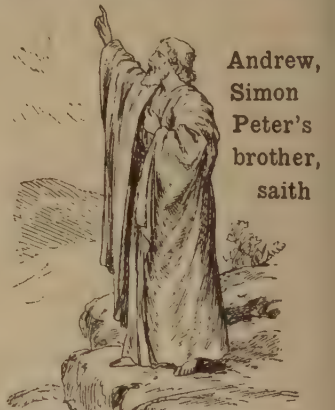
of the  
Jews,  
was nigh.  
When  
Jesus  
then  
lifted up  
his eyes,  
and saw  
a great



he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy



that these may eat? And this he  
said to prove him: for he himself  
knew what he would do. Philip  
answered him, Two hundred  
pennyworth of bread is not  
sufficient for them, that every  
one of them may take a little.

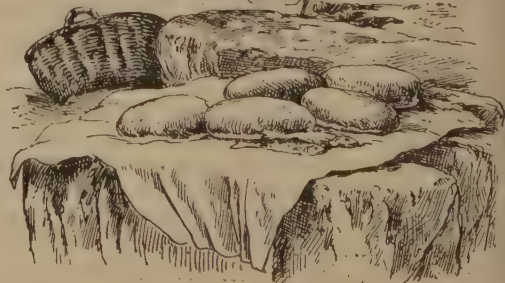


Andrew,  
Simon  
Peter's  
brother,  
saith

unto him, There is



here,  
which  
hath



but what are they among so many?



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 6:3-13; ALSO MATT. 14:13-22; MARK 6:32-44;  
LUKE 9:6-17.**

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We rejoice that Thy largess is sufficient for all and to spare. May we be partakers of Thy bounty, and as Thou didst use and multiply the lad's small store, so, we pray Thee, do Thou use and increase our usefulness. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Since from His bounty I receive  
Such proofs of love Divine,  
Had I a thousand hearts to give,  
Lord! they should all be Thine."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 29. Place, Bethsaida Julias, near Capernaum. Persons, Jesus, the disciples and the multitudes.

**Scripture Setting:** Divine Provision. Israel fed, Ex. 16:13-15, Deut. 8:3. Elijah fed by ravens, I Kings 17:4-6. Elisha feeds one hundred, II Kings 4:42-44. God's provision for the poor, Psa. 132:15. His universal providence, Psa. 136:25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The miracle of the loaves and fishes shows: 1. Jesus' compassion for the multitude. 2. His ability to meet every possible human need. 3. That nothing is too scant and naught too poor to serve His purpose. 4. His Divine example of returning thanks to God for daily food. 5. The sufficiency and bounty of His provision. 6. The duty of economy. 7. His miraculous power to meet the demands of human nature.

## A WONDERFUL FEAST.

**Sad Tidings.** About the time the Twelve returned from their mission, the disciples of John the Baptist came to Jesus with the sad tidings of his martyrdom. The inhabitants of every village, far and near, turned out to hear Jesus and to witness His wonderful works. Many companies or caravans, en route to Jerusalem to the feast of the pass-over, improved the opportunity to stop and see and hear the great Prophet whose fame had spread throughout the land. In fact "many were coming and going and they had no leisure so much as to eat."

The disciples were weary and perplexed. The news of John's death had not only filled the little company with sorrow for the fate of the preacher of righteousness, but with apprehension for the safety of Jesus. Already Herod saw in this new prophet, John the Baptist come to life. There was danger that the people, exasperated by John's martyrdom, should attempt to crown Jesus as King, while the Jewish authorities were plotting His death. Feeling the need of His own withdrawal and desiring rest and solitude for His disciples, Jesus said, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place and rest awhile."

**Plans Frustrated.** Accordingly they took ship and crossed the lake to a desert place near the city of Bethsaida Julias, where quiet glens and green sloping hills offered a refuge from the throngs. But their hope was vain. Both their departure and destination were soon known. It was only six miles and the crowd immediately set out to go around the lake by land. Others joined them from the near-by villages; some even ran all the way afoot, reaching their destination before the One they sought. As the

boat touched the shore, what a sight met Jesus' gaze; thousands of great strong men, besides women and children all awaiting His coming. They had even brought the sick. The desert sweep, the wandering people without provisions, reminded Jesus of sheep without a shepherd, and as the Good Shepherd He willingly abandoned His purpose of rest and retirement, and healed the sick by word or touch as He moved amid the throng. Then ascending the hillside with the Twelve, Jesus gathered the vast throng to Him and spoke to them on the all absorbing theme of the Kingdom of God.

**An All Day Sermon.** All day long they listened to the marvelous story that has never grown old, forgetting even hunger and thirst under the spell of His teaching. What were bread or meat compared to the truths unfolded to them? They were on the borderland of that Heavenly Kingdom where physical wants sink into nothingness. The afternoon shadows lengthened and it became a matter of anxiety with the disciples how the people, who in their haste had come without provisions, were to be fed, for nothing was to be had in this desert place. They had tarried so long hearing the word, that it was now too late for them to reach their homes. In their anxiety the disciples' ears were deaf to the truths that came like pearls from the lips of their Master, else they would have known that His Divine power would be sufficient for the emergency. To test their faith, Jesus asked, "Philip, whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?"

**A Perplexing Problem.** The question was to test their reliance upon Him and also an intimation that His Divine power would be

sufficient for the occasion. But Philip, who understood neither that power or the purpose of the query, replied, "Two hundred denarii" (about thirty dollars' worth) "of bread is not sufficient for them that every one may take a little." Philip repeated Jesus' question to Andrew, while their Master declared the Heavenly Father's loving care and providence to the multitude. How were they to satisfy the appetites of five thousand hearty men beside all the women and children? It would require all of Philip's estimate—two hundred denarii—if Jesus wanted them to feed all those people. Judas, who carried the money bag, counted their small capital and according to his computation it did not reach that amount.

**An Utter Impossibility.** They spent much thought and several anxious hours planning a way out of the difficulty when all the while Jesus stood ready to meet the emergency. They even brought their poor selfish plan to Jesus, and said, "This is a desert place and the time is now past;" as though Jesus did not know the desert, and as if he did not hold all time in His hands. Then followed the suggestion, "Send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages and buy themselves victuals." Quietly the Master says, "They need not depart; give ye them to eat." The disciples were perplexed and almost irritated by His words, and only Judas, as he showed Jesus the almost empty money bag, could have made that impertinent reply, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii of bread, and give them to eat?" Surely the Master must see the absurdity of His demand. It was then He asked a still greater impossibility. They were not to buy, but to share their own store with all those thousands! How many loaves had they? Andrew replied, "There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what are they among so many?"

**The Master's Way.** A conviction of His power to perform the impossible and supply every human need must have dawned upon the Twelve, as with quiet authority He commanded the loaves and fishes to be brought to Him, for there was neither query nor protest when Jesus told them to seat the people. Ah, they never forgot that scene, the expanse of luxuriant green grass, and the people seated in orderly groups of fifty or a hundred; and in the gay red, blue and yel-

low colors which Orientals wear, looking to imaginative Peter for all the world like a multitude of flower beds on the green turf. Every eye was bent on the one central figure. Around Him stood His disciples. Before Him the little lad with the basket containing the scanty store of five barley loaves and two small fishes.

**The People Fed.** "Jesus took the loaves and when He had given thanks, He distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would."

It was all done systematically. The barley loaves were the usual thin cakes, such as are still eaten in the East, one of which is hardly sufficient for one person. They were a coarse food, eaten only by the poorest people. The fish were a peculiar kind of small fish, very like our sardines. Small as was the amount and inferior as was its quality, under the Divine touch of Jesus it was multiplied until the five thousand men, the women and children were fed, and so delicious did it prove that the appetites of all were satisfied.

**His Provision Greater Than the Need.** After all were fed, Jesus bade His disciples gather up the fragments that nothing be lost, and there were twelve baskets full left over from the feast. It was not only a lesson in Divine economy, but Jesus' method of reproving the Twelve for their doubt of His power to care for all who come to Him.

As the Twelve presented themselves, each carrying a basket of fragments, they needed no word of reproof from Jesus. The rebuke was hidden in the miracle each bore in his own wicker basket. As the fed multitude watched the disciples go from company to company gathering up the fragments, the contrast between the five barley loaves and two small fishes was so great we do not wonder that word ran through the ranks: "This is truly the Prophet, the One who should come into the world."

**Quiz:** 1. Where and how many did Elisha miraculously feed? 2. In this narrative, what impresses you most concerning the disciples? 3. Upon what later occasion did Jesus manifest His miraculous power in feeding His disciples with bread and fishes? 4. Upon what other occasion did He feed the multitude? 5. What lesson may we learn from this miracle?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Jesus is as compassionate today as when He taught the multitude. 2. Jesus was never too weary to instruct those who came to Him. 3. As in nature, so in His miracles, Jesus worked systematically. 4. Our Lord is sufficient to supply every need. 5. His disciples had only to furnish the few loaves and fishes, Jesus did the rest. 6. His providence is so great that it always exceeds the need. 7. Every harvest is nature's miracle of the loaves and fishes, whereby God provides for His creatures; we see it in the seed that is multiplied a thousand fold; in the tiny grains of seed wheat which provides bread for the millions.

MARGARET WINTINGER.



# JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA.

And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get



and to go  
before  
him  
unto the  
other  
side,  
while he  
sent the



And when  
he had  
sent the  
multitudes  
away,  
he went



apart  
to



and when  
the evening  
was come,  
he was  
there alone.  
But the



was now  
in the  
midst of  
the sea,



for the wind  
was contrary.  
And in the fourth  
watch of the  
night Jesus  
went unto them,



And when the  
disciples saw him  
walking on the  
sea, they were  
troubled, saying,  
It is a spirit;  
and they cried  
out for fear.



# JESUS WALKING ON THE SEA.

**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 14:22-32; ALSO MARK 6:45-52, AND JOHN 6:15-25.**

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee that in darkness and tempest we may hear Thy voice saying "It is I, be not afraid." We know that in storm and trouble Thou dost walk the sea as of old, and in the dark hours of life we would recognize and welcome Thee. May we keep eyes and heart fixed upon Thee, lest we perish. For Thy name's sake, Amen.

God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants his footsteps in the sea  
And rides upon the storm.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Early in April, A. D. 29. Place, The Sea of Galilee. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** God in the Storm. Commands the storm, Psa. 107:25-30. Winds obedient to Him, Psa. 148:8. A Refuge from the storm, Isa. 25:4. God's power in the storm, Jonah 1:4-9. The Lord governs the storm, Nahum 1:3-4. God saves from the storm, Acts 27:20-24.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The lesson reveals, 1. Our Lord's absence of earthly ambition. 2. His habit of prayer. 3. His power not only to command the sea, but to make it a royal highway. 4. The amazement of His disciples. 5. He would cast out fear wherever He is. 6. The overconfidence of Peter, which is soon followed by doubt and distress.

## JESUS WALKS UPON THE WAVES.

**Refuses a Crown.** The miracle of the loaves and fishes produced a profound impression on the multitude. Here was a prophet like Moses, who also fed the people in the wilderness. So great was their enthusiasm that they even contemplated making Him a king by force. Far as it was from His teaching the plan even appealed to the Twelve, but their Master constrained them to enter into the ship, directing them to cross the lake toward Bethsaida. "Then Jesus, perceiving that they were about to come and to take Him by force that they might make Him a king, withdrew again into the mountain Himself alone." Thus did Jesus refuse a crown and teach His disciples the emptiness of earthly honors.

**A Mountain Altar.** Do we ask why Jesus sent the multitude away and climbed the steep of the mountain after a laborious day of teaching and miracle working? Matthew tells us He withdrew to pray. The great mountain top was the altar of Jesus' temple of the night, where with the stars as the only onlookers, He poured out His soul to the Father. In the seclusion of the mountain and amid its grandeur, He continued in prayer from evening till almost dawn.

During one of the crucial battles of the Civil War, President Lincoln spent the night in prayer. He could not withdraw to a mountain, but alone in his office in the White House he prayed till early morn for the preservation of the Union. Gen. Sickles, who saw Mr. Lincoln that morning, tells us that a holy light on his face lit the usually sad countenance with a strange joy and confidence.

**In Deadly Peril.** Meanwhile a sudden storm had arisen on the lake. Fierce sweeping winds from the surrounding hills rushed howling down the ravines and struck the lake, soon converting it into a boisterous

sea. The wind seemed to come from every quarter; the waves were fierce and high. His disciples were alone on the lake and all their skill as Galilean fishermen and sailors availed little. Fearing for the safety of the careening craft, they had taken in their sail and resorted to the oars. Oh that the Master were with them to quiet the storm! In the darkness that enshrouded them they did not know that high on the mountain, Himself facing the howling tempest, Jesus saw the belabored little craft in the seething, foaming lake; that even while He was bowed in prayer and as the fierce winds blew, Jesus was conscious of the careening boat. They were hidden in the darkness and because they could not see Him, they did not realize that they were as safe as if Jesus were in the boat. The Master on the mountain top was not so far from His followers in the tempestuous sea below as to be ignorant of their danger. Even amid storm and darkness they could not drift beyond His love and care. Hours passed and still the storm continued in unmitigated fury. It was now the fourth watch and the morning would soon dawn; though they had rowed for eight long hours, so slow had been their progress that only three miles had been made. It was just half the distance across the lake.

**An Unseen Friend.** They did not know that Jesus saw and pitied them nor did they know that help was so near. Strengthened by communion with the Father, Jesus rose and gazed across the inky sea. Darkness and light were the same to the All-seeing One, and plainly He saw the imperiled disciples. In that dark hour they were dearer to Him than they knew. Small as was the





## CHRIST AND ST. PETER

BY PLOCKHORST

After Christ had fed the multitude on the five loaves and two fishes, He sent His disciples away in a boat on the sea, while He dismissed the people. Later in the night, when the boat was tossed about, in the midst of the sea, by a great storm, which arose suddenly, the disciples were in distress. Jesus came to them walking on the water, which alarmed them still more, as they thought Him a spirit. But He cried out: "It is I, be not afraid." Recognizing Him, Peter, the impulsive one, exclaimed, "If it be Thou, bid me come to Thee on the water." Receiving permission to do so, Peter walked on the water toward Christ. But the wild sea frightened him, so he commenced to sink and had to call for help. Christ drew him out, saying: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

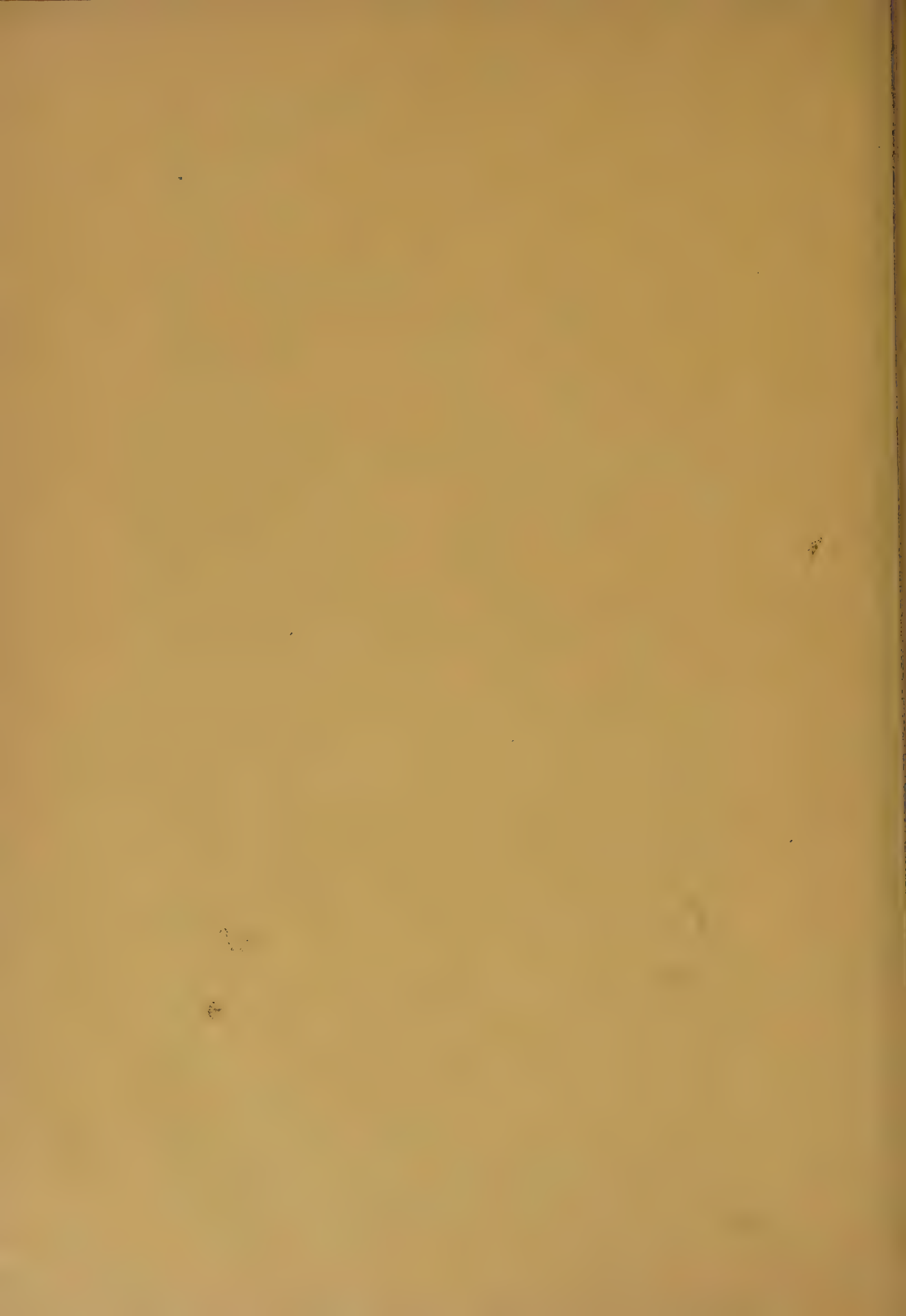
As Plockhorst follows the manner of the finished school of Germany, Christ's figure is naturally monumental and Peter is in the usual draped coat. Though not exactly realistic, it is very effective. The disciples left in the half-wrecked boat are crying out and gesticulating with excitement. Christ's reproachful face and uplifted hand, and Peter's pleading attitude, tell well the story, and the wild sea and wrecked sails speak eloquently of the situation.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST AND ST. PETER





little craft, it contained the nucleus of that church which was to extend to the uttermost parts of the earth and take the world for Christ's own Kingdom. Truly they did not know the measure of His love; they did not realize their value in the eyes of God whose Kingdom they were to establish or they would have been assured of their own safety.

A great ship bound for the Orient was grappling with a terrible storm. The passengers were on deck preparing to leave the ship. All were frightened save one. He walked with certainty and his very presence inspired confidence. "Why are you not sharing the general panic?" asked the captain. "When I was a child, God called me to preach the Gospel to His children in darkness. I am now bound for my field of labor. He who called me to be His missionary has stilled the sea before this and He will do it again. I know He will not suffer me to be lost," was the reply, when so suddenly as to seem a miracle, the wind changed and the gallant ship rode the storm and arrived safely in port.

**Jesus Appears.** Anxiously the disciples peer through the thick sky and scan the waters. Suddenly these strong men are frozen with terror. Through the darkness they see something more awe-inspiring than the tempest. Can it be? Yes, it is a human form approaching them. Calmly it treads the raging sea and at each footfall the furious waves subside into calm so that the strange apparition leaves behind it a smooth and shining path. All witness the spectacle. Never had mortal eyes looked on the sight before. They have not yet outgrown the superstition of the Galilean peasantry and they do not doubt that it is a spirit. It seems about to pass by the ship, when they cry out in terror at the sight. And through the darkness and storm comes the well remembered and beloved voice speaking the words that since that eventful night have stilled many a storm and steadied many a life bark. "It is I; be not afraid." It is Jesus and their terror is changed to wonder and joy.

**Peter's Impetuosity.** Then He comes toward the ship, but Peter, whose nature is as tempestuous and unstable as the sea, cannot await His coming. "Lord," he exclaimed, "if it be Thou, bid me come to Thee on the water." "Come," said Jesus. With

characteristic boldness and impetuosity Peter immediately stepped over the side of the boat and into the troubled sea. When the Master said "Come," He gave Peter His own supernatural power. As long as His eyes were fixed on Jesus the boisterous waves could not harm him; he found himself upborne and able to do even as his Master had. But suddenly he looked down at the tempestuous water, saw the dashing billows and inky blackness beneath his feet; then fear, that arch enemy of faith, entered and took possession of his soul. In less than an instant he was sinking. Though a strong swimmer, he could not even swim. He could only cry, "Lord, save me." But even though the peril comes from our own presumption and lack of faith, no one ever calls on the Lord in vain. Immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him and said unto him, "Oh, thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" And with his hand in the Master's, Peter walked the waves humbly as a child who had been rebuked; and the Lord and His boastful, abashed disciple entered the ship together. Immediately the wind ceased and without an effort of the oars they were at their destination. If we had been there I am sure we should have done as did all in the vessel, for they fell at His feet and worshiped Him, saying, "Of a truth Thou art the Son of God." He had proven that He holds the laws of nature in the hollow of His hand and that even the sea was subservient to Him.

**Quiz** 1. How does this miracle differ from Jesus' former miracle of the sea? 2. Which was the greater? 3. Why did Jesus refuse to be a king? 4. Do you think Jesus needed to pray? 5. Why did Peter sink beneath the waves? 6. What lesson do we learn from His failure?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Amid all our perils, Jesus watches over us from the Mount of God. 2. Though we see Him not, He never loses sight of us. 3. He who asks least and communes most, prays most like Jesus. 4. If we would but open our eyes in the hour of distress and danger, we would see Jesus walking the waves of every trouble. 5. Ofttimes His approach seems a new and greater peril, because we fail to recognize Him. 6. We may hear His voice through the gloom saying "It is I; be not afraid." 7. If we fix our eyes on Jesus, we too may walk the stormiest seas of life.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE.

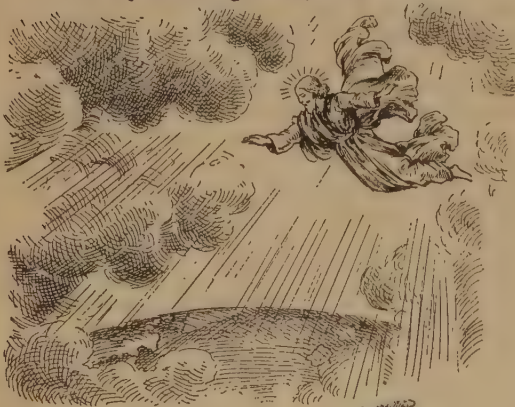
Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,



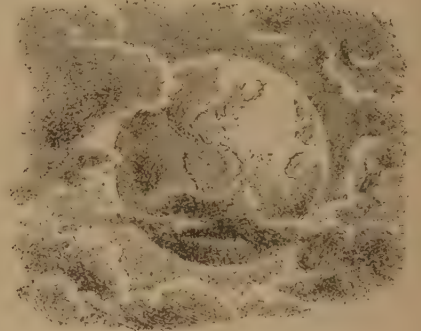
gave  
you  
not  
that



but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which



and  
giveth  
life  
unto  
the



Then said they unto  
him, Lord, evermore give  
us this bread. And Jesus  
said unto them,  
I am the bread  
of life: he that



shall  
never



and he that  
believeth on  
me shall never





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 6:22-51.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, we come to Thee, for Thou art the Bread of Life and the source of all good. We thank Thee for the abundance of Thy blessings, but our hearts are hungry for Thee. We want to know Thee better and grow more and more in Thy likeness. Help us in all things to put the spiritual above the temporal; the eternal above the passing things of time and sense, and by faith in Thee inherit eternal life. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

We taste Thee, O Thou Living Bread,  
And long to feast upon Thee still;  
We drink of Thee, the Fountain Head,  
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

Our restless spirits yearn for Thee,  
Where'er our changeful lot is cast;  
Glad when Thy gracious smile we see,  
Blest when our faith can hold Thee fast.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Early in April, A. D. 29. Place, the synagogue, Capernaum. Persons, Jesus and His hearers.

**Scripture Setting:** The Bread of Life. The true bread, Deut. 8:3. The bread that satisfieth not, Isa. 55:1, 2. Hunger of soul satisfied, Psa. 107: 8, 9. The blessedness of spiritual hunger, Matt. 5:6. His children neither hunger nor thirst, Isa. 49:10. The body and blood of Christ, Luke

22:19, 20. A type of Christ, I Cor., 10:16. Fed by the Lamb of God, Rev. 7:16, 17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this discourse Jesus demands, 1. Disinterested service on the part of His followers. 2. That man's chief aim shall not be for material benefits. 3. Declares Himself the Bread of Life. 4. That He alone can satisfy all spiritual need. 5. His power to bestow eternal life. 6. Foretells His sacrifice and death.

## BREAD THAT SATISFIES.

**An Important Discourse.** In the synagogue built by the centurion whose servant He had healed; its chief ruler, Jairus, whose daughter had even been raised from the dead, and in the city which had been the scene of so many of His miracles, Jesus gave one of the most important and marvelous discourses ever delivered. The multitude whom Jesus had sent away after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, hoped for still further manifestation of His power, in which they might profit and remained in the neighborhood of Bethsaida Julias expecting to find Him somewhere in the vicinity the next morning. Disappointed in this, they took boats and crossed the lake to Capernaum, where they found Him calmly teaching in the synagogue. Perhaps rumors of the miracle of walking on the water had reached them and prompted the question, "Rabbi, when comest Thou hither?"

**An Open Rebuke.** Instead of replying to their question, Jesus rebuked them for their mercenary motives in seeking Him. They sought Him not because of the Divine power which His miracles attested, but for the gratification of physical and material desire. They thought only of the loaves with which they had been filled. If He were the promised Messiah, He would enable them to triumph over the hated Romans and restore the garden of Eden where the fruit trees and harvest fields would every day or at least every week or so yield their abundance; the grain to stand like palm trees and to yield its harvest without labor. They would eat and drink, live magnificently all their days in houses built of the most precious jewels, loll in beds of silk and lave

in rivers flowing with wine and oil. His miracles only indicated to them His power to create such a magic paradise and that is why they wished to make Him King. If He could not fulfill their corrupt desire they would have nothing of Him.

**A Higher Aim.** But Jesus sought to make it plain that He came for a higher purpose. He had given them bread to nourish their bodies, thus ministering to their temporal life. But now He urges them not to hold paramount perishable food of the body, but to seek earnestly for "that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" and He intimates that He can give them that spiritual food which will impart everlasting life. His hearers at once saw that He alluded to some religious duty, although they failed to understand what it was. They were already overburdened with forms and tithes which the rabbis had laid upon them; however, if Jesus had some additional precepts they were willing to add them to the long catalogue of religious formalism if thereby they might become entitled to citizenship in the new Kingdom. But instead of loading them with additional duties, Jesus startled them by His reply to their query, "What shall we do that we might work the works of God?" For He tells them all they need to do is to believe on Himself as sent from God. Not content with His previous manifestations of power, they demanded a still greater sign. The lintel of the door of that ancient synagogue of Capernaum has been discovered among the ruins recently unearthed and it bears the device of a pot of manna with a flowing pattern of leaves and cluster of grapes. Someone, perhaps an opposing rabbi

who has just passed under that lintel, is reminded of the miracle of which it is a symbol, and he breaks in upon the discourse. By what sign can you attest your claim? Moses gave our fathers bread from Heaven to eat all the time they were in the wilderness, which was surely a greater miracle than feeding the multitude last night.

**A Momentous Declaration.** Quickly Jesus dispels their error. The bread from Heaven was not the gift of Moses, but of God and He further states, "The bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven and giveth life unto the world." Ah, who does not want to live? Who does not seek life? No wonder that many voices now cry, "Lord, evermore give us this bread." What were a few barley loaves in comparison to a bread that would make them immortal? Silence falls upon the multitude, the very air of the synagogue is pregnant with import as Jesus quietly faces them and from His lips comes the startling declaration, "I am the Bread of Life: he that cometh to Me shall never hunger and he that believeth in Me shall never thirst." All whom the Father gives will come to Him, and no hungering, thirsting soul will be cast out of His Kingdom. Just as He saved the little band of disciples from the storm and peril so He will succor and sustain all His followers throughout the ages to come and none shall be lost. The Father "had sent Him down from Heaven to do His will, and it is the will of the Father that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

**The Challenge.** So bold a claim had never been heard in the synagogue. It created a stir that penetrated the woman's gallery and extended to the rear seats, where Jesus' words aroused eager hope and desire. But from the rabbis and those who sat in the high seats of the synagogue came a contemptuous denial, "He styles Himself the Heaven-sent Messiah, when He is only a carpenter's son and He came from Nazareth. Surely He should go farther from home to declare His Heavenly origin. Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" But he met these skeptics as He always did, with a bolder challenge and a stronger and more fearless assertion of the truth they had rejected. "Murmur not among yourselves. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. I am that Bread of Life." Then he reminded them that the manna had no life-giving power, since their fathers did

eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. They who eat the Bread from Heaven shall not die. Then came the startling declaration that that bread was His flesh which He would give for the life of the world. Thus he pointed to His death when He should give His life and body for the spiritual life of men, as bread is given for the bodily life. The use of the term "eating" as a symbol of complete receptiveness and acceptance of spiritual truth was a familiar form of Jewish teaching, and those who heard Him as readily understood as when we speak of "devouring" a book or "drinking" in a sermon. But they were determined neither to see nor accept the truth, and therefore only wrangled over the idle question, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"

**Partakers of Christ.** Solemnly and with the vision of His own death on the cross before Him, Jesus gives a stronger meaning to the truth He is trying to impress upon them, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood ye have no life in you." We must take on ourselves His flesh; we, too, must share His weariness and hunger; we must wear the crown of thorns; bear the nail prints and even suffer crucifixion in the work He has for us, and we will only have the power to do this when we have partaken of His Divine nature. There must be a transfusion of His blood of sacrifice ere we may suffer and serve as He served.

Thus in one sentence Jesus dashed away all their hopes of earthly comfort and enjoyment of physical pleasure and earthly advancement. He assures them that hard as is the sacrifice which is asked of those who would be citizens of the new Kingdom His flesh and His blood are sufficient. He always comes to us with an open hand to receive our sacrifice; the reward is ever in His outstretched right hand. Then He offers the reward. It is not earthly honor or position; nor material wealth or physical gratification. With wondrous softness and sweetness the words penetrate every corner of the old synagogue, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him."

**Quiz.** 1. Where did the people find Jesus? 2. What did they expect of Him? 3. What book in the Old Testament contains frequent references to the Divine law as food and drink? 4. What was the effect of Jesus' discourse?

**Seed Truths.** 1. Unbelief even crops into the synagogue. 2. Those who seek Jesus for the loaves and fishes always go away disappointed. 3. Jesus is not only the life-giving Bread but the living Bread. 4. As natural bread when eaten and assimilated is the means of perpetuating bodily life, so Christ received by faith is the living Bread that perpetuates the soul life. 5. In the wilderness of this world Jesus stands ready to feed us with the Bread of life as He fed the multitude in the desert with the loaves and fishes.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE GENTILE WOMAN'S FAITH.

And from thence he arose, and went into the borders of



and  
entered



and would  
have no man  
know it:  
but he could  
not be hid.  
For a certain



whose young  
daughter had  
an unclean  
spirit, heard  
of him, and  
came and

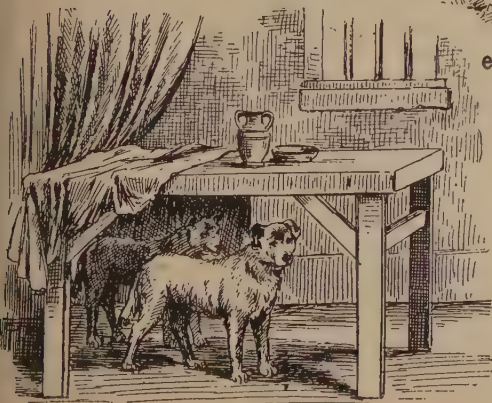


The woman was a Greek,  
a Syrophenician by nation;  
and she besought him that he  
would cast forth the devil  
out of her daughter. But Jesus  
said unto her, Let the children  
first be filled: for it is not meet to  
take the children's bread, and to



And she answered  
and said unto  
him, Yes, Lord:  
yet the

eat of the children's crumbs. And he said unto her, For this  
saying go thy  
way; the devil is  
gone out of thy  
daughter. And  
when she was  
come to her  
house, she found  
the devil gone  
out, and her



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 7:24-30; ALSO MATT. 15:21-28.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Teach us to pray; give us faith to approach Thee with confidence. May we be importunate and persevering in prayer. Behind Thy silence may we see Thy love and compassion and when Thou seemest not to answer, may we learn the lesson Thou wouldst teach us. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Did ever mourner plead with Thee  
And Thou refuse that mourner's plea?  
Does not the word still fixed remain,  
That none shall seek Thy face in vain?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 29. Place, Galilee, bordering Tyre and Sidon. Persons, Jesus, His disciples and a Gentile woman.

**Scripture Setting:** Requisites of Prayer. True prayer will be heard, Psa. 145:18-19. Importunity in prayer, Luke 11:5-11. Persistent prayer, Luke 18:1-7. Perseverance and watchfulness necessary,

Col. 4:2. Those who pray must not doubt, James 1:6-7. The prayer of faith, Heb. 11:6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This narrative teaches us: 1. That God is not a respecter of persons. 2. That the prayer of the humble and needy will be heard. 3. The kind of a prayer that is sure to prevail with God. 4. An example of faith. 5. That faith makes prayer mighty and victorious.

### THE WOMAN WHO PREVAILED.

**The Heroine.** We know so little about her and yet we know her so well. It begins so exactly like a story "A certain woman." In the nearly two thousand years that have passed since, we have never discovered her name, and though Matthew and Mark tell all we know about her in a few verses, we feel better acquainted with her than almost any other woman associated with Jesus' life. We have a trace of the same blood as hers, in our own veins. She was not only a Gentile but she belonged to an accursed race; she was a woman of Canaan, and being a Syrophenician and a Greek, she belonged to an ancient race which overran the shores of Tyre and Sidon and planted colonies in Spain and Britain, thus establishing a distant kinship with our Anglo-Saxon race. She dwelt within sight of Lebanon's eternal snows and ancient cedars, and in the neighborhood of those who worshiped the true God. It is evident she had ceased to be an idolator. So much we know of the woman to whom, from that day to this, everyone must go to school, who will learn how to pray.

**Among the Heathen.** Jesus again sought rest and seclusion for Himself and the Twelve by retiring to the northern extremity of Palestine. Across the uplands with their near view of the snow-capped Lebanon; through the many wooded valleys of these highland regions, a two day's journey brought them to the hills at whose feet lay the plains of Tyre. Here Jesus may have looked down on the smoking chimneys of the glass works of Sidon and of the dye works of Tyre. He may even have seen the long rows of warehouses filled with the merchandise of the world, the mansions and palaces, the public buildings, temples, palm groves and gardens of this land of surpass-

ing beauty and depravity. And its merchants and chief citizens never dreamed as they watched the white wings of the many ships of commerce, that centuries hence, when all the splendor, magnificence and glory of their cities had departed and they were forgotten, the story of an unknown woman of their race would be read in distant lands, far beyond the great seas, carrying its blessed message to countless millions.

**In Deep Affliction.** An unknown home gladly welcomed Jesus and offered privacy and retirement, "But he could not be hid." Even under the shadow of Mount Lebanon, they come to beseech Him for help. This time it was a woman in deep affliction. Her daughter was a victim of a demoniac possession, a peculiar disease not uncommon in that country. She had doubtless heard something of Jesus, the Prophet, and learning that He was in the neighborhood, maternal solicitude drove her to Him to implore help for her child. She met Jesus on the highway. She did not venture near Him. Perhaps she remembered that she was a Gentile, and He a Jew. In the eyes of a Jew, a Canaanite was as a dog. Something in her heart told her that despite her race He would not refuse the prayer of a broken-hearted mother. It is the only instance in all Jesus' ministry of His apparent disregard of a petitioner. We may be sure there was a tremendous reason for His peculiar reception of this woman's request. Our Lord does not try needlessly, nor disguise His loving intent unless for some great purpose. May not Jesus have perceived her faith even as he recognized the guilelessness of the approaching Nathaniel? The world knew not how to pray. It needed to learn the lesson. Here was one who understood the art, and throughout all the ages to come, her an-



guished heart and voice should teach His followers the secret of true prayer.

**A Model Prayer.** She prayed, though she was not encouraged by gracious word or look. Behold her humility and earnestness. A sense of her inferiority withheld her from coming near the Holy One, yet her intensity and earnestness overcame womanly timidity and she cried out to Jesus on the public highway. Her soul's desire and a burden of sorrow were revealed in her first words. She besought Him reverently, as the Son of David, the Christ of God. She did not doubt His Divinity or His power to save, while unselfishness was so blended in her prayer that she made another's misfortune her own. She prayed, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David. My daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." She was not disheartened though she received no answer or encouragement; she only prayed with greater insistency, following after Jesus and framing her desire in the fewest words possible continued to cry, "Have mercy on me." The disciples failed to recognize the lesson which their Master would teach them through this woman and only found annoyance in the scene. Impatient of her persistency, they besought Jesus to send her away and stop her crying after them. Let Him give her an answer; either grant or deny her request so they might be at peace.

**Still She Prays.** Of all Jesus miracles, this for the Gentile woman was Martin Luther's favorite, and when he too would prevail with God, Luther would read this story. Surely it required faith to meet such an apparently cold refusal. "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." The disciples understood that the woman's request was denied; they did not perceive the rebuke to themselves that lay in the words, which were only an expression of their own narrow thought. But this woman of prayer who had never met Him before, understood Jesus better than His own chosen disciples. Her faith grew stronger under trial that would have utterly extinguished that of an ordinary believer. She even found encouragement in a reply that silenced His closest disciples and forgetting her unworthiness, drew near to Him and fell at His feet worshipping Him. Ah, she was willing to prostrate and abase herself, for she knew that the One to whom she made her prayer was infinitely more than a mere man. He had become her Lord and her God. Jesus neither reproves her, nor does He accept her worship. He is silent. Then a mother's an-

guished soul voices itself in the pitiful cry, "Lord, help me."

**A Faith that Stands the Test.** Surely the One who stilled the sea at a like cry from the lips of His disciples will respond to that appeal. It expresses all the desire, helplessness, and misery in her mother heart. But Jesus sees beneath the rolling billows that disturb her soul, a priceless gem which once displayed, will illumine the discouraged hearts of the centuries—an unconquerable faith in the power of Christ—and He would give this to the world. So He answers, "Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs." It was a homely reference to the troops of vagrant dogs everywhere encountered, and who came in at the open door at meal time to pick up the fragments which were always to be found where only the fingers were used at table.

As the disciples read His message it meant that Jesus' mission must be confined to the Jews who were peculiarly God's children, while the Gentiles, who were held as dogs in Jewish estimation, must wait for His mercy. How it must have hurt the tender-hearted Jesus to use such words to the agonized suppliant at His feet. But He will not suffer any to be tempted above what they are able to bear and He knows this woman's faith will stand the test. Many, even if they had persevered thus far, would now have gone away in anger and despair at words that were calculated to extinguish all hope, but her faith grows stronger by the discouragement she encounters. She does not cease to pray. He had called her a dog; very well, in that name she will make a fresh appeal. If only she may enter the household of faith, she will willingly occupy its lowest place. "Yes, Lord, yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs."

**Faith Triumphant.** Could we but have been with Jesus that day, we would have witnessed a marvelous change; we would have seen His face before so impassive, now grow alight with approval. She who stood every test of her Lord, who has proved herself the model suppliant, may now retire with a title above all scholastic degrees, bestowed upon her by Christ himself. O woman of great faith! Yes, and she shall be recompensed for all that cruel testing time. Her heart's desire is granted. "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. Go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter."

**Quiz.** 1. What was the Gentile woman's greatest characteristic? 2. What other instances of woman's faith do we find in the Gospels? 3. Did Jesus really mean to refuse this mother's petition? 4. Why do you think He waited so long ere He granted her request?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Few of His disciples have Jesus' compassion. 2. Jesus, the burden bearer of humanity, cannot resist an appeal that comes from a mother's burdened heart. 3. She who asked for a crumb received a whole loaf. 4. No one ever appeals to His love and compassion in vain. 5. Faith, humility and earnestness are the requisites of prayer.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

## SEEING AND CONFESSING CHRIST.

And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they



and  
besought  
him to  
touch  
him.  
And  
he took



and led him



and when  
he had  
spit on  
his eyes,  
and



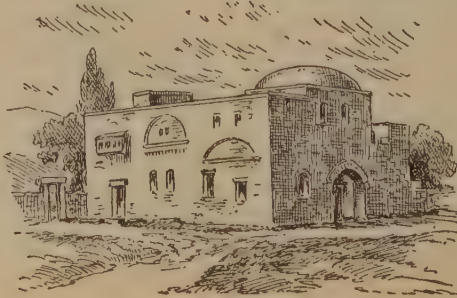
he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see



After  
that he  
put his  
hands  
again



and made him look up:  
and he was restored,  
and saw every man  
clearly. And he sent  
him away to his



saying, Neither go into  
the town, nor tell it  
to any in the town.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 8:22-26.

**Prayer:** Lord, We thank Thee that those who come to Thee are made to see; that they are brought from darkness into Thy marvelous light. Dispel the darkness and open our blind eyes that we may see Thee as Thou art: the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, so shall our faith and love grow strong. For Thy name's sake we ask it, Amen.

Jesus, didst Thou condescend  
When veiled in human clay,  
To heal the sick, the lame, the blind,  
And drive disease away?

And didst Thou pity mortal woe,  
And sight and health restore?  
Then pity, Lord, and save my soul  
Which needs Thy mercy more.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Summer of A. D. 29. Place, Bethsaida Julias. Persons, Jesus and the blind man.

**Scripture Setting:** From Darkness to Light. Those in darkness see light, Isa. 9:2. Jesus the Light, Isa. 42:6-7 and John 8:12. An armor of light, Rom. 13:12. Darkness and light contrasted, 2 Cor., 4:4-6. Delivered from darkness, Col. 1:13. Called from darkness to light, 1 Pet. 2:9.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson, 1.

Prophecy is fulfilled and the blind are made to see. 2. Jesus manifests His power to restore sight. 3. The blind man is first made to follow Jesus' leading. 4. Weak faith retards the power of Jesus. 5. Our Lord uses His miraculous power a second time to complete the cure of a vacillating, doubting suppliant. 6. Separation from His former evil companions and associations is demanded of the recipient of Jesus' favor.

### DELIVERED FROM DARKNESS.

**A Wandering Life.** It was late autumn. Departing from the coast of Tyre, Jesus came through Zidon to the familiar shores of Galilee. His route led him along the southern slope of Lebanon and under the shadow of the snowy Hermon. It is not recorded how long Jesus lingered amid these mountain solitudes, but we know that Jesus loved the mountains and delighted in the grandeur of scenery which displayed the power and majesty of God. The mountain air invigorated His weary body, while the sight of heights clothed with primeval forests and capped with perpetual snow refreshed His soul and afforded communion with the Father. He returned to Decapolis, where the healed demoniac must have done well his missionary work, for here the people received Him with gladness, so that He performed many works of healing; preached to the multitudes on the highland overlooking the lake, and miraculously fed 4,000. Dismissing the rejoicing and grateful throng, Jesus and the disciples crossed to the little town of Magdala on the further shore where His old deadly enemies met Him, from the ranks of the scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, all anxious to entangle Him in a discussion which should weaken the people's confidence in Him. After sunset His disciples directed the course of their familiar ship toward Bethsaida Julias. Here they disembarked in the late autumn evening.

**Sitting in Darkness.** Bethsaida stood on a high green hill above the plain which was the scene of the miraculous feeding of the 5,000; it overlooked the entrance of the Jordan into the lake and commanded a view of the Jordan marshes in which the buffaloes

wallowed. Jesus had often taught in its streets and synagogues, had lived among them and done many mighty works in their midst, yet so great was their hardness of heart and unbelief that Bethsaida was included in the woes Jesus pronounced upon Chorazin and Capernaum. But even in this unbelieving city there must have been some who believed on Him, for the next morning after His arrival they brought a blind man to Jesus for healing. It was a pitiful sight to see this strong man led into Jesus' presence by his friends. We are not told how many years he had sat in darkness. The very hopelessness of his affliction contributed to its pathos. Why, in all Jewish history the blind had never been known to receive sight. Even that dread disease, leprosy, had been healed by Israel's prophet. Marvelous as it may seem, the dead had been raised, but never had eyes been given to the blind. No one knew his despairing condition better than the blind man himself. It is true he had come to Jesus, but he came without faith. It was only to satisfy the urgency of friends who had seen the Master multiply the loaves and fishes until they fed the 5,000. He was so destitute of hope that he did not even join them as his friends besought Jesus to help him.

**Led Out.** The first thing Jesus did was to change his environment. He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of town, away from the scoffers and unbelieving; away from those rabbis who sneered at Jesus; away from the city and its wickedness, out into the fields. And the blind man must have had some little faith, for he was willing to be led, first by his friends

to Jesus and then by the Divine hand of Jesus, out from his old associations and haunts to the open. What a sweet and beautiful picture of Christ's power to lead from darkness to light was presented as the compassionate Jesus tenderly took the hand of the one who groped in darkness and gently led him away from the curious throng. For the miracle of His healing was not to be for the gratification of morbid curiosity on the part of outsiders; it would be a transaction between Jesus and the blind man.

**Darkness Wanes.** The miracle of healing this blind man is peculiar, for it is the only instance in which the result was not instantaneous. Jesus had so often shown His ability to heal every ill that we may be sure His arm was not shortened nor His power abated. The healing must have been instantaneous. Was it not due to the impassive attitude of the man himself, whose faith was so weak that he had not uttered an appeal on his own behalf, that he did not at once grasp the fact of his own complete restoration? Or perhaps as He deals with all according to individual need, Jesus saw that this apathetic soul needed additional care. He was so slow to receive, it would require a second lesson to forever dispel the darkness from his beclouded soul. The use of saliva was a well known Jewish remedy for affection of the eyes and for some reason best known to Himself, Jesus made use of it in this instance and, laying His hands upon the man, spat upon the blind eyes that would have opened at his bare command. Evidently the man had more confidence in this human agency than in the Divine power of his benefactor, and his reliance on the outward application so outweighed his faith in Jesus' supernatural power that he was unaware of the completeness of the cure. He saw men as trees walking. The darkness was disappearing.

**Out Into the Light.** Nowhere have we a more beautiful instance of the patient forbearance of the Great Physician. He does not rebuke the man for dullness of vision which fails to discern the completeness of the miracle; does not complain of the lack of faith that confused the sight of eyes that were completely restored. Others had apprehended their cure 'instantaneously' and glorified God; some, like the nobleman of Herod's household and the Gentile woman, accepted His word and have gone on their way rejoicing without any ocular demonstrations of the granting of their petition; but there is neither rebuke nor punishment of the one who receives His benefits so haltingly as to demand a second application of His power. "He put His hands again upon his eyes and made him look up." The see-

ing and laying on of hands was for a cure of the spiritual darkness that held an enthralled soul from full entrance into light. He must look above human agency to Divine cause. That upward look into the face of Divine compassion and tenderness opened the eyes of the prisoner of darkness to the fullness of Jesus' mercy. The sunlight of infinite love flooded the man's soul and overflowed his little world. The mist had vanished, confusion no longer marred his vision. He saw every man clearly.

**His Confession.** Doubtless like other recipients of Jesus' healing power, the restored man longed to go and publish his cure abroad. He may even have asked the privilege but the Master sent him away to his own house with a command not to enter Bethsaida or even tell of his cure to any in the town. Alas for a city from which God must needs hide such evidences of His mercy. Jesus knew that the hearts of its citizens were so hardened against Him that the publication of such a wonderful miracle as the restoration of sight to the blind would enrage them and even endanger His own safety. For the miracle was proof of His Messiahship; only of the Coming One was it prophesied that He should restore sight to the blind. Should it become known that Jesus had fulfilled this prophecy, the hatred of those who were determined not to accept Jesus as their promised King would be so inflamed that they would stop at no means that would cause His death. It might be as well for this new convert, whose faith had been so halting, not to resume the old relation with unbelievers. Fortunately his home was outside wicked Bethsaida; let him return to his own house. He, who had been so easily led, who had manifested so little decision of character, might be led to cast off his new found faith if he returned to Bethsaida Julias. Every ray of golden sunlight that penetrated the once darkened orbs; every image reflected on the retina of the eyes that had been blind; each firm footstep measured by his restored vision, would be his confession of the power of Jesus, the Light of the world.

**Quiz.** 1. Had sight ever been restored to the blind before? 2. What had been one of the prophecies concerning Christ? 3. Have we other instances of Jesus healing the blind? 4. What is most noticeable about this miracle? 5. What great spiritual change may we liken to the receiving of sight by the blind? 6. Is this change always instantaneous?

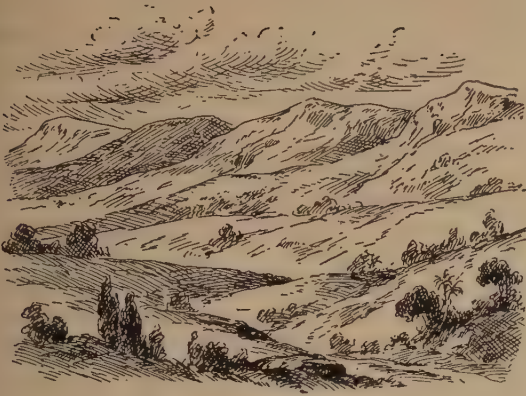
**Seed Thoughts.** 1. When He would confer a blessing Jesus often leads us from familiar haunts to be alone with Him. 2. The only limit to Divine power is that placed upon it by man's unbelief. 3. Jesus never manifests His power haltingly; it is our faith which halts. 4. Our Lord will not stay His power until His work of grace is completed. 5. Jesus never leaves a soul that seeks Him, in semi-darkness. 6. Bethsaida is not the only city whose wickedness and unbelief hinder the publication of the Gospel.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# PETER'S GREAT CONFESSION.

When Jesus came into the



of



he asked his



saying Whom  
do men say  
that I the  
Son of man  
am? And  
they said,  
Some say  
that thou art



some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or



He saith unto  
them, But whom  
say ye that  
I am? And  
Simon Peter  
answered  
and said,  
Thou art the



the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona:  
for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 16: 13-20; ALSO MARK 8:27-30, LUKE 9:18-21.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, We bless Thee for the knowledge that Thou art the Christ of God, to whom we may come for the words of eternal Life. We rejoice that Thy church is founded on this truth, and we pray that we may be as living stones in the great church of which Thou art the Architect and whose Foundation Thou art. Amen.

"Not like kingdoms of the world,  
Thy holy church, O God.  
Though earthquake shocks are threatening here,  
And tempests are abroad:

Unshaken as eternal hills,  
Immovable she stands,  
A mountain that shall fill the earth,  
A house not made with hands."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Summer of A. D. 29, about nine months before the crucifixion. Place, Cesarea Philippi. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Belief in Christ. Frees from condemnation, John 3:16-18. Evidences of new birth, 1 John 5:1. Overcomes the world, 1 John 5:5. Honors God, John 5:23. Guarantees answer to prayer, John 14:13. Insures peace, Rom. 5:1. Gives eternal life, 1 John 5:11-13. The sin of denial of Christ, 1 John 2:22, 23. Disbelief brings

condemnation and darkness, John 3:18, 19. Spiritual death, John 3:36.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This lesson discloses, 1. The world's view of Christ. 2. Peter's confession of Jesus as The Christ, the Son of the Living God. 3. Jesus' commendation of Peter for this acknowledgment of His Divinity. 4. That this great truth is revealed to every man through the action of God's Spirit. 5. His church is to be built upon a belief in His Divinity. 6. Peter is made as a rock of the living church.

### THE ROCK ON WHICH HIS CHURCH STANDS.

**A Beautiful Retreat.** It was one of the loveliest spots in the Holy Land. The great Hermon towered to a majestic elevation of 7,000 or 8,000 feet above the city of Cesarea Philippi, which nestles in a recess at its southern base. Countless murmuring streams found their way down the mountain slopes amid bright colored flowers, luxuriant shrubs and shady trees; while the springs of the river Jordan burst in a clear silver stream from a cave at the foot of Hermon. It was a land of wheat and barley, maize and rice, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, olive trees and oak groves, adorned with marble tablets and statues, silvery fountains, ancient temples and rock-ribbed castles. Jesus sought safety in this heathen region outside Jewish territory as a fugitive and outlaw, rejected by the nation He came to save. Even in Galilee, where the greatest multitudes had followed Him from the moment Jesus had made it so plain that those who followed Him need not expect to reap material benefits, the people began to hold aloof from Him. A few followed Him at a distance and they were permitted to hear the teaching He sought to impress upon His disciples, but often He was alone.

**What Men Say of Christ.** Even the disciples had withdrawn a short distance while Jesus indulged in one of those frequent periods of solitary prayer. On His return He propounded two momentous questions. First He asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" No one could gainsay His miracles; no one could dispute His teachings; nor could they impugn His sincerity. They dared not deny His power and

it was useless to decry His spotless life. Just as today unbelievers admit that Jesus was the greatest teacher ever known, and are willing to acknowledge He was the most perfect man who ever walked the earth, and even honor Him as a great moralist and preacher of righteousness; so the world of His own day found it impossible to treat Him as an ordinary man and briefly the Apostles recounted the idle guesses of the populace. "Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some Elias, and others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." That was all the world knew of Jesus. None dreamed that He was the Messiah; not one accepted Him as their King and Saviour. Such ignorance of the real nature and mission of Jesus, despite His works and words, show how impossible it is for the carnal mind to discern God.

**Whom Say Ye That I Am?** It was a question of fearful moment. For in the wonderful plan of salvation God has made co-workers of men. Had the disciples failed to recognize Jesus as the Son of God then all His labor in training them had been in vain. There would be no one to declare His death and resurrection; no one to preach the atonement through the sacrificial death on the cross of the only begotten and beloved Son of God. After all, sad as was their denseness and ignorance, it mattered less what the multitude thought than as to how this little intimate circle of twelve received Him. The time had come for Jesus to elicit from His own immediate followers an expression of their faith. Therefore He put the searching question, "But whom say ye that



I am?" Would these who had been so especially chosen and who had received such especial marks of His favor recognize Him? The Twelve who had been witnesses of His daily life and works, who had seen Him walk the waves and who owed their very lives to His supernatural power and care; would they see in their Lord only a great prophet, a new lawgiver and marvelous teacher? It was of mighty moment to all the world to come as to what testimony His own followers should bear of Jesus.

**The Great Confession.** It is not certain that all the Twelve would have answered so readily, certainly not Judas, and perhaps the slow and doubting Thomas might have halted for an answer, but in a moment it leaped from the lips of Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was not the ecstatic answer of an enthusiast, but a confession of Jesus as the Christ of God, the Messiah-King, the Mighty God, the Lamb of Sacrifice, inspired by God Himself. Through the prompting and power of the Holy Ghost, Peter had given utterance to the great truth on which the church of God is built. True, the wave of inspiration which had swept Peter from the materialistic conception of Jesus' mission held even by the disciples would recede, but the truth he had spoken would never be recalled. Thus the first foundations of the church of Christ were laid far away from the temple and synagogue, from the priests and Pharisees and scribes, and amid the Gentiles, for did He not come as a light to the Gentiles?

**The Great Avowal.** Once before, when the great secession of His disciples took place at Capernaum, Peter had replied to the Master's question whether the Twelve would also go, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." But Jesus had ignored the confession. Would He do so again. Nay, He openly accepts that which before He had passed unnoticed. For the hour had come. Flesh and blood had not revealed it to them. Daily they had seen the simplicity and poverty of His life, His homelessness and wanderings afoot, His humiliation and rejection by His own people. Ah, the knowledge had come to them through the Father. Breathlessly the Twelve awaited their Master's reception of Peter's declaration. It was a wonderful moment in the life of the fisherman Apostle when his Master's voice

fell upon his ears, "I say unto Thee, thou art Peter" (or Petros, which meant a rock) "and on this rock I will build My church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in Heaven."

**The Church of Christ.** Never did Jesus utter words of greater moment. They hold His testimony of Himself, a blessing upon all who acknowledge His Sonship; the declaration that not by earthly criticism or learning, but only by Heavenly grace are we led to the acknowledgment of Jesus as the Son of God; the first mention of the church He would found, its corner stone to be Peter's inspired confession; the promise of the supremacy of His church over the powers of evil and of its eternal survival of the ravages of the ages; and the power which through continuance in this great truth, it shall exercise on earth and in Heaven. Because of the boldness and greatness of his confession, Jesus blessed Peter. The name, Peter, **Man of Rock**, had been prophetically given him at Bethabara; now Jesus applies it to him because of his confession of Jesus' Sonship—the rock upon which He would build His church. High honor had the Galilean fisherman; even the keys of Heaven were given to him, for in the marvelous sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter was the first to open the Kingdom both to the Jews and the Gentiles, through the declaration that "the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off," and, in obedience to the Heavenly vision, he baptized the first Gentile convert.

**Stones in Zion's Walls.** The actual building of the church of Christ did not begin till the day of Pentecost, when three thousand living souls were welded into its walls. Ever since that day stones have been added; in the darkness of persecution, when His servants stood firm as a rock for the great truth embedded in Peter's confession, each blessed martyr became a Peter, a living, precious stone in the edifice which shall some day cover all the earth and stand throughout all time; every one who has a like living experience of faith in Christ is a Peter to his generation, blessed of God and a living stone in the walls of Zion.

**Quiz.** 1. Had any of the disciples previously acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah? 2. How does Peter's confession differ from these? 3. Why did it mean more? 4. Had Jesus spoken of His church before? 5. Why does He now emphasize His Sonship?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The faith of Peter was not of human culture but of Divine illumination. 2. It is in the Son of Man that we recognize the Son of God. 3. He who recognizes the Christ is near the Mount of Transfiguration. 4. When alienated from the Holy Spirit, he who had been first to confess Christ was first to deny his Lord. 5. The all-conquering church must be built upon the all-conquering Christ. The Divinity of Christ is the only redemption for the humanity of His followers.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

Then said Jesus unto his



If any  
man will



let him deny himself, and



For whosoever  
will save  
his life shall  
lose it: and  
whosoever will



for my sake shall find it. For what is



if he shall  
gain the whole



and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 16:21-28; ALSO MARK 8:31-37, AND LUKE 9:21-27.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We rejoice that Thy love for us is so great that Thou wert willing to suffer and die for us. May we be ever willing to take up our cross and follow after Thee. May we count all gain small, all loss as nothing, compared to the loss of eternal life which we have through Thee. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
All the light of sacred story,  
Gathers round its head sublime.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Summer of A. D. 29. Place, Vicinity of Cesarea Philippi. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Cross of Christ. Jesus bears the cross, John 19:17-19. An example of humility, Phil. 2:7, 8. His joy in the cross, Heb. 12:2. Glory of the cross, Gal. 6:14. Power of the cross, John 12:32, 33. Peace through the cross, Col. 1:20. The example of the cross, Matt. 10:38.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this lesson, 1. Jesus reveals His rejection, death and resurrection. 2. Rebukes Peter for his worldliness and presumption. 3. Declares that His disciples must follow His example of self-sacrifice. 4. All the world offers profits nothing if the gain incurs the loss of life hereafter. 5. Foretells the establishment of His Kingdom.

### THE CROSS AND CROWN.

**Under the Shadow of the Cross.** There is a wonderful painting of Christ before His entrance upon His ministry. In the dim interior of the workshop one sees the carpenter's bench at which He earned a livelihood for Himself and the family bereft of Joseph's support. Jesus wears the coarse garb of the peasant carpenter of Nazareth. He stands at the door of the little carpenter shop with head thrown back and arms outstretched for a moment's relaxation of the tired muscles. The dying sun has made the path that leads from His feet out into the world blood-red and athwart it, the outstretched and upraised figure of Christ has thrown the dark shadow of a cross. The artist has only presaged that which was ever uppermost in Jesus' thought. Probably never did the cross loom more portentously than at the moment of His affirmation of His Messiahship.

**Dreams Dispelled.** Notwithstanding all His teaching, still the Twelve clung to the Jewish idea of the Messiah. We may imagine what hopes were awakened when at last the announcement was made for which they had so long waited, and though secrecy was enjoined, it must mean that Jesus would soon assert His sovereignty and declare His authority. Their days of privation were well-nigh over and His chosen would soon emerge from poverty and humiliation to wealth and honor. Even the faint-hearted and mercenary Judas was encouraged to continue a little longer with the Master. It was time that all these idle hopes of earthly splendor and advancement should be dispelled. They must learn the way of the cross to the crown. Therefore, Jesus began

to reveal to them His intended journey to Jerusalem and to prepare them for the rejection and insult He should meet there. He even foretold His violent death and resurrection. Indirectly He had spoken of all these things before, but now for the first time He dwelt on them distinctly. "He must go unto Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day."

**An Unexpected Tempter.** The bare idea was so repulsive to them and so contrary to all their hopes and desires that the announcement seemed incredible to the disciples. He had so often spoken in a figurative sense that surely this must be one of the times when He had chosen to use symbols. His death must be merely a figure of speech and should not be interpreted literally. Peter could not understand or believe it. He could not conceive how the Christ, the Son of the living God, should suffer and die. The One whom he verily believed to be the Messiah and whom he loved so intensely should never pass through such an ordeal. Never while he lived. Really Jesus should not think or speak of such a thing. Now, our Lord's commendation of Peter seems to have been hurtful to his humility. He actually took it upon himself to advise, instruct and rebuke His Master. Taking Jesus by the hand he led Him aside and immediately began to try to dissuade Him from taking a journey which would prove so unfortunate. "'Be it far from Thee, Lord; this shall not be unto Thee.' It would utterly ruin the prospects of the Kingdom you intend to establish. You are the Son of

the living God. You can use the power we have so often seen displayed for others, to preserve yourself from such danger."

**Peter Rebuked.** It was the very same temptation Satan had used in the wilderness, when he asked Jesus to employ His Divine power to His own advantage, and naturally Jesus was reminded of those terrible days of conflict. The answer of His Lord must have made Peter's ears tingle to his dying day. Those who had but a few days before heard the splendid eulogium and promise given Peter, now see him cowed and abashed by His Master's rebuke. "Get thee behind me, Satan." He who under the power of the Holy Spirit was a foundation rock when controlled by earthly wisdom and prudence becomes a stone of stumbling and rock of offense. Alas, Peter! yesterday a rock, to-day disintegrating stone, and tomorrow shifting as the sand. Yet, when grounded in Christ, filled with the Holy Ghost and kept by God, he who had tempted and finally denied his Lord became the chief witness, servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ.

**A Sad Audience.** Turning from the abashed Apostle, Jesus made the incident the occasion of a searching discourse to His disciples and to the eager though now scant band of followers who followed Him at a distance, whom He called to Him. It was a solemn moment, for from the brief rebuke He had given Peter the Twelve had learned all too surely that their Master was to suffer rejection and death. They knew the death on the cross which the Romans were wont to inflict, but alas, they did not yet know and were utterly unable to realize the glorious resurrection foretold in those few words—"raised again the third day." We may be sure that tear-dimmed eyes were in evidence, while stifled sobs and broken exclamations of grief were heard in Jesus' audience. Closer to His side came John, while Andrew, James, Philip, Bartholomew and all the Twelve save Judas drew nearer to their Lord; even Peter's loving heart refused to allow humiliation and rebuke to keep him without the chosen circle. Judas alone stands far from the Master; he has no mind to affiliate longer than is necessary with the little band shadowed by the cross.

**A Cross for Everyone.** It was startling enough when the One who had declared Himself to be the giver of eternal life prophesied His own suffering and death, but what are the words that now proceed from the Master's lips? "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up the

cross and follow Me." Did His disciples remember that declaration when a few months later a weary Figure wearing a crown of thorns bowed under the weight of the cross as It climbed the steps of Calvary? He would set them the example which everyone who purposes to be His disciple must follow, bearing suffering and self-denial, as a man condemned to death bears the cross on which he is to die. Judas is drawn farther from the circle, yet still he lingers, for there is a fascination in the Master's words, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." As yet the hearers live so wholly in the present life that they hardly comprehend that the words are a promise that those who lay down pleasure and ease, or life itself in behalf of duty, shall gain everlasting life in the Kingdom.

**Profit and Loss.** Suddenly Judas starts as if pierced by an arrow from the bow of an unerring marksman. For the question aimed at every mercenary soul since that day seemed to the guilty, bargaining disciple as though it were directed straight at him: "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" What gain here can repay for the loss of life hereafter? Did it seem a great sacrifice to bear the cross? Ah! those who share His cross shall share His triumph. Some who are standing about Him will live to see the old dispensation abolished, a new dispensation ushered in and the foundations of the Kingdom established forever. There were those in the little circle who should be vouchsafed a glimpse of Jesus in the glory in which He would come when He returned to enter His Kingdom. How surely the prophecy was fulfilled. Within one week after it was uttered it was granted to Peter, James and John to see Jesus transfigured. One—the beloved disciple—survived the capture of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple, judgments and fulfilment of prophecy which declared that the Son of Man had come in His Kingdom.

**Quiz 1.** Why did Jesus enjoin silence concerning His Messiahship? 2. Why did he foretell His suffering and death to His disciples? 3. Why was Peter rebuked? 4. When did the full meaning of the prophecy of His death and resurrection come to the disciples? 5. What great principle did Jesus lay down as a condition of discipleship? 6. How can a man gain life by losing his life?

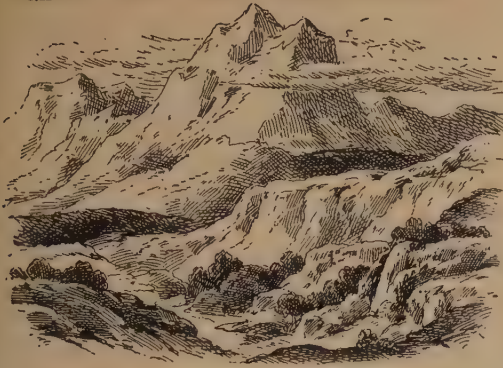
**Seed Truths.** 1. Temptations that are not put behind us become a stumbling block before us. 2. We are all capable of falling from heights of Divine insight to depths of egotism. 3. There is a cross for every one who would win a crown. 4. Heaven is only gained by the royal road of the cross. 5. All the rewards and emoluments of the world are not equal to the value of a human soul. 6. Never go into any transaction where the recording angel may not enter your profits on Heaven's balance sheet. 7. He who verily sees Christ shall never see death.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE TRANSFIGURATION.

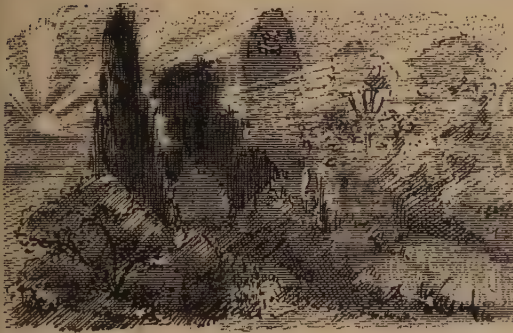
And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an



apart,  
And was trans-  
figured  
before  
them:  
and his



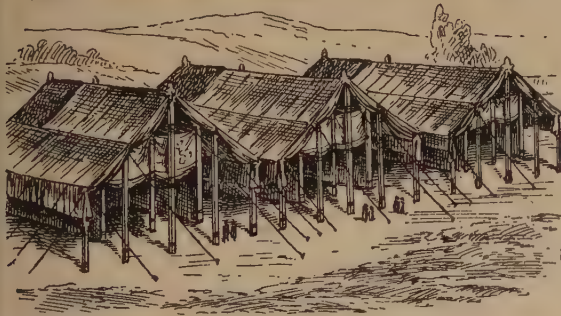
as the sun, and his raiment was white as the



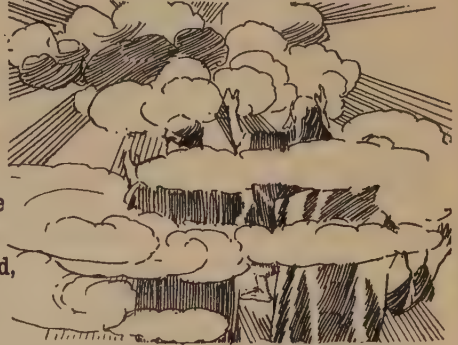
And,  
behold,  
there  
appeared  
unto them  
Moses  
and Elias



Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here



one for  
thee, and  
one for  
Moses, and  
one for  
Elias. While  
he yet  
spake, behold,  
a bright



and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they



and were  
sore  
afraid.  
And Jesus  
came and



them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 17:1-9. READ MARK 9:2-9, LUKE 9:28-36.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I ask to stand upon that mountain of prayer and vision; in that inner circle of discipleship, where I may see that Thou art the fulfillment of all law and the Divine personality in whom centers all prophecy. There would I remain until all else fades but Thee. Then would I go in Thy company to minister to the needy, waiting world in the valley, to be with Thee in

the garden, and be found close by Thee at the cross. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"O Master, it is good to be  
Entranced, enwrapped, alone with Thee,  
Till we, too, change from grace to grace,  
Gazing on that transfigured face."

—A. P. Stanley.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn, A. D. 29. Place, a spur of Mount Hermon. Persons, Christ, Peter, James, John, Moses and Elijah.

**Scripture Setting:** God-Touched Humanity. The shining face of Moses, Ex. 24:13-18. Elijah at Horeb, I Kings 19:8-18. Peter at Hermon, II Pet. 1:16-19. John's testimony, John 1:14, I John 1:1-3. Vision at Emmaus, Luke 24:13-27. Light of martyrdom, Acts 6:15, 7:54-60. Christ transfigured, Rev. 1:5-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage describes the resplendent hour of the Saviour's glory. 1. Not

all in the school of prayer qualify for the university of Mount Vision. 2. Heavenly ministers strengthen and gird us for life's work, and commune with us as we travel down to death. 3. Our richest and most Heavenly experiences come through prayer. 4. The path to approved character lies in the light of obedience to Heavenly visions. 5. The stream of Christ-like service takes its rise in the uplands, but quickly descends to gladden the valley below. 6. When Jesus is glorified in a human life the prohibitions of the law are unnecessary, and the highest predictions of the Kingdom are fulfilled.

### THE WHITEST AND SUBLIMEST PEAK IN HUMAN HISTORY.

**The Beacon-Light Upon the Mountain.** "Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart." There are certain climaxes in great careers that require some striking celebration. If some renowned athlete by his prowess brings honor to his university his victory is celebrated by great bonfires that blaze across the campus and light up the spires of the tallest buildings.

In the very midst of Christ's career He tells His disciples that as the Messiah He must suffer and die. At this revelation they become discouraged, and hesitate. Hence their need of special help and a new outlook upon the Messiah's glory. Christ calls the three best fitted to pray with Him upon the mount and to behold His ever-abiding Kingship. As the beacon-fires, lighted from hill to hill, announced to those far from Jerusalem the advent of a solemn feast, so the light of the transfiguration mount was to shine down through the doubts of the disciples, the darkness of the world, and the terrors of death, announcing the Divine Sonship of Christ and the final resurrection.

Hermon towered 9,000 feet. It offered solitude and coolness after the burning heat of that eastern day. The heights covered with snow glistened in the moonlight like marble. The stars shone overhead. In the midst of such a night scene it was the fitting time and place for a prayer-meeting on the mountain-top. He prayed that He might be prepared and fortified for death, and that His chosen three, the "sons of thunder" and the "man of rock," might stand unshaken

when they gazed upon the shameful insults and humiliation of the cross. No doubt the disciples also prayed, but as the night wore on they wrapped themselves in their outer garments and slept on Hermon as they were afterwards to sleep in Gethsemane. It was Jesus only who kept the signal light of prayer burning brightly through the midnight darkness of the mountain.

**The Illumined Face.** "He was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was white as the light." It is useless to attempt an explanation of the epiphany. Christ Himself called the transfiguration "a vision." While it is not easy to comprehend the manner of it, it must be taken, not as an optical illusion, but real. It could not have been a subjective experience for it affected all three disciples with equal certitude. Luke says that it was while He prayed and in answer to His prayer that His face was transfigured. We have seen marked examples of the Spirit's power in transforming the flesh; the love-light in a mother's face as she bends over her child; the fiery thought and passion that glows upon the orator's face; the spiritual light that breaks across the face of the worshipper; the serene peace upon the brow of the dying saint. History tells us that the outward symbol of the Divine presence is the illumined face. After forty days of communion with God Moses brought down from the mount a face that dazzled Israel. As Stephen lifted his eyes toward Heaven in the council chamber of the sanhedrin all that sat there "saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."



Already the face of Jesus had been marred by sorrow. Storms had beaten on it, the Syrian sun had tanned it, the dust had covered it. It was to be marred more than the sons of men. It would be defiled with spittle, torn with thorns, distorted with thirst and pain: But for one radiant hour it was to shine as the sun. With Peter, James, and John as an audience; with Moses and Elijah as corroborating witnesses at either hand; with the cloud of light and the commendatory voice of God, for once the flesh of man became the perfect medium for expressing the spiritual grace of God. For once in the long story of humanity the curtains of the fleshly tabernacle were pushed back that the incarnation might become the revelation of Divinity.

**A Picture of Contrasts.** "While Peter yet spake, behold a voice out of the cloud." The great painters and writers who have pictured the transfiguration represent it as a scene of boldest contrasts.

Mr. Ruskin says, "We cannot explain the union of the Divine and human in Jesus, yet the thing to do is to insist on the entireness of both." The whole background of the picture suggests the natural;—the noble mountain; the broad patches of snow overhead; the pale light of the moon; and the bright stars like points of light. In the foreground of the picture is the supernatural Heavenly visitors; a cloud of light; garments that gleam and glow like lightning; the dazzling face of the Master upturned to catch the Divine voice from out the enveloping cloud. In this picture are employed all the darker shades of human need and helplessness, —Christ and His disciples praying; the overpowering drowsiness followed by overpowering fear on the part of the three; Peter's vague and idle talk.

Blended with this are the brighter colors of Divine help and spiritual phenomena. As there are three witnesses from earth, two are called from Heaven,—the prophet of Sinai, who died by the kiss of God, and whose body was never found, and the avenger of Carmel who went up in a chariot of fire. If there was need of prayer, there was answer by a Divine revelation. If Peter's voice betrays ignorance and half-conscious confusion, there was an authoritative voice from out the cloud confirming the character of Jesus, and witnessing to the importance of His message. If adown the valley of humiliation and death there was waiting a central cross, there was above a loving Father who was well pleased.

**The Dissolving View.** "And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only." The purpose of the transfiguration was to show the three chosen disciples that when Christ the Perfect was come then that which was in part should be done away.

Moses the representative of the law, and Elijah the representative of the prophecies are summoned, and in the presence and hear-

ing of the three they hold converse on the crucifixion and the resurrection. Jesus is thus supported on the right and on the left; the supreme and abiding character of His reign is affirmed, and the disciples are given the evidence they need. Later in much the same way did Jesus confirm the wavering faith of His disciples by the authority of the Old Testament as He walked with them after His resurrection towards Emmaus.

But when Moses and Elijah have testified they must pass. When the nail prints and the spear would have been felt Thomas must rest in faith and not in touch. "Be not faithless, but believing." When Jesus is known in the breaking of bread His bodily presence is no longer needed to confirm faith and it passes. The electric illumination of the city makes a wondrous scene through all the dark hours of night, yet how it pales and seems to die out as the light of the great sun breaks over the hills. Moses and Elijah came not to speak of their achievements; they were but attendant satellites upon the great Sun of righteousness. They shone with borrowed light, and must decrease that He might increase. The meaning of the new view—Jesus standing alone—was unmistakable. The law of Moses and the utterances of the prophets would hereafter cease to be the chief impulse of religion. They faded by reason of the glory that excelleth.

**The Vision Treasured.** "Tell the vision to no man until the Son of man be risen." This vision of the mount of glory was to be hidden in their hearts; an inner light to light them down through the valley of their Master's coming humiliation and death. Hidden there it would awaken no jealousy in the other disciples, nor self-satisfaction in themselves.

They might not remain upon the mountain, for a needy people waited for their coming in the valley, but they might keep the vision in their hearts. If so the vision would keep them. It was for what they had experienced on the mount of vision that the "sons of thunder" were willing to be baptized with His baptism, and the "man of rock" offered to die for Him. A tradition, well authenticated, says they all three gave their lives as martyrs to the faith, Peter preferring to die with His head downward. Each could say with Paul, "I have not been disobedient unto the Heavenly vision."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. On what previous occasion did Christ choose these three? What later one? 2. On what previous occasion did Christ hear the commanding voice of His Father? 3. On what mount did the face of Moses shine? 4. What persecutor remembered the shining face of the martyr Stephen? 5. What vision came to Peter on the housetop, to Paul at Damascus, to John on Patmos?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The mountain of solitude for vision; the town in the valley for service. 2. The power of prayer transfigures the plainest face. 3. Sinai was a dark cloud, but Hermon a cloud of light. 4. Revelation has its base in the law, its shaft is prophecy, but its crowning peak is Christ. 5. God's voice commends as He begins His ministry, and commends as He approaches His passion.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# JESUS AND THE CHILDREN.

How think ye? if a man have an hundred



and



doth  
he  
not



the  
ninety  
and nine,  
and  
goeth



and



that which  
is gone  
astray?  
And if so  
be that



verily I say unto you, he



more of that sheep,  
than of the ninety  
and nine which  
went not astray.  
Even so it is not  
the will of your  
Father which is  
in heaven, that  
one of these

should perish.





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 18:1-7, 10-14;

ALSO MARK 9:33-42, LUKE 9:46-48.

**Prayer:** "Help me, Lord Jesus, to see in my young life some of the Divine possibilities Thou didst see in the life of every child. Give me the faith and humility of a little child. Keep me from all those sad lessons of sin which I must afterwards unlearn if I would be a child of Thy Kingdom. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"An angel paused in his onward flight,  
With a seed of love and truth and right.  
'To whom can this precious seed be given,  
That it will bear most fruit for Heaven?'  
The Saviour heard and said, as He smiled,  
'Place it at once in the heart of a child.'"

—L. M.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn, A. D. 29. Place, at Capernaum on the return from the Mount of Transfiguration. Persons, Jesus, the Twelve, and a child, possibly Peter's son.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ and Childhood. Cure for strife, Phil. 2:3-11. Perils to childhood removed, Isa. 11:5-10. God's children, Eph. 2:2-3, 11-19. Outgrowing childhood, Eph. 4:13-16. False teachers of childhood, Matt. 23:4-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage treats

of character formation and reformation. 1. The seed of a Calaveras redwood is hardly discernable, but they live for six thousand years. 2. There is much in childhood to retain, there is much to outgrow. 3. By controlling a child's surroundings we help to shape his destiny. 4. The seducer of childhood is worthy of a millstone about his neck, because by thought or practice he has forged a chain of habit about a child's life. 5. The wise teacher puts the child's portion where he can reach it.

### THE BATTLEGROUND OF THE KINGDOM.

**The Quarrel of the Generals.** "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?" From the Mount of Transfiguration the descent to Capernaum was indeed a descent into the valley of humiliation. What painful surprise and sad disappointment met the Master as even His best and most privileged disciples engaged in a serious and violent dispute. The vision on the Mount instead of confirming their love and humility only stirred up their jealousy and pride. The three that had witnessed the vision were ambitious, and the nine who had not were jealous. They all still clung to the common view that there would be distinctions of rank in the Kingdom of Heaven. Only three could be trusted to see their Master transfigured, but every one of the Twelve, it would seem, could be trusted to fight for the highest place. The patient Christ, in the training of the Twelve, would teach them the true nature of the coming Kingdom. Not even as privates, much less as great leaders, would they ever enter in, except they "be converted, and become as little children."

**The Strategic Position.** "And Jesus called a little child unto Him, and set him in the midst of them." At the time Jesus took no notice of their dispute. But now they are in the house of Peter that faces Galilee. When they are seated, He asks them, what they had been disputing about on the way? Peter especially needs the lesson of humility, and it is quite possible that Jesus taught it to Peter and the rest by calling Peter's little son and setting him in the midst. Christ still has the way of setting a little child down in the midst of a home to rebuke the grasping

selfishness of parents. It was a daring thing for Jesus to choose a child's heart for the battleground of the Kingdom. But it is certainly true that when the church completely cares for the children, she will command the situation that is the key to the future. Jesus was a great strategist in risking the battle of the ages upon the humility and unselfish service of a child's heart.

Japan triumphed over Russia by taking Port Arthur, and she took Port Arthur by taking 203 Meter Hill. When she had repeatedly failed she wired the Mikado that it was impossible. Then came the answer, "The Mikado will expect his army to accomplish the impossible." So Japan massed all her guns from her ships and literally blew the top off the hill. By the loss of 20,000 men she drove the Russian army down. Then she put one man on the hill. But he was at the end of a telephone wire and could see, so he directed the fire of the Japanese guns so that the shots fell over the hills onto the Russian ships.

Far-sighted statesmanship sees that unless the heights of American childhood are captured for Christ our nation will go the way of the nations of the past. It is not a good sign that we spend over three millions a day for police protection, and a little more than one million a day for schools. We have not caught Christ's viewpoint of the battle when we spend more on dreadnaughts and coast defenses than we do on our children in the Sunday school.

**Recruiting the Ranks.** "Whoso receiveth one such little child in My name receiveth Me." Napoleon marshalled the troops that were to overrun Europe at the tap of the drum, but we are to marshal the troops for the moral conquest of the world at the tap of the Sunday school bell. The Sunday school is the West Point training school for Christian soldierhood. A man saved at sixty startles the neighborhood as a great religious victory; a child received

at ten is hardly commented on. The man converted at sixty is a soul saved if old habits are not resumed, plus ten years of service. The child of ten is a soul saved free from evil habits, plus sixty years of service.

When Robert Moffat was received in the name of Christ the people of the church said disparagingly, "Only a boy." That boy opened up new provinces to the Gospel, gave a translated Bible to savage tribes, and brought African chiefs to the feet of Christ. The children of the church today are the saints, prophets, and apostles of the future Kingdom. When Conrad and Ursula Cotta in their beautiful home looked out and saw the bright face and heard the sweet voice of the poor miner's son singing a Christmas carol, they little knew that in befriending him they were training the greatest of Protestant reformers. And later when John Trebonius, the instructor of Luther, was wont to uncover his head in the presence of his boys, saying, "Who can tell but that there may be among these, learned doctors, sage legislators, nay, princes of the empire?" he never dreamed that before him sat "the solitary monk that would shake the world."

**Betraying the Fortress.** "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." There are some acts so full of perfidy that by the laws of international warfare only the most inhuman and ignoble forms of death are used to punish them. He who poisons the springs where the soldiers drink, or who betrays a fort to the enemy is hung on a gibbet or blindfolded and then shot.

Jerome tells us that some of the leaders under Judas of Galilee had plotted insurrection so many times that when the Romans caught them they tied to their necks the huge mill stones turned by mules, and cast the insurrectionists beneath the blue waves of Galilee. Sitting in the house of Peter at Capernaum it may be that Jesus and His disciples could see the very spot where this punishment was meted out. Jesus had never before used words of such bitter, crushing import. But for these vile seducers of innocent childhood, these heartless fiends who were doing the devil's work, a worse fate awaited them than the Galilean insurrectionists. The depth of the sea is none too severe a punishment for the depth of guilt of him who tempts or misleads a child, who teaches a wicked thing or suggests a wicked thought to one of Christ's little ones.

After Benedict Arnold tried to betray West Point into the hands of the British he fled for protection to the British lines. Feeling deeply the guilt of his treachery he asked an American pris-

oner what would be done with him if he were caught. The reply was, "They would first cut off your leg which was wounded at Saratoga and bury it with the honors of war, but the rest of you they would hang."

**The Hospital for the Wounded.** "It is not the will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." Gypsy Smith has truly said, "a fence at the top of a precipice is better than a hospital at the bottom." And that is the whole burden of Christ's formative and preventative teaching concerning childhood. Yet Jesus found full-grown men with distorted bodies having lost their health, men with deranged minds having lost their reason, and men with depraved hearts hating God and men. When he asked the father of the lunatic how long the son had been afflicted, the pathetic answer was "From a child." Something went wrong, some accident, some failure of duty, so Jesus was needed to effect a cure. The church is Christ's hospital where bruised and torn and mangled hearts are restored. It is the lost sheep, the one caught in the thicket with broken leg, harried by the wild beast, that is in greatest need of the Shepherd's care. But the church must do even more than the work of rescue and healing. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.

The true hospital wages an offensive warfare against disease. In the military hospital at Tokyo, Japan, Baron Takaki, one of the doctors, discovered a dietetic treatment that prevented beri-beri, that dread Oriental disease that once threatened the army and navy of Japan. Likewise Walter Reed in the yellow fever hospital at Havana discovered and demonstrated that mosquito infection was the cause of yellow fever. He gave his life, but his discovery is a monument greater than the Panama canal. The church of Christ must wage relentless warfare against every form of evil that catches the young so that it shall be safe for the boys and girls to play in the streets of the city. We pray and labor for that day when the will of God shall be the law of our land and not one of these little ones shall perish.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. To what games of childhood did Christ refer? 2. On what occasion did the disciples complain because mothers brought children to Christ? 3. What was Christ's answer? 4. What worker did Paul commend as having learned the Scriptures in childhood? 5. Whom did Christ tell to feed His lambs?

**Challenge Text.** "I will — on —, according to the — of the —. Gen. 33:(?). R. V.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. They are wise men indeed who bow before the Divinity of childhood. 2. The doctors of the law cried, Crucify,—the children sang, Hosanna. 3. He who sins against a child sins against God. 4. To train a child is to carve a monument which time can never efface. 5. The crowning virtues of a teacher are love, patience, and vision.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE DUTY OF FORGIVENESS.

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain



which would  
take account  
of his



And when he  
had begun  
to reckon,



which owed him ten  
thousand talents But  
forasmuch as he had  
not to pay, his lord  
commanded him to be



and his



and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore



and worshipped  
him, saying,  
Lord, have  
patience with me,  
and I will pay  
thee all. Then  
the lord of that  
servant was  
moved with  
compassion,  
and



and forgave him the debt.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 18:21-35; ALSO MARK 11:25,26 ; LUKE 17:3, 4.

**Prayer:** Our Father in Heaven, Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us. May we pray for those who spitefully use us, even as Jesus prayed for His enemies on the cross. May we never brood over wrongs, but bury them in the depths of our love. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

I'll go to Jesus, though my sin  
Like mountains round me close;  
I know His courts, I'll enter in,  
Whatever may oppose.

Prostrate I'll lie before His throne,  
And there my guilt confess;  
I'll tell Him I'm a wretch undone  
Without His sovereign grace.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn, A. D. 29, continuous with last lesson. Place, Capernaum on Sea of Galilee, perhaps at Peter's house. Persons, Christ, Peter and the other disciples, and three parabolic figures: an Oriental king, a provincial governor, a petty debtor.

**Scripture Setting:** Love for Enmity. Treatment for enemies, Matt. 5:38-48. Loving much, forgiven much, Luke 7:40-49. The Divine forgiveness, Luke 15:11-24. Cancelling the bond, Col. 2:13-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage teaches the simple law of love. 1. Seeking forgiveness without a new nature, we soon lose forgiveness in new guilt. 2. We cannot be a tyrant before our brethren, and a successful suppliant before God. 3. Forgiveness is the soul's highest achievement. 4. Wrongs should be written in the dust, and injuries locked in the tower of oblivion. 5. A tiny egg of unforgiveness will hatch a whole brood of hateful creatures.

### THE KING'S KINDNESS TO THE BANKRUPT BEGGAR.

**The Law of the Rabbi Versus the Grace of Christ.** "Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but until seventy times seven." Probably Peter and Judas had quarreled over who should pay the temple tax for their Master. The former had done what might be supposed to have been the duty of the latter, the treasurer. Perhaps these contentions had grown frequent, and Peter's patience was becoming exhausted. The rabbis had taught that the offense of a brother need not be forgiven after the third time. But Peter would be generous, and by a great stretch of virtue more than doubled it. He asks the Master, "Is seven times sufficient?" But Christ recognizes at once the spirit of Judaistic formalism, so He answers with perceptible irony. A number had been asked so He would give a number, even though grace can never be expressed in terms of mathematics. "Until seventy times seven." This is a symbolic expression for never-ending forgiveness. Peter had advanced beyond his former teachers, the rabbis, but he still followed Christ "afar off." The rabbis required an offender to go to the injured party, but Jesus taught His disciples that the injured one was to go to the wrong doer, strengthening his own humility, and winning his guilty brother to contrition. With Jesus all things legalistic became evangelistic. He found the Roman law impressing a Jew into service as guide and escort whenever a Roman courier passed through that territory. He taught His disciples to not only go the mile required by law, but to go voluntarily a second mile out of good will. This gospel of love has

well been termed "the gospel of the second mile." In Peter's case He enlightens them all by a parable that sets in contrast Judaistic legalism and Roman law, and the laws of the Kingdom of Heaven.

**The Wealth of the Royal Forgiveness.** "He was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt." An oriental monarch, following the colossal lease-systems of the day, farmed out his taxes to a provincial governor called a "servant" of the crown. The king for a number of years had been lax in his settlements, until there had accumulated immense sums, which were owing to the king as royal debts. Possibly confronted by the prospect of a foreign war, he makes a sudden demand for payment upon the provincial governor. He has nothing to pay, and bankruptcy stares him in the face. The creditor in Syria waits till the debt exceeds the entire property of the debtor. Then at the threshing season he secures a band of bashi-bazouks, who enter the defaulting province, stable their horses in his house, lie in his beds, eat his fatted sheep, sell his men, wives, and children into slavery, and drive the debtor, handcuffed, to prison.

The debt, if reckoned in silver would be ten million dollars, or one hundred sixty million dollars, if the talents were gold. The poor suppliant begs for time, promising to pay it all, whereas he knows it can never be paid. He asks for patience, because he dare not ask for forgiveness. The royal treasury must have been an almost inexhaustless supply to forgive so many millions of indebtedness. And the wealth of his kingdom symbolizes the wealth of the king's



compassion and forgiving spirit. He speaks one word, the chains fall from his wrists and limbs, the sword of authority, hanging over his head, is grasped to slash in pieces the bond that was written against him. His family and his possessions are restored, and with incredible leniency the monarch restores to him his important office.

**The Compassion of Christ Who Cancels Our Sins.** "I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me." The king of the parable is the Lord of the spiritual Kingdom. Peter, as an apostle, in the coming church was an underlord trusted with much, and capable of making all the greater failure. In the day of reckoning he would need to throw himself in the arms of Divine compassion. Therefore in his dealings with his fellows he would need to exercise patient love.

But every man according to his high calling is accountable to the King for the great interests of his life and influence. Every guilty bankrupt will be punished or forgiven. It is folly to speak of future payments, as foolish as for the prodigal, who in his disgrace and poverty, thinks of working off, as a hired hand, the debt he owes his father. A heart first smitten by the law begins to hunt around for a way to pay God. But the thoroughly humbled soul sees that the debt is too great to be cancelled except by grace. Redemption means buying back, not paying back. God must forgive the debt by giving His Son, and Jesus must buy it back by giving His life.

**The Beggar Turns Tyrant.** "He took him by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest." Strange that he who a little before had been a prostrate beggar before royalty now becomes a tyrant before one of his own humble debtors. Instead of applying the milder law of Israel, he would take advantage of Rome's present occupancy and apply the severest measures of Roman law, which legalized such brutal violence as seizing a debtor by the throat and dragging him into custody. Having just been forgiven a debt of millions, he would exercise every legal right against a fellow-subject who owes him seventeen dollars. Now that he himself is free through a marvellous act of mercy, his whole nature changes;—his hard, heartless zeal for the law makes him angry when this humble debtor makes the same plea for patience in the same language he had used himself a little time before.

"The devil was sick; the devil a monk would be. The devil got well; the devil a monk was he."

It was within his legal rights to demand, Shylock-like, the pound of flesh next to his enemy's heart. In the sphere of the law he was justified in casting the debtor into prison. But the king, as his judge, Portia-like, reminds him at the end of the sad story that there is a higher law, the law of love in the Kingdom of Heaven. That law absolutely forbids one who has begged for mercy and received it, from taking all the authority he can seize and punishing a fellow-debtor who pleads for kindness. The king, once compassionate, is now thoroughly angry, because his grace has been turned into presumption. Since he would judge others by the strictness of the law, by that law will he himself be judged. Back to the jail must he go till he has paid the uttermost farthing. And since he could not secure so vast a sum when out of jail, where is there any hope he can secure it in his imprisonment?

**Sins Remitted Shall Return.** "So shall also my Heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts." It is a fundamental law of the Kingdom that the pardoned sinner must forgive the ill will and ill conduct of his brother man. In the daily prayer that Jesus taught us in this great self-adjusting law, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." In a way God allows us to be the executors of our own moral estates. Since God has forgiven so much in us we can afford to forgive a little in our neighbors.

The human heart may be either a royal treasury of inexhaustible love, forgiveness, and kindness, or a polluted reservoir ever sending forth hate, revenge, and retaliation. God offers to settle by giving each a full, unconditioned pardon based on grace and grace alone. But if afterwards in our dealings with our fellow men we deny the very existence of grace, presuming upon the goodness of God to tyrannize over our brother, then the debt of our sins, though once remitted, returns. To the everlasting prison-house of spiritual bankruptcy the strictness of the law consigns us, and how shall we escape by the door of mercy when we deny that very door? Peter never forgot the import of this rich parable, for in his last epistle (2 Pet. 1:7, 9) he urges that to godliness be added brotherly kindness, and shows he has not "forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

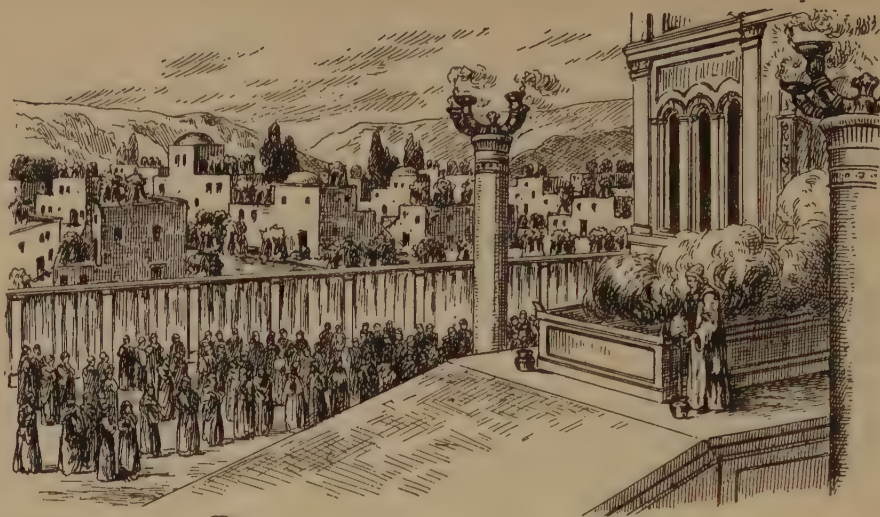
**Quiz and Study.** 1. How often should forgiveness be offered, according to the rabbis, according to Peter, according to Christ's words, according to His real meaning? 2. On what grounds did Christ forgive those who crucified Him? 3. Which disciple would call down fire from Heaven on his enemies? 4. Which disciple wielded his sword against the enemies of Christ? 5. What martyr, dying, prayed for his executioners?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. To leave the poisonous sting of revenge in others means spiritual death to ourselves. 2. To show general amnesty to criminals and debtors would work injury to them and the state. 3. Returning evil for good is devilish, returning good for good is human, returning good for evil is Divine. 4. Most of life's estrangements grow out of misunderstandings. 5. Love is not limited by the multiplication table.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



In the last  
day, that  
great day  
of the



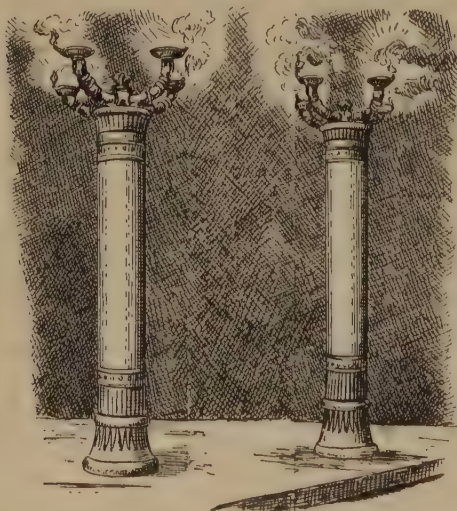
Jesus  
stood and  
cried,  
saying,  
If any  
man  
thirst,  
let him  
come unto  
me, and



He that  
believeth  
on me,  
as the  
scripture  
hath said,  
out of  
his belly  
shall flow



of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the



of the world:  
he that



shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS JOHN 7:37-53; 8:12.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I would begin each new day with Thee, and at its close commit myself, my deeds, and all my words into Thy keeping.

If Thou wilt cleanse the fountain of my heart, and be in me a well of water springing up into everlasting life, then will all my thoughts be pure and all my deeds be right. Amen.

"Plenteous grace with Thee is found  
Grace to cover all my sin;  
Let the healing streams abound;  
Make and keep me pure within.  
Thou of life the fountain art,  
Freely let me take of Thee;  
Spring Thou up within my heart,  
Rise to all eternity."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, last day of feast of tabernacles, early October, A. D. 29. Place, the temple and its environs, the fountain—gate and the pool of Siloam. Persons, Jesus, the priestly families, the Levites, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Jewish multitude, and foreign visitors.

**Scripture Setting:** The Life-Giving Fountain. Around the well at Haran. Gen. 29: 1-12. A drink from Bethlehem's well. 2 Sam. 23:11-17. A drink at Jacob's well. John 4:5-15. The wells of salvation. Isa. 55:1-11. A final invitation. Rev. 22: 12-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage pre-

sents the world proclamation of Jesus as the well-spring of spiritual satisfaction. 1. Three springs that never run dry: (a) the tears of Christ shed in compassion and sympathy, (b) the love of God flowing down in the sacrificial blood of His Son for redemption, (c) the gift of the Holy Spirit out-poured for power and service. 2. Christ is the true Rock smitten on Calvary, pouring forth (a) living water, (b) a copious stream, (c) flowing in its diffusiveness from heart to heart, (d) accessible to all. 3. The temporary booths were taken down, the golden pitcher stolen, the temple itself destroyed, but Jesus abides the fountain of life and power.

### THE FLOWING FOUNTAIN THAT NEVER FAILS.

**The Central Ceremony.** "On the last day, the great day of the feast." The feast of tabernacles was called the greatest feast of the year, and the last day was called the greatest day, and celebrated with great pomp. Its central ceremony was the out-pouring of water, commemorative of the rock smitten by Moses. So important did the Jews consider this act that the whole week was called the week of water pouring.

The temple procession marched to the pool of Siloam, where the priest filled the golden pitcher with water and then bore it at the head of the column to the temple, where before all the people it was poured out at the base of the altar, as Isaiah's words were sung, "With joy shall ye draw water from the wells of salvation." Immediately after the great Hallel was sung, consisting of six Psalms, beginning with the 113th. A brief moment of silence fell upon all, and then, loud enough to be heard throughout the temple, sounded words so strange and yet so suitable, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." These words interrupted not the service, but they interpreted its meaning.

**The Central Figure.** "Jesus stood, and cried." It is easy to name the central figure of the feast, who at this time had become the central figure of His nation. In the capital city, the metropolis of the country, there had been a nervous tension, a growing apprehension that Jesus would use this great occasion to manifest Himself. Yet the enmity of the rulers was well known. His disciples also were losing faith in Him. At a previous

feast the Pharisees, offended at the form the service had taken, caused 6,000 to be killed on the temple floor. The Pharisees were harboring a deadly hostility, and had commanded the officers to arrest Him. In this crisis the populace was asking, "Dare He come up to the feast?" Christ answers them when in the calmness of His courage He stands before them that last great day unattended and unafraid. "Some of them would have taken Him, but no man laid hands on Him."

Hard as it is to explain, it is harder to explain why, after nearly 2,000 years, Jesus is still the central figure. Only forty years after this a fire-brand was thrown by one of the soldiers of Titus and the temple went up in smoke. Jackals bark and owls hoot where the great Hallel once was sung. Only the mountains round about Jerusalem remain unchanged. But in ten thousand temples in this Christian era Jesus stands and offers water from the wells of salvation.

**A Universal Thirst.** "If any man thirst." Jesus assumed that the claim of religion is universal, that all men thirst for God. Every man who heard His voice break the stillness must have been struck by His astounding words. His listeners were both patriotic and religious. But they had grown weary of forms and symbols. They were weary of following a pitcher, even a golden pitcher, that did not quench spiritual thirst. They had burned bullocks on the altar day after day, but these forms did not satisfy. They were thirsty for God. In place of the golden pitcher He offers His own living, loving

personality to supply the spiritual wants of humanity. Man can best find God through the God-man. The world still thirsts to drink long and deep of a living, Divine Personality. Not to join a church, not to subscribe to a creed, not to follow a priest, but to assume personal relations with the highest and holiest. Fashion has her followers, pleasure her votaries, wealth her pursuers, and fame her worshippers, but on the worn and sad faces of countless thousands today it is written, "These do not satisfy."

**A Universal Supply.** "Let him come unto Me." The weary, the heavy laden, the thirsty; all, regardless of age, condition, sex, color, or nationality, are included in this gracious invitation. Jerusalem was for the Jews alone, though they allowed visiting strangers. The pool of Siloam was really a conduit which brought the water from the virgin's fountain down to the city to increase its supply in time of siege. This canal, with the inscription of the workmen upon it, has been unearthed, and is proved to be the work of Hezekiah. The water supply of Jerusalem was always limited, and the Jewish religion was like it, a narrow stream that flowed into Jerusalem for home consumption.

Occasionally a great prophet like Isaiah caught sight of the Divine well-spring which God should yet open for Israel and the world, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money come." Now in the midst of this great religious metropolis God publishes through His Son that He provides copious springs to satisfy the deepest cravings of the human spirit. Jesus breaks the pitcher at the ancient well of religion, destroying the distinction between Jew and Samaritan, and lo, His life and love become the great sacrament flowing for all. The Son of man's religion is for all the sons of men. Baal for the Phoenician, Apollo for the Greek, Mars for the Roman, Confucius for the Chinese, Mohammed for the Arabian, but Christ for the world. Black or white, brown or yellow, landsman or seaman, giant or pigmy, savage or civilized, barbarian or Scythian, bond or free, "If any one thirst, . . . drink."

**Rivers of Salvation from the Rock of Ages.** "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." How easy it is to accept religiosity for religion. Even now there are many trying to satisfy themselves with the old life of religious formalism. Perhaps you have been content to be a pitcher, and in your devotion to churchly duties you have thought yourself a golden pitcher. Such a life will end in spiritual drought and famine. But Jesus, like the prophet, comes to touch that failing cruse of oil and make it a supply inexhaustible, "enough for each, enough for all, enough forevermore." I like that plural

word "rivers," as though the Congo, the Mississippi, the Amazon, the Ganges, and a dozen other huge rivers would alone satisfy the thought of Christ for every one of His beloved. Paul was thirsty, dissatisfied with Judaism; he drank of the chalice of Christian experience, and lo, his life became a mighty river, flowing across the continents and the centuries, blessing and gladdening the race.

**The Great Divide.** "So there was a division of the people because of Him." The chief physical feature of our North American continent is the great central ridge of the Rocky Mountains known as the Great Divide. These towering masses decide the direction of the watershed on either side. So as Jesus stood in the temple on Mount Moriah on that last day of the feast inviting the whole world to satisfy their spiritual thirst in Him, He became the Great Divider of human destinies. Again and again does John record how the lofty truth and sublime character of Jesus divided the multitude. We can never be the same after hearing the words of Christ, for as Paul says, "The Gospel is a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." We can never look upon the character of Jesus without feeling the heavy weight of our own responsibility. We accept or reject, for there is no other alternative. In His presence every heart ponders the question Pilate could not answer, "What, then, shall I do with Jesus?"

A great constitutional lawyer followed his wife's pastor, who also possessed a legal training, through a series of remarkable sermons on the resurrection of Jesus. At the conclusion of the series he took the minister's hand at the altar and said with much feeling, "This is a case that demands a verdict, and the irresistible logic of it compels me to surrender my life to the Master." Yes, the Gospel is a case that demands a verdict. The Son of God strikes a line of cleavage through all time and by it judges all mankind. He is still the Divider of destinies. May we be of that company led beside the still waters with souls restored.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. On what occasion did Moses smite the rock for water? 2. What mother and child were miraculously preserved in the desert when the water was spent in the bottle? 3. Where did Elisha cleanse the water supply of a city? 4. What New Testament writer describes hypocrites as "wells without water?" 5. What is the last invitation in the Bible?

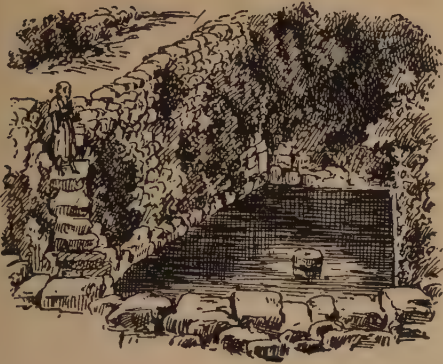
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The sailor surrounded by water may die of thirst since the sea is not the water of life. 2. David's spiritual life flourished in all seasons, for said he, "All my springs are in Thee." 3. The godly life is fruitful, "like a tree planted by the rivers of waters." 4. Soul satisfaction is found in Christ; who drinks of Him "shall never thirst." 5. The Dead Sea holds its tide; the Jordan passes it on.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE MAN BORN BLIND.

And said unto him, Go, wash in the



of Siloam.  
(which  
is by  
interpretation,  
Sent.) He



his way therefore, and



and



seeing. The



therefore,  
and they which  
before had  
seen him that  
he was blind.  
said, Is not  
this he that



Some said, This is he:  
others said, He is like  
him: but he said, I am  
he. Therefore said  
they unto him, How  
were thine eyes opened?  
He answered and said,  
A man that is called



made clay, and anointed  
mine eyes, and said unto  
me, Go to the pool of  
Siloam, and wash:  
and I went and washed,  
and I received sight.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 9:1-41.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Be Thou my Light. Let Thy Word shine on my path to show me the way I ought to go. Let Thy life be my light of inspiration, awaking in me the noble and the good. Let Thy Spirit be a burning light, purifying me from all sin. And when my eyes close in death may they open in the morning of the resurrection to see the King in His beauty. Amen.

"O God, who made me, help me see  
Just why I came to earth  
And help me the real thing to be  
For which Thou gavest me birth.  
The darkness of my soul make light,  
That I may look within,  
And banish all the imps of night,  
And life of life begin."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the Sabbath, the day after the octave of the feast of tabernacles, A. D. 29. **Place,** the temple porch, Jerusalem. **Persons,** Jesus, the blind man, his parents, his neighbors, the Pharisees, and other Jews.

**Scripture Setting:** **The Light of Faith.** Two blind men see, Matt. 9:27-31. The beggar at the beautiful gate, Acts 3:1-10. Blindness of heart, Eph. 4:17-24. Children of light, Eph. 5:7-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This miracle sets

forth the illuminating power of the Gospel. 1. The conclusive evidence of Christianity is a life restored and redeemed. 2. The best preaching is the personal and public testimony to God's power over sin. 3. The best Sabbath is the one in which we uplift men and glorify God. 4. The light of the body is the eye, and Christian faith illuminates and guides the soul. 5. Every man shall finally speak for himself, his belief or his denial testifying to his sight or his blindness.

## FOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

**A Question of Theology.** "Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind." One Sabbath day as Jesus was making His way to the temple, accompanied by His disciples, He saw, perhaps begging at the temple gate, a man blind from his birth. Touched by his misfortune, doubtless Jesus inquired how long he had been blind. The disciples also had an interest in the case, but the incident shows how Teacher and disciples look upon the selfsame scene and receive impressions as different as vision and blindness.

This incident offers to the disciples a neat little problem in theology. If there were a hereditary cause for the malady, and it were visited upon him for the sins of his parents, why should their innocent child suffer? But if it were a punishment for his own sin, how could it be known before he was born that he was to be a sinner above his fellows? The Lord Himself had little interest for such unprofitable speculations. He warns them that the night soon comes when all will be enveloped in the darkness wherein no man can work. He does not see fit to discuss the deep and dark question of the origin and entrance of evil into the world. Instead He pushes back His robe and begins to mix the clay with which to anoint the sightless sockets.

It is the part of practical wisdom, when the house already is in flames, to defer the debate on how the fire started, and save at once the family and the home. The disciples saw a penalty and a punishment, the Teacher saw an opportunity to help man and glorify God at once. In a brief space this man's darkness would blaze with miraculous illum-

ination, revealing Christ, the light of the world.

**A Question of Method.** "They said therefore unto him, how then were thine eyes opened?" This second irrelevant question was asked a number of times, first by the neighbors in idle curiosity, then by the Pharisees, anxious to prove a Sabbath law had been violated, then to the parents, who refuse to answer it, then a second time to the son. He is weary with it. His answer is curt. "I told you even now, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again?" The question of method is important, but to the Pharisee it was all important.

No two of Christ's miracles were performed alike, as no two blades of grass He has made are alike. Sometimes, as in stilling Galilee, He spoke but a word. At other times He adopted slow and elaborate methods, assisted by, or conforming to the laws of nature, as in this case. The clay, the spittle, and the bath in the pool of Siloam in no wise detract from the splendor of the miracle, but they must have greatly stimulated faith and obedience in the heart of the blind man. The saliva of a man who had fasted, the ancients believed, had great healing virtue, and they bound clay upon the eyelids to heal tumors.

But the principles that controlled Christ in His choice of means are hidden from our sight. The bath in the pool of Siloam called forth active obedience on the part of the blind man. He did not question the method, but obeyed. Here is forthshadowed the far greater miracle of Divine cleansing from sin. We are by nature born blind, prone to do evil as the sparks fly upward. Nothing but



the cleansing fountain of redemption can wash away sin. No two receive spiritual sight by exactly the same method, but two principles are always discoverable, the Divine love and power that performs the miracle coöperating with the faith and obedience of the man who is saved. The naturalness and simplicity of the method was no stumbling block to this poor seeker after light. He had something to do, and he hurried to do it. Willingness is the key to salvation. Many a man has been saved in the very first step of obedience he took.

**A Question of Identity.** "The neighbors therefore said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Others said, It is he: others said, No, but he is like him." He said, "I am he." A public beggar in a city becomes widely known, in form and feature, often better known than the mayor. He chooses some public corner where the throngs pass, and early and late holds forth his palm. Many there were who had watched this pathetic figure grow from youth to manhood. They knew his parents and easily found them. His blindness, his age,—having recently arrived at his majority,—his tattered clothes, the accents of his voice, so often heard in pleading for alms, all these made his identity easy, not only to his neighbors, but to many passers-by. Here was the same man, at the very spot where he had so long begged, his parents and his neighbors around him, yet the crowd is divided on the question of his identification. Half are saying, It is he, the other half, No, but he is like him.

The confusion was owing to the great change that had passed over the man. If no Christ had passed that way there would have been no confusion, no division among the people. The chief priests were half right when on another occasion they bring the charge against Christ, "He stirreth up the people." Without Christ there would have been the quiet that is the sign of stagnation and death, broken only by the plaintive begging of a blind man.

It is hard to identify any man who in his sin meets Jesus and is transformed by His power. He may afterwards bear the same name, live in the same house, retain the same temperament and the intonations of voice, but he is so changed that the world is confused and the opposers of religion are defiant.

The man himself settled the question of his identity by insisting, "I am he." This poor man dared the Pharisees, was excommunicated from the synagogue,—which meant he was treated by all his fellow-townsmen as a moral leper,—because he would not deny either his own identity or that of his Healer. In a deeper sense he was not the same man at all. Once he was a beggar; now his begging days are over. Once he sat all day, a man with body, mind, and soul unproductive, existing but not living. In the census of Jerusalem he

counted as a man, but in reality a helpless, worthless pauper. Now he is a man, standing alert and keen, in possession of all his faculties, a productive member of human society, a believer, a witness, a worshipper. When the synagogue casts out such, what a sad reflection it is upon the synagogue.

**A Question of Character.** "What sayest thou of Him, in that He opened thine eyes? And he said, He is a prophet." In this miracle the whole rabbinic system was on trial at its chief center. The miracle was so apparent that none could really deny it.

But the Pharisees, knowing how the common people stood in fear of them, hoped to brow-beat the parents into either denying the miracle or denying that the son was blind at birth. Failing here, they return to the young man himself. Since the wondrous fact could neither be denied nor explained, they must, if possible break down the natural inference that He who did this work was Divine.

The young man had not yet been taught the higher truth, so when asked what he has to say of Christ, he gives the inadequate answer, "A prophet." But his indirect testimony to the character of Christ is powerful. He would not pose as an authority on the question whether Christ were a sinner or not, but he was perfectly competent to testify that His healing work was perfect, "whereas I was blind, now I see." "Since the world began it was never heard before that a man born blind was given sight." He holds them to the great central fact of the case, then puts them in a pit from which they cannot extricate themselves. Does God ever give to a "sinner" this supreme power?

This grateful follower of Christ has little to say about His character, but what he does say speaks volumes on the character of Jesus. He suffered ostracism from Jewish society for His sake; he so stood for Him before the Pharisees that they exclaimed, "Thou art His disciple." He believed on Him and worshipped Him. It was the unstudied, resistless expression of adoration for the character of Jesus.

This Friend heard the youth had been cast out and found him, not by accident but by seeking, knowing that one with such a martyr spirit was not far from the Kingdom. O that sympathizing breast of Christ, so soon to know when we are forsaken, so eager to find us, so able to help us, so willing to lead us into the light of perfect love and discipleship.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In which Gospel is the account of the healing of two blind men? 2. What two natural remedies does Christ apply? What third one is applied by the blind man? 3. On what two points did the parents affirm knowledge; on what two did they deny knowledge? 4. Of what was the whole miracle a symbol; how?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The blindness of the beggar was real and known; the blindness of the Pharisees was as real but unknown to them. 2. Christ stated He was the light of the world, symbolized it by healing the blind, proved it by spiritual awakenings. 3. Every Christ-like worker meets objections, misrepresentations, and opposition. 4. The path of obedience leads to the mount of vision. 5. There is only one question of supreme importance, the Gospel.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the



All that  
ever  
came  
before  
me are



but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; by me if any



he  
shall  
be



and shall go in and out, and find





## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS JOHN 10:1-16.

**Prayer:** Thou mighty Christ, Keeper of the fold, and Seeker of the straying, let me hear Thy voice and follow where Thou leadest. As I begin each new morning do Thou lead me out; and as night-time comes lead me to the shelter of Thy presence. Reminded of how black was the night and how deep the love when Thou didst find me and bring me back, may I love the Shepherd's voice and love the peaceful fold. Amen.

"While dies the day in purple and in splendor,  
The swift, sweet day that meant so much to me,  
While darkness comes and birds their vespers  
render,  
I would draw near, O Master, unto Thee."  
—Fred L. Pattee.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn, A. D. 29, soon after healing of the blind man. Place, the temple, Jerusalem; the last of the temple discourses. Persons, Christ and the Pharisees.

**Scripture Setting:** The Pastoral Office. Shepherds false and true, Ezek. 34:7-16. Shepherd of Israel, Jer. 23:1-8. The searching Shepherd, Luke 15:4-7. Feeding the flock, 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage sharply contrasts the false shepherds and the true. 1. The

great purpose of the shepherd's care is to save the sheep. 2. The best portraits of Jesus are those self drawn. 3. The early bishops of Rome protected the flock to the giving of their lives. 4. There is an instinct in Divinely taught hearts, causing them to flee from the voice of the stranger void of shepherd love. 5. How sad to see leaders spiritually blind attempting to lead men with the wandering sheep nature.

### THE SHEEP, THE SHEPHERD, AND THE SHEEPFOLD.

**The Door.** "I am the door of the sheep." The occasion of this parable was not a flock of sheep in the distance, or the fact that many of His hearers were employed in sheep raising, but that the listening Pharisees were false shepherds. They had proved in the preceding lesson, by casting out of the synagogue a poor, blind young man, that they were not true shepherds of God's flock. Christ's wonderful story opens with a general picture of the beautiful relation existing between the shepherd and his sheep. It was designed to show that the Pharisees were shepherds only in name.

The very fact that the multitude had broken away from their religious leaders, refusing to follow them, and were flocking to Him, hanging upon His gracious words, was evidence as convincing as it was unwelcome. To show the Pharisees even more conclusively how dangerous and wicked was their attitude of hostility to Him, He likens Himself to the only door of the sheepfold. It is necessary for the shepherds as well as the sheep to find an entrance through the door of the fold. The sheep, the common people, were simple-minded enough to use that one lowly Door provided. For the prophecies of their Scriptures had so designated Him; the Door of hope God had provided for Israel's flock.

But when the supposed shepherds refuse to enter by that Door with the sheep, and seek some novel and irregular way of climbing up, their conduct shows they are not shepherds at all, but thieves and robbers. The porter able to judge them and challenge their entrance was the body of the Jewish Scriptures. Standing before such passages

as Ezek. 34, Jer. 23 and Zech. 11, their mercenary spirit was revealed.

**The Hireling.** "The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling." These Pharisees, or hireling shepherds, had in part deceived the sheep, but they could not deceive Christ. Lacking as they did the shepherd-love, they were totally unfit for the emergency about to come. Since they were in the service for pay, and were unwilling to stake their very lives for the salvation and deliverance of the sheep, they would fail when the poor, frightened, stampeded sheep fled to them for protection from the wolves.

The wolf is the great enemy that stands in antithesis to the great Shepherd. When it is allowed to get into the sheepfold of the church, what havoc and ruin is wrought. It tears and eats what it can, and it will bite all the sheep to death before it eats a single one. If it cannot kill, then it will at least scatter them, so that as a flock they exist no more. A craven hireling, loving his wages, but loving not the sheep, will stand revealed in his true nature in such troublous times. Not to resist the great enemy is to become the enemy's agent and confederate.

**The Robber.** "He that climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber." All men must be judged by motives. The design of the Pharisee was a selfish one, his object being wool, milk, and mutton. The shepherd's joy is to feed the sheep, the robber's joy is to feed his stomach, even by destroying and scattering the sheep.

Pharisees, Sadducees and Nationalists had all been climbing up some other way with treacherous purpose, while all along the institutions, prophe-

cies and promises of the Old Testament had clearly pointed to Christ as the Door through which all must pass to God's fold. They were cunningly but wrongfully taking what was not theirs. Like a robber and a plunderer of the fold that had seized the power to excommunicate one who dared out of gratitude for his sight to follow the good Shepherd.

What more accurate description of Pharisees and Sadducees who had appropriated the rule of God's flock than call them thieves and robbers who had climbed up some other way?

**The Sheep.** "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." There is no similitude in nature which so aptly exhibits the dependence and helplessness of humanity as a flock of sheep. "This simple creature," says Luther, "has special note among all creatures, that it quickly hears the voice of the shepherd, follows no one else, depends entirely on him, cannot help itself, but is shut up to another's aid." The poor sheep is unprotected, exposed to the danger of wandering, weak and infirm in going, and so constituted as to require of necessity a strong protector.

In our human pride we may be inclined to laugh at the symbolism, but the strongest men have at times shown in their conduct the sheep's nature. The domestic sheep is fortunately docile, tractable and patient. It is intelligent enough to know the voice of the shepherd and to follow him. In the Eastern world a mutual confidence and familiarity exists between shepherd and sheep delightful to see. So the relation of Christ to us; the consciousness of being loved, awakens our love in return.

**The Shepherd.** "I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." The true Shepherd is He who came to lead us through God's door of covenant—mercy and Gospel—promise. The hireling came to take money, the robber to take life, but the Good Shepherd to give life and preserve it. He would distinguish Himself from the hireling shepherds by "laying down His life for the sheep." He had "power to lay it down, and power to take it up." The Messiah-Shepherd was to die and rise again, but His death and resurrection were to be voluntary, sovereign, Divine.

Not all His sheep were of the Jewish fold, but the scattered sheep of the Gentile world should also hear His voice, "and there shall be one fold, one Shepherd." All demarcations are finally to fall away, when all are led to living fountains of water in the new world; and one common eternal praise will redound to the one Shepherd, whose name alone worthily closes all.

**The Heavenly Fold.** "And there shall be one fold." Christ gave His own life that He might give to His sheep eternal life. If we hear His voice and follow Him, we will go with Him through the garden, to the grave and dwell with Him forever. When the long night of death comes on the Shepherd shows His loving care by leading His own into the fold prepared. "If it were not so I would have told you."

The only child of wealthy and worldly German parents died in early life. They became inconsolable in their grief, complained against the dispensation of God, and demanded of their pastor an explanation of so unkind a providence. He promised to give them an answer in the funeral discourse. Like Christ, he framed his thought in a parable: There was once a shepherd who prepared choice food in a fold for his sheep. He opened the door wide, but the sheep would not enter therein. At length he took a little lamb from the flock and carried it in, and lo, the parents followed after. That good shepherd is Christ; the open fold, Heaven; your child, the lamb; the stubborn sheep, ye parents that have stayed so long without. If you have the hearts of parents, follow the bleating of your little lamb, for the Good Shepherd has carried him into the Heavenly fold that you parents may follow after.

"Hear the Shepherd's voice so sweetly saying,  
Loving words of comfort by the way,  
Little flock, O why are ye so fearful?  
Follow Me, I'll lead you day by day.  
Hear the Shepherd's voice, 'Lo, I am with you!'  
Pointing upward to the gates of gold,  
'Tis the pleasure of the Heavenly Father,  
In His Kingdom fair His sheep to fold."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name two great Jewish leaders, one patriarch, and one prophet who were shepherds. 2. What prophet condemned a king's action by the parable of a stolen lamb? 3. What other parable on the shepherd and the sheep did Christ relate as an answer to the Pharisees? 4. Which Psalm of David's reflects his shepherd life? 5. Where in this parable are we taught the Good Shepherd's authority, generosity, faithfulness, knowledge, catholicity?

**Challenge Text.** "I am the —, the — giveth his — for the —. John 10: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Pitiable is that church which has a hireling for a shepherd; more pitiable where there are wolves instead of hirelings; most miserable where there are devils in place of wolves. 2. There are four kinds of ministers, good shepherds, hirelings, thieves and wolves. 3. The good shepherd has for his crook the cross, he pipes to his flock the melody of praise and prayer, he carries salt in his bag, the savor of a good example, and a sling at his side, the Word of Truth to put to fight the devil. 4. The sacrifice that struggled at the altar was reckoned unlucky by the heathen; our Sacrifice dedicated Himself, a freewill offering.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE MISSION OF THE SEVENTY.

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them



before  
his face  
into every



and place, whither he himself would come. Therefore said he unto them, The



truly is  
great,  
but the



are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as



among



Carry neither



nor



nor



and



no man by the way.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGES ARE LUKE 10:1-12, 17-20.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help me to find my mission. Give me the ready and willing spirit which says, "Here am I, send me." I pray Thee that I may not neglect my own mission of little deeds at home while idly waiting for a call to some great work far away across the seas. Show me the home that needs my cheer today. May I breathe into some heart the message of courage. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

If you cannot cross the ocean,  
And the heathen lands explore,  
You can find the heathen nearer,  
You can find them at your door:  
If you cannot give your thousands,  
You can give the widow's mite;  
And the least you give for Jesus  
Will be precious in His sight.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, uncertain, but probably between the feast of tabernacles and that of dedication of the temple, A. D. 29 Place, from the borders of Judea to those cities of Peraea and Judea, on the road to Jerusalem. Persons, Christ and thirty-five pairs of disciples, including Luke.

**Scripture Setting:** Laborers Sent Forth. Greatness of the harvest. Matt. 9: 35-38. The ripened field. John 4:31-38. Mission of the Twelve. Matt. 10: 5-14. Preparation for service. Eph. 6:10-20. Call to action. 1 Thess. 5:5-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage describes

the equipment of the gospel missionary. 1. Belief in Jesus inspires the faith that His program will prevail, and all the world be His. 2. With the response of an obedient spirit comes the clear attestation that our way will be made plain, and the barriers in due time removed. 3. Those whom God commissions He empowers with ability, discernment and resistless passion. 4. The purest, most unalloyed joy that human life can yield is to return from an errand of the Holy Spirit conscious that our human personality has been the agency of reclaiming a life.

### THE COMMISSION AND THE CONQUESTS OF THE GOSPEL COMRADES.

**The Sending of the Seventy.** "The Lord appointed seventy others and sent them two and two." The mission of the Seventy falls into a late period, when Jesus resolved to go to Jerusalem for the last time. As John the Baptist had, at the first, heralded His coming, so now two heralds were to visit every place in His route to Jerusalem and urge, as representatives of the New Testament church, that Jerusalem accept this rule, and open the gates to her rightful King.

The number seventy corresponds to the seventy elders (Ex. 24:1), and the seventy members of the Sanhedrin. John's mission had been a national failure, and this is a gracious effort made for the last time in opposition to the hostility of His enemies. He saw multitudes throughout Israel, distressed and prostrate, like sheep without a true shepherd's care, and His Divine compassion would make a last loving appeal.

**Prayer to Heaven for Harvest Hands.** "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest." In this expression Christ had in His thought a much wider field than the route to Jerusalem now to be covered, and many more labors than the seventy now commissioned. He was asking them to pray, as He still asks us, for the vast world-field whose soul-harvest must be gathered in, and for Gospel harvesters to be raised up, called and trained for missionary work.

This is not a case in which the demand controls the supply; the supply of men and women who felt

a definite call to Christian work has never once equalled the demands of the field. Christ placed His hand upon the great source of all our supplies when He urged, "Pray ye." Moody was wont to say, "It is better to set ten men to work than to do ten men's work." But while Moody in life did do ten men's work, he never ceased to pray that God would raise up men to man the work. And how his own faith and consecrated example helped to answer his prayers. Whether you look at his Bible Institute in Chicago or his schools in Northfield and Mount Hermon you behold each June at graduation the "other seventy also" starting out to use their Christian training in "every city and place whither he himself would come." The father's warm heart and active brain lives again in his distinguished and consecrated son, Will Moody. Christian parents are Gospel comrades "sent two and two," not only to labor themselves, but to remember the great field daily in prayer, and to lead if possible their own children to follow in their steps.

**Their Commission and Code of Conduct.** "Heal the sick, and say unto them, The Kingdom of Heaven is come nigh unto you." These were to be itinerant preachers to arouse and organize the Christian life of communities, but not to remain and govern them. They were the Lord's flying squadron to hurriedly visit many ports; His mounted cavalry to preach as they went, traveling the circuit of many cities. They were to carry no *impedimenta*, but to depend for their rations and equipment largely upon the kindness which their message of peace would awaken. Even purse, script, and shoes must be left as unnecessary, since they would disturb the simplicity of their faith in their great Sender.

Their commission differed greatly from John the Baptist's, who did not travel up



and down, performed no miracles, and preached not the opened Kingdom of peace. The ground-tone of their preaching was not to be John's severe summons to repentance, but the evangelical and gracious "Peace be to this house: the Kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." And since they were publicans and unlettered fishermen in large part, it was needful for them to work miracles to prove the genuineness of their call and their message.

In the simplicity of their faith and fidelity to duty, exposed as they were to danger and opposition, they were to take nothing. They had nothing to carry except the glad news that God welcomed the sinner, and the power to graciously heal any of the household who were sick. There is one burden the Christian worker is free from, that is the burden of guilt which rests thereafter alone upon the unbelieving.

**The City Condemned for Rejecting Its Chance.** "Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you." There is a great Christian principle running through all Scripture, and all life, which declares that exalted privilege neglected brings added condemnation. As far back as in the song of Deborah and Barak this principle is recorded in history. In the battle between Israel and the Canaanites on the banks of the Kishon, Sisera had a distinct advantage in commanding nine hundred chariots of iron. But it could have been overbalanced by the position of the men of Meroz, who lived on a height commanding an important pass through which the enemy must come. Meroz miserably failed in the hour of her opportunity, and though the people of God triumphed finally, Meroz gets only a curse in that national song of victory:

"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord,  
Curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof;  
Because they came not to the help of the Lord,  
To the help of the Lord against the mighty."

It is exactly this which Jesus sets forth in this lesson: "To whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required." Had Tyre and Sydon received admonitions similar to those given Chorazin and Bethsaida they would have repented. But these latter cities were so guilty in proportion to their privileges that the Divine woe fell upon them, and today we cannot even identify their sites. Oh, the cities that have been preached to, and wept over, which remained hard and impenitent! Their broken stones lie scattered in the valley, or covered by the shifting sands of the desert. How sad that the city in which Jesus preached the most, the city over which he wept, and said, "They shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation,"—that Jerusalem, most exalted of all, should sink lowest of all through superior privileges ne-

glected. The message of God to the modern city and the modern man is one of wooing love and reconciliation. But the city and the man who heed not the messengers of Christ thereby seal their own doom.

**Christian Cheer.** "And the Seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us." The mission of the Seventy was that of pioneers, and temporary, probably including only a single missionary tour. The mission of the Twelve contemplated world-wide and permanent results. Evidently the Seventy were not long away, and we never again read of them. But the tired workmen come filing in, as they went forth, two by two, and, like harvest hands on summer eves, they return singing, bringing their sheaves.

Christ Himself is cheered by the welcome thought that His soldiers have grasped the secret of victory. He had watched them in their triumphs, and, as if compressing all the great Christian conquests of the future in a moment of time, and quickening it into the rapidity of lightning, He declares, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven." There is no joy for the believing Christian like that which comes after winning a convert to Christ and seeing Satan fall from his throne.

A young man in Indianapolis expressed his difficulties in believing in Christianity, and a prominent layman asked for his address, found his boarding house and sat down in the hall bedroom to urge upon him the Gospel. One difficulty after another was met, and then they engaged in earnest prayer. Surprised and delighted was the worker when the young man surrendered unconditionally to Christ. As he told his pastor the story he said: "I have had many thrilling experiences, but this one is the happiest of all." The worker who stayed till one in the morning with the strange young man was Benjamin Harrison, ex-President of the United States.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name the twelve original disciples. 2. What is meant by the statement, "The laborer is worthy of his hire?" 3. What is meant by "power to tread on serpents and scorpions?" 4. On what occasion did Jesus tell His followers to take a purse, scrip and sword? 5. Quote some text proving that the Heavenly rank of the Christian is fixed by his personal work.

**Challenge Text:** And they that be — shall shine as the — of the —; and they that — many to righteousness as the — forever and ever. Dan. 12: (?).

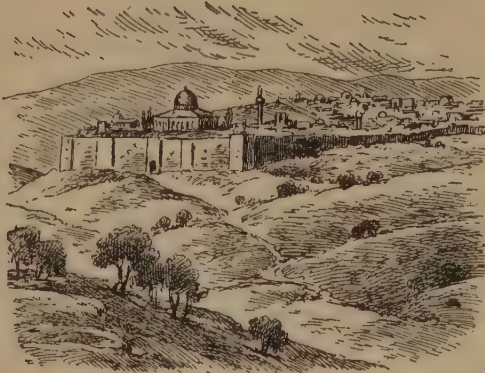
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Two ways of caring for the harvest—adding to the number of reapers, increasing the power and value of each. 2. An ordinary man weighs 150 pounds; a man dead in earnest weighs a ton. 3. It is not ours to decide whether the heathen who have never heard the Gospel will be lost, but ours to send them the Gospel. 4. The best preparation for soul-winning is a loving heart.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from



to  
Jericho,  
and  
fell  
among



which



and  
wounded  
him,  
and



half dead. And by chance there came down a certain



that way:  
and when  
he saw  
him, he



on the other  
side. And  
likewise  
a Levite,  
when he was  
at the place,



and  
passed  
by on the  
other side.





## THE GOOD SAMARITAN

BY PLOCKHORST.

In answer to the questionings of a certain ruler, Christ replied that he must love his neighbor as himself. Then asked the ruler: "Who is my neighbor?" Christ told him a story, which contained the answer, about a merciful Samaritan who helped a wounded Jew. Now no Jew would acknowledge that a Samaritan could be his neighbor.

As the story runs, a Jew was attacked by thieves who robbed him of his all, even of his clothing, and wounded him seriously. A passing priest looked at him and went his way. Also a Levite passed, indifferent to the man's plight. But a Samaritan who might have been a heathen, took pity on him, bathed his wounds and, laying him on his own beast, took him to an inn, cared for him and paid his board in advance. Thus the despised Samaritan was in reality the neighbor of the poor man, and those of his own race were not. The artist, Plockhorst, found here a picturesque motive. The naked, wounded man is a well drawn figure. The tender expression of the Samaritan's face give opportunity for character study, and the wild valley suggests a highwayman's opportunity.

The group is so composed as to make a saddled donkey important. In the distance, the priest and Levite are separately following their own route. The broken pilgrim staff and the torn wallet of the unfortunate traveler speak of the visit of the robbers. The rugged country has given the artist a fine opportunity for a good landscape painting.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

"Copyright, Photographische Gesellschaft," and "By  
Permission of the Berlin Photographie Co., New York."





# THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

But a certain Samaritan, as he



came where he  
was: and when  
he saw him,  
he had  
compassion  
on him. And



and



pouring in  
oil and  
wine, and



and brought him to



And  
on the  
morrow  
when



he took  
out



and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more,  
when I come again, I will repay thee. Which now of these



thinkest thou,  
was neighbour  
unto him that  
fell among the



And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 10:25-37.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Help me to do good to all men, but especially to those who need it most. Give me the heart of a true neighbor, who cannot pass by on the other side when some fellow-being is in trouble and distress.

In trouble help me to show compassion, in sorrow show sympathy, and in need show myself a friend of men. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"I see from my house by the side of the road,  
By the side of the highway of life,  
The men that press on with the ardor of hope,  
And the men that are faint with the strife.  
And I turn not away from their smiles and their tears,  
Both parts of an infinite plan.  
Let me live in a house by the side of the road  
And be a friend to man."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 29, immediately following last lesson, when thirteen parables, evangelical in character, are spoken. Place, somewhere in Peraea, as Christ makes His final appearance in Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus, the disciples, a Jewish lawyer, and a miscellaneous group.

**Scripture Setting.** Love's Healing Ointment. The Levitical law of the neighbor, Lev. 19:9-18. The wounds of sin, Isa. 1:4-6. The compassion of God, Ezek. 16:5, 6, 9-14. Dealing with a fallen brother, Gal. 6:1-10. Formality and spirituality, Isa. 58:4-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage portrays the incarnated spirit of true religion contrasted with pretension. 1. The priest looked on, the Levite drew near, the Samaritan stooped down to lift up. 2. You cannot judge another's religion by his outward signs. A long robe may cover a shrivelled heart. 3. The Samaritan gave medicine, mercy, and money, and last of all gave himself. 4. Hollow is that worship on the Sabbath that blinds our eyes to human misery on the morrow. 5. A religion that costs nothing is worth it.

## WHO IS MAN'S NEIGHBOR?

**The Legal Questioner.** "A certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him." Regular argumentative contests between rabbis were quite common in the time of Christ. On His final journey to Jerusalem He encountered an expert in Jewish canon law, a lawyer who was anxious to cross swords in debate with the great Rabbi of Nazareth. It must not be supposed that this lawyer was seeking light on a moral question so much as the personal satisfaction and reputation which might be gained if only he could ensnare Christ in the net of his argument.

There seems to be none of that rancour and malice which characterized the Jerusalem scribes and teachers who were always setting some one forward to ask of Christ questions the discussion of which was sure to provoke ill-feeling.

As this discussion progresses we discover in the lawyer one who attached great value to good works, but who was quite willing to justify himself. It must not be forgotten that the parable which follows, like the Sermon on the Mount, does not include the whole Gospel, but contains the truth this lawyer could best appropriate.

**The Legal Question.** "He, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" It is easier, as someone has said, to ask questions, than to answer them. The lawyer seemed good at cross-questioning, and Jesus proved his match in the more difficult work of answering him. The first question referred to the means of securing eternal life. Christ lets the lawyer answer

his own question by asking him to cite the answer given by the law. The lawyer glibly quotes from Deuteronomy and Leviticus, and Jesus commends his answer.

And now the lawyer would have a scripture term defined, neighbor; "Who is my neighbor?" This was a great question to put, for it brings out in striking contrast the difference of meaning attaching to the same term when interpreted by the Jewish rabbis or interpreted by Christ. The "neighbor" in Lev. 19:18 was the man across the street, if he were of the same blood and religion. The neighbor of Christ is any man who may be in trouble, though unworthy and disagreeable, and though he lives on the other side of the globe. The curse of the whole Pharaic system lay in the self-righteous pride with which it separated itself from the world about it, making its own religion a literal hatred of the rest of mankind.

**The Parabolic Answer.** Jesus made answer, and said, "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho." An answer to the lawyer's question on the meaning of neighbor was as unnecessary as a definition of the word "love," or the term "whole heart." The question of Christ, "How readest thou?" had already revealed that this lawyer was reading the Divine law as a special pleader, looking for evasions and back doors. An evil heart can find in the very central words of religion suggestions for casuistry and insincerity. Like the priest traveling down to Jericho, returning to the



city of priests after officiating at the temple; knowing minutely every word of the sacred volume he is reading, but though he sees his duty, is able to excuse himself from doing it, so the lawyer had learned the book by heart, but the inward truth had not lodged in his heart.

The man who needs our friendship, sympathy, and compassion is not necessarily a Jew, he is only "a certain man." There is no mention of nation, tribe, rank, or character. We are related, and we owe practical help to the poor and friendless man lying in our path half dead. To commit murder we have only to pass on and let him die. When we see a fellow-being on the brink of eternity there is no religious piety nor even human pity in hurrying home to pray for his poor soul or to hope some one else will run across him.

Possibly the shameful example of the heartless priest influenced the Levite who was traveling just behind him. Since the priest, so much his superior, would not stain his beautiful robes with that smeared, naked body lying in its own blood, much less could it be expected that he, a Levite, would succor him. With possibly a little more compassion than his predecessor, he draws near, looks on him with unimpassioned gaze, without winking an eye, or bending a finger. This Levite knew every jot and tittle of the Levitical law; he could not forget it. But he forgot to practice it.

How, think you, the poor traveler would have fared if the third one had not chanced to pass that way? It was the despised, half-heathen Samaritan that had the compassion to investigate, the neighbor-heart to sympathize, and the strong arms to reach under and lift up.

**The Parable Applied.** "Which of these three, thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among robbers?" It was not in Christ's purpose to hide some subtle meaning in each detail of this parable. Fine distinctions have been pressed by a forced interpretation that degenerates into mere trifling. But it is easy to see in the whole parable a picture of man lying in sin and misery, whom neither the law nor the Levitical institutions could help, and to whom comes the mercy of Christ, the despised and rejected Samaritan.

Whoever finds in this merely a suggestion that it is the part of a humane spirit to alleviate the ills of the body, has not sounded its real depths. Those who are wounded in their souls, who are dying spiritually, need a Friend. And Christ became humanity's Helper by vitalizing the old truth of the law, not only supplying balm for our wounds, lifting us up from the mire of sin, nursing us with His own hands, paying the price of our health and recovery, building the church as a great hospital for spiritual healing, but by giving Himself on the cross He revealed love in such a manner as to

shame, overpower, and awaken a return of love in hearts that were without love. Christ says to every redeemed and recovered patient, "Go and do to others as I have done to thee." And the world becomes an increasingly safe and sweeter place to live as the Samaritan spirit spreads.

How modern is Christ, anticipating in this parable the latest appliances for healing the sick! The Samaritan's beast anticipated the hospital ambulance; the Samaritan's care, in its faithfulness until the sun arose "on the morrow," anticipated the night nurse; the Samaritan's two pence and promise to stand good for more, anticipated the endowed beds in our hospital wards.

**The Difference Between Defining and Doing.** "Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise." There is no record whatever that the lawyer went. He was practicing law, but he had no intention of practicing the golden rule. There are two ways of finding out "who is my neighbor?" The first might be called the theoretical. With a sharp pencil on our ear and a pad of paper we might consult the city directory, find his name and address, and possibly his occupation. By consulting the polling list we might find his politics. The assessor or Bradstreet's might give us his financial standing. By telephoning his friends we might get a good personal description. The pad might be written full of notations that made up the theorists' knowledge of his neighbor.

But the practical man would hunt up his neighbor some evening, calling at his home. He would express pleasure at finding him in his neighborhood. He would observe his home life and acquaint himself with his family. If he were without employment he would suggest a firm that needed a man. If he had no regular place of worship he would invite him to his own church. If there were sickness in his family, he might offer to bring him a household remedy. The practical man would go home with little expert knowledge of his neighbor, perhaps, but he would have shown himself neighborly. The very heart of the good Samaritan kindness is the spirit of sympathy. To dream about the unfortunate, to dedicate poetry to them, and to write books on the submerged slums will never lift them like one hearty, practical handshake, and one generous act of helpfulness.

**Quiz and Study:** What six characters are introduced in the parable. 2. Name six things the Samaritan did for the man who was robbed. 3. What two things did the robbers do to their victim? 4. In what parable did Christ represent Himself as beaten and slain.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The lawyer wanted a talk, not a task. Many worshippers go to hear a sermon, not to receive the Divine directions. 2. The first hospital was built by the Hospitallers, an order of Monks, at Jerusalem in 1042. 3. The reason we know so little of the world's misery is because of our refusal to take a look. 4. Twelve thousand priests lived in Jericho in Christ's time, yet robbers infested the road, and a Jew might die unvisited, almost in sight of the city.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS LUKE 10:38-42; 11: 37-44, 53, 54.

**Prayer.** Help us, our Father, to interpret religion in terms of friendship with Thee and with Thy Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. May it be ours to welcome Him not only to our homes but to our hearts, and while compassing Him with loving observances may we also sit at His feet listening to his words of grace. Put far away from us all hypocrisy and guile and give to us that single-hearted love and service which alone is acceptable in Thy sight. Quicken our devotion, strengthen our faith, increase

our love and make fruitful all our activities, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

I could not do without Thee;  
No other friend can read  
The spirit's strange, deep longings,  
Interpreting its need:  
No human eye could enter  
Each dim recess of mine  
And soothe and hush and calm it,  
Oh blessed Lord, like Thine.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Bethany near Jerusalem. **Persons,** Jesus, Martha and Mary; later, a Pharisee and a circle of Pharisees.

**Scripture Setting:** Jesus among the people. Jesus at a Wedding, John 2:1-11; Jesus by the Well Side, John 4:4-26; Jesus as Host, John 6:5-12; Jesus with His Own, Luke 22:14-20; False Friendship with Jesus, John 13:18-30; True Friendship for Jesus, Luke 7:36-47; The Breadth of Jesus' Sympathy, Luke 19:1-10; A Friendly Soul Among Foes, John 5:16; 6:41; 7:30; 8:59; and often elsewhere.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. A good man is not likely to be without friends. His goodness is the one thing in man that people tie to. Other qualities are necessary for social popularity but goodness be-

gets trust and trust is the first requirement in friendship. 2. But a good man is not likely to be without enemies. This, too, must be reckoned with. Positive goodness is sure to antagonize evil. Jesus was at once the best loved and best hated man of his day. 3. Let it not be forgotten, however, that there is always something radically wrong with a nature which hates goodness. 4. It is the foundation of a true religion to live with Jesus on terms of friendship. 5. When he is welcome in the heart and in the home there peace and harmony abide. 6. One may invite the presence of Jesus at every meal by simply asking a blessing upon it in reverent temper. 7. In that way we may always eat and drink to the glory of God.

### JESUS A WELCOME GUEST.

Jesus loved folks and was always at home in a social gathering. This was one of the reasons why the religious leaders of Jewry hated him. He was popular in the right way. He began his public ministry by helping at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee (John 2); and he was a frequent guest at family and social festivals where indeed some of his most beautiful and searching disclosures were spoken. It was at a simple luncheon by the well side that he told the Samaritan woman the secret of true worship (John 4); it was as the guest of Zaccheus (Luke 19) that he declared his own mission to be that of seeking and saving the lost; it was as the guest of Simon the Leper (Matthew 26) that he taught his disciples the secret of loving service. Yes, Jesus came eating and drinking. Therefore, say the Pharisees, he is a wine bibber and glutton; therefore, say the sincere and honest of all the ages, he is the friend of man.

**The Bethany Home.** The references to Bethany, a suburb of Jerusalem, are numerous in the life of Jesus. The little village shares with Nazareth and Capernaum the glory of being one of his "homes." One home in particular seems to have been his favorite abiding place, the home of Lazarus (whom Jesus brought again from the dead) and of the sisters, Martha and Mary. Here

occurred the incident selected for study. The sisters were equally devoted to Jesus, each in her own way. Martha in her way busied herself in providing for the material comfort of her Guest. Mary in her way compassed him with the service of waiting upon his fellowship and talk. For the perfect entertainment of a guest both are necessary. Just at the moment, when Jesus was feeling the urgency of his work, he was more responsive to the fellowship of sympathy than to the friendly anxiety about his bodily well being. His immediate hunger was of the heart rather than of the body. When, therefore, Martha "burst upon him"—so the word means—with her petulant complaint, "Lord, can not you say something to Mary, who has left me alone in the middle of my work and who is doing nothing but listening to you, that she come and help?" Jesus answered soothingly, "Martha, Martha, why fret yourself about such elaborate preparations for an old friend, an extra plate is all that is necessary and just now what I need more than anything else is the nourishment of friendly sympathy and companionship. Mary is giving me that; you come and join her; friendly intercourse, rather than the meal, is the thing that abides." Such, in rather clumsy paraphrase, is the significance of the dialogue. The truth Jesus emphasizes is simple enough—in friend-



ship it is love rather than lavishness that matters. In our fellowship with God, for instance, God is more than any or all of his gifts.

**Illustration.** A Y. M. C. A. worker at the front greatly endeared himself to the "boys" by his untiring efforts for their comfort and diversion. He was hindered much by want of suitable quarters and, hoping to expedite matters, he made a journey to headquarters with urgency in his walk and in his speech. He was delayed a day or two and upon returning was surprised and pleased to see his boys at the station with "Welcome" writ large on every feature. He explained his absence and delay, and his disappointment at not being able to bring along with him the materials for his hut. To which the boys warmly replied, "We don't care a whoop for the hut, we want you."

**An Ungracious Host.** In sharp contrast to the cordial hospitality of the home in Bethany is the cold formality of the Pharisee who "besought Jesus to dine with him." The discourse throughout indicates two things, first that the Pharisee **meant** to make trouble for Jesus; and, second, that Jesus accepted fearlessly the challenge of the Pharisee in the interest of religious sincerity and honesty. The host somewhat ungraciously called his guest's attention to the fact that he (the guest) had not first washed before dinner." From the nature of our Lord's reply and of the Evangelist's comment in verses 53 and 54 the attack was gratuitous and deliberate. It was part of the plan of "seeking to catch something out of his mouth that they might accuse him." Could treachery and wickedness go farther?

**Pharisaism Exposed.** The burning words of Jesus wound but they carry healing also. The worst of Pharisaism is that it disguises badness under a vocabulary of goodness. The Pharisee, under the law, could deny support to his starving father and mother, by simply claiming that all his money was "Corban," that is, dedicated to Temple uses (Mark 7:8-13). When people are disposed to think of Jesus as weak and effeminate let them read his words to this Pharisee and his companions and remember that these same Pharisees, so far as Jesus was concerned, practically held the power of life and death. They are dreadful things he says: "Your inner life is filled with rapacity and malice;" "you disregard utterly the justice and love of God"—which you profess to exemplify; "you are like unsuspected tombs which men walk over unaware;" "you load men with irksome bur-

dens and you will not put a finger to their burdens." "In other words," says Jesus, "the religion you profess is a religion from the teeth outwards; it is a religion of word, not of deed nor of the heart. It is the sort of religion God has always abhorred and will ever abhor, and it lies forever under his bitterest condemnation." To say these things was a brave attempt on the part of Jesus to warn the Pharisees of their danger; however brave, it was fruitless. From this time on the Pharisees followed him with a murderous cruelty as undeserved as it was relentless.

**A Warning.** It was not irreligious but religious men who sought and compassed the death of Jesus. Always suspect the virtue and sincerity of a religion which proposes inhuman methods to further the divine purposes. Calvin was not at his best but at his worst when he sanctioned the martyrdom of Servetus. He did not promote, he only defamed, the glory of God by reason of it. Burning witches, as did our Puritan forebears, had no evangelistic power or success. It did not exalt the Bible which was supposed to command it; it made the Bible more difficult to accept and obey for the majority of good people. The religion which promotes and cultivates hardness of heart and indifference to human suffering is never of God and always of the Devil.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Study the Gospels with reference to Jesus as a Guest in the homes of the people and note the discourses recorded as he sits at meat with them. 2. How would you describe the difference between Martha and Mary in their relation to Jesus? 3. Do you know Mr. Kipling's poem, "The Sons of Martha"? And do you think it a fair characterization of the Sisters? 4. Find out from your Bible Dictionary what the Pharisees thought about "washings" and "ablutions." 5. Do you think Jesus was justified in using such sharp language to the host? 6. And if so, on what grounds do you justify it? 7. Is there ever such a thing as "righteous indignation"?

**Seed Thought.** 1. It helps friendship with Jesus to remember that he loved "folks" just as folks. 2. It is good to exalt the divine Christ; it is good also to remember the human Christ; He touches us at the point of our human lives just to show us how divine He is. 3. Martha was right in making provision for the comfort of her guest; but she was overdoing it and neglecting the kind of sympathetic attention which, at the moment, Jesus needed most. 4. We can be busy about many things, good enough in themselves, and yet miss doing the particular kind of service which brings most comfort to the heart of God. 5. Beware of professing the religion you do not live—that is Pharisaism.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.

# THE RICH MAN'S FOLLY.

And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The



of a  
certain  
rich



brought forth plentifully:

And he thought  
within himself, saying,  
What shall I do,  
because I have  
no room where  
to bestow my



And he said,  
This will  
I do: I will



my barns, and



greater; and there will I



all my





## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 12:13-21.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, let not the desire to possess mere things rob me of the sense of my soul's worth. Let me not be a fool to follow such an unprofitable venture as to lose my soul in a vain effort to gain the world. I would seek first and always the Kingdom of God and Divine righteousness, knowing

that the other things for which the Gentiles seek will be added in their needful measure. Amen.

"O dream beyond the saddest guess  
As the long years of God unroll,  
To make thy dreary selfishness  
The prison of a soul."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, uncertain, but spoken near close of Peraean ministry. **Place,** in Peraea, on His last journey to Jerusalem. **Persons,** Christ, a young man, perhaps his older brother, the disciples and an innumerable multitude.

**Scripture Setting:** **Earthly and Heavenly Riches.** Wisdom compared with gold. Prov. 8:1-11. Placing God first. Luke 14:27-33. The recompense of reward. Heb. 10:28-35. Fraudulent and corrupted riches. James 5:1-6. True and false riches. Rev. 3:17-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This lesson paints the folly and the doom of the near-sighted worldling.

1. The rich man's four-fold folly: (a) forgetting the Giver; (b) keeping all for self; (c) counting "things" as soul food; (d) neglecting to consider the daily possibility of death. 2. The rich man's four-fold doom: (a) life's plans frustrated; (b) facing God with empty hands; (c) the white light of the judgment throne inspecting a shriveled soul; (d) punishment for a wasted life.

### THE RICH MAN WITH BIG BARNs AND SHRIVELED SOUL.

**A Religious Teacher, Not a Civil Judge.** "Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?" This parable, like many others of Christ's, is a fanciful picture set in an historic frame. In the multitude of listeners there was one young man who conceived of using the genius of the great Rabbi of Nazareth for selfish purposes. Since He could confute and confound the lawyers pitted against Him, perhaps He might be enlisted as his own champion in a law case involving a good inheritance. How absurd and irrelevant this inopportune intrusion of a quarrel between him and his older brother upon the solemnities of this occasion, when great multitudes were eager to hear the Lord's teaching!

Whenever a religious teacher leaves his exalted sphere to seek a political office or ceases to deliver his message because the opposition offers a fat retainer's fee, the spell of his influence is broken. But so long as he holds steadily to his appointed task of teaching and preaching religious truth the indirect influence of his life and labors has a tremendous influence even in the external relations of life. For the law in all its ramifications rests upon justice; justice rests upon righteous living; and righteous life rests upon the deep foundations of religious truth. The faithful preaching of righteousness will uplift the body politic.

**The Fool That Locked His Soul in His Barn.** "I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits." A man who rashly forces his private business matters before a vast religious assembly has no sense of the true proportions of life, but is a self-confessed devotee to worldly goods to the exclusion of all else.

Jesus takes this man as a type of the Jewish nation, building its life on the narrow, insecure foundation of present, material success. Having warned them against the national sin of covetousness, He employs a popular parable of a wealthy old farmer who sees his fields fast ripening with an unusual harvest beyond the capacity of his barns. He resolves with one great final effort to build barns sufficiently strong and ample to store enough to last him the rest of his days without striking another stroke. Here he would bestow all his fruits. The Lord would not condemn a barn, for it has its legitimate place, but it can never be builded great enough to include all the fruits of life. Yet some men lock their souls in the wheat granary and their fruits of righteousness moulder in the dark.

**The Sinner That Locked God Out of His Life.** "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry." Christ certainly drew in fair colors this favored lord of the land. He stands before a background of sunshine without a shadow. The mind of man is susceptible to scenes of material prosperity. This man ignores God and apparently his brother men also. He sits wreathed with smiles, his cheeks ruddy with health, with opulent fields and corpulent body, at peace with the world. Practically all he needs to eat is raised on his own estate. Nature deals bountifully, giving him much for little labor. This independent farmer has arrived at the rocking-chair stage of life. In self-satisfaction he addresses his soul in the very language of the Epicurean's creed, "Eat, drink, and be merry."

One wonders why Jesus painted this gay old fel-

low on such a bright canvass only to slash it down its whole length before the eyes of His audience. Was it not to show that sin with all its fair colors is ugly and contemptible? This easy-going fellow had no soul to address; he was talking all the while to his stomach. In his coarse, sensuous life he had starved his soul, and glutted his stomach. These good-natured, well-fed worldlings, says Paul, "are the enemies of the cross of Christ: who mind earthly things, whose glory is their shame, whose god is their belly, whose end is destruction."

When suddenly his soul shall be required of him, perhaps by a sudden stroke of apoplexy, it will be found that all these years his soul was locked outside his life, a beggar starving at his gate. "Soul, take thine ease." How could a soul be at ease in a life where even God was ruled out?

Powerfully has William Allen White in his book, "A Certain Rich Man," told America that it is our national sin to build up great commercial and financial interests, and live at ease with ourselves, while we rule God and the interests of the soul out of our banquet halls and our thinking. This kind of living is the life of a fool with mind darkened and heart depraved.

**The Stern and Sudden Summons.** "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall these things be?" When death rang down the curtain God found a beggar and a bankrupt behind the scenes, though in life his neighbors envied the rich man. Few dare to reprove the wicked man of wealth because of his power. For that reason he seldom hears the truth about himself, and is accustomed to hear men flatter his sins as virtues. And since he stakes all on the present life, sudden death leaves him without forgiveness, without holiness, and without hope. Death weighs the creed of the Epicurean and finds it wanting.

The tomb of a wealthy Roman of antiquity was recently opened and the bones crumbled in contact with the air. But on the marble slab was chiselled, "Ede, bibe, lude; post mortem nolla voluptas." "Eat, drink, laugh; after death there is no pleasure." How that tombstone now in the Vatican mocks the vain life of that nameless heathen! The Master's story of the rich man whom death found unready serves to bring death into our immediate present. He who can complacently smile as he looks upon his "much goods for many years" smiles not before the summons, "This night thy soul!" If life insurance is good, how much better is the soul assurance: the Christian life crowned with faith and immortality.

"He who can guard 'gainst the low baits of sense, Will find Temptation's arrows hurtless strike Against the brazen shield of Temperance. For 'tis the inferior appetites enthrall The man, and quench the immortal light within him; The senses take the soul an easy prey, And sink the imprisoned spirit into brute."

—Hannah More.

**A Spiritual Bankrupt at the Final Accounting.** "So is he that layeth up treasure

for himself, and is not rich towards God." This concluding remark of Christ points out the folly, the danger, and the sinfulness of the self-indulgent, God-forgetting man. He was wise in a certain practical foresight, he had planted seed for the harvest, and anticipating an unprecedented harvest, he was full of plans and purposings for greater buildings to store it. His folly was not that he planned for the future, but that he left God out of all his accounts. He kept accurately, no doubt, his cash account, but forgot utterly every item in his accountability to God. He planned as though his soul could live by bread; he fondly recounts "my goods" and "my barns" and "my fruits," as if all he had was absolutely his own to fatten upon for many years to come. But in the midnight hour the Divine Examiner awoke him, balanced his books of life, and found him a spiritual bankrupt. There is no such thing as "tainted money," since material things do not have moral attributes or qualities. But that soul is tainted which sets its whole energy to the acquisition of earthly riches and in its pride and selfishness forgets Him who giveth the increase and crowneth the year with His goodness.

Faith in God should flow through all parts of a man's life as the sap flows through all parts of a tree, through roots and trunk and topmost branches. It should establish a life in habits of saving, thrift and frugality. It should lead to the wise and economical use of both time and money, and develop one's capacity for earning. There is a more direct relation between religion and savings bank deposits than many have imagined. He that provides not for his own household is represented as denying the faith and by his example is worse than an infidel. "Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord," this is the symmetrical tree of righteousness planted by the Lord.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What law of Moses concerning gleanings and the Sabbath-year reminded the rich of their obligations to the poor. 2. Name two wealthy men with whom Christ dined, showing He was friendly to rich and poor alike. 3. What two rich and influential men assisted in Christ's burial? 4. What disciple perished through taking a bribe; what two through keeping back part of the price? 5. In what other parable does Christ introduce an unrepentant rich man?

**Challenge Text.** "A man's — consisteth — in the abundance of the — which he —." Luke 12:21.

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. Ease and repose of the body does not always make for ease and repose of the soul. 2. In possessing wealth or being possessed by it consists the right or wrong use of money. 3. It is easier to resolve to build a greater barn than to succeed in building a greater character. 4. The father heaps riches; the son sweeps them away. Neither keeps them long. 5. Man cannot gather and keep immense riches without sin.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# LAWFUL WORK ON THE SABBATH.

The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath



or



from  
the



and



away  
to



And  
ought  
not this  
woman,  
being a  
daughter of



whom Satan  
hath bound,  
lo, these  
eighteen  
years, be  
loosed  
from this  
bond on the



day? And  
when he had  
said these  
things, all his  
adversaries  
were ashamed:  
and all the



for all the glorious things that were done by him.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 13:10-17.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the Lord's day wherein we celebrate Thy power to rise from the dead. May it be to us a day of rest and gladness, a day of worship and of service. We would find the path that leads to Sabbath school and church as well as the path that leads to some sick friend or needy neighbor. Amen.

"O day of rest! How beautiful, how fair,  
How welcome to the weary and the old!  
Day of the Lord! and truce to earthly cares!  
Day of the Lord, as all our days should be!  
Ah, why will man by his austerities  
Shut out the blessed sunshine and the light,  
And make of thee a dungeon of despair!"  
—Longfellow.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, somewhere between October and December, 29 A. D., on a Sabbath day. **Place,** a synagogue in Peraea. **Persons,** Christ, His disciples, the synagogue ruler, the infirm woman, and the synagogue worshippers.

**Scripture Setting:** **Lord of the Sabbath.** The first Sabbath. Gen. 2:1-3. The Sabbath a delight. Isa. 58:13, 14. Jesus in the wheat field. Matt. 12:10-14. Jesus on the Sabbath. Luke 4:14-22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage suggests the privileges of the Lord's day. 1. Sunday is a day which helps the soul in "laying aside every

weight" to feel the buoyancy of its spiritual nature. 2. Religion is perverted when ceremonial prohibitions stand in the way of health and even life itself. 3. All sacrifices, symbols and types of the temple were fulfilled in Christ; and His absolute authority in His Father's house resided in the fact that He was the Truth and not the type. 4. Sunday with its glad sensation of freedom publishes the fact that we are not slaves to toil, that the body is not a tool but a temple, and that the life is more than food and raiment.

### THE TRUE SABBATH SPIRIT.

**Christ's Compassionate Response to a Mute Appeal.** Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity." Entering into a synagogue one Sabbath day, Jesus sees among the worshippers a woman strangely afflicted. For eighteen years she had been a helpless cripple, bent double, having doubtless lost all hope of recovery. She makes no appeal to Christ for help save the mute appeal of her own unfortunate condition. To Christ in all her misfortune she is "A daughter of Abraham," and assuring her of her recovery, He lays His hands upon that bent, misshapen body. Her cure is instantaneous, and doubtless the synagogue service is interrupted by her prayer of gratitude to God for this unexpected release. The ruler of the synagogue is indignant over the cure, and with all the official fussiness of which he is capable he quotes texts to prove if possible that the Sabbath law was broken.

But instead of breaking the Sabbath law, Jesus was breaking up a foolish network of petty observances and freeing man, that he might enjoy the rest day which Divine love and wisdom had long before instituted. He also broke the fetters of disease and infirmity which bound this poor woman so many years. In doing so He attributed her misfortune to Satan. Her condition shows us how terrible is Satan's power to warp the body, and we know he has even greater power to warp the mind and soul. There is only One who can break his chains. That One never looks upon the victim whom Satan has bound without being filled with tender compassion. Wherever in the world today men, women, or little children are the vic-

tims of Satan's power, bound by the chains of habit, ignorance, superstition, or fear, Christ alone is able to set them free. And best of all, He is more than willing, since He came "to destroy the works of the devil," and "to set at liberty them that are bound."

**The Healing and Rejoicing on the Sabbath.** "He laid His hand upon her: and immediately she was made straight and glorified God." Christ came into conflict with the Jewish authorities on the Sabbath question in three controversies: in Jerusalem, in Galilee, and in Peraea. At the latter place He is confronted by the chief ruler of the synagogue, very angry, but not very wise. Before the astounded eye-witnesses a glorious thing had been done. The good works of Christ met with heartier approval than the narrow rule of the synagogue official. As this poor woman leaves eighteen years of suffering behind her, she breaks into grateful singing, and the rest of the worshippers, seeing what has been done, openly rejoice in this glorious recovery.

**The Chinese Wall About the Pharasaic Sabbath.** "The ruler of the synagogue, being moved with indignation because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, answered, There are six days in which men ought to work."

The artificial and childish restrictions which the Pharisees had added to the simple Sabbath laws of Moses would be amusing, if in their stern insistence they did not at times come so near being tragic. From countless thousands we choose two. To catch a flea upon one's person was a violation of the Sabbath law, since it was construed to be a kind of hunting. Three beautiful young girls burned to death in Jerusalem, reports a traveler, because a slight blaze broke out in the Jewish quarter, and



since it was forbidden to kindle a fire on the Sabbath, it was presumably wrong to extinguish an accidental blaze. Reproached for the hideous tragedy, a Jewish woman declared that God would reward them for making so costly a sacrifice rather than break a commandment. No wonder Christ's fiery indignation! He called their leaders hypocrites, declaring they bound burdens grievous to be borne on the backs of the common people but would not lift their little fingers to relieve them. If it were a glorious work to loose the woman of her malady, how much more glorious to loose their minds from such silly traditions.

**Reasoning from the Lesser to the Greater.** "Doth not each of you loose his ox or his ass? Ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, to have been loosed?" Christ most easily and effectively silences the official of the synagogue and any others who may have been inclined to oppose Him, by citing their own admissions, their own practice, and their own law. He demands the freedom for a daughter of Abraham which they were willing to accord their beasts of burden. His retort was unanswerable and irresistible. His adversaries were men of little minds, in their eagerness for ceremonial law seeing the flea and the gnat, but in their moral near-sightedness swallowing a camel. In their self-interest they had provided for a Sabbath drink for their oxen; therefore Christ forces the wedge a little farther, compelling them to admit the rightfulness of His healing.

**The Modern Interpretation of Christ's Spirit.** "Ought not this woman to have been loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?" Christ is proved Lord of the Sabbath, not only because so largely the world honors Him in making Sunday, the anniversary of His new birth from the grave, a holy day, but because He has liberated many minds from the slavish letter of the law. The proper observance of Sunday involves many questions, May I take a walk? write a letter? ride a bicycle? read a novel? entertain a guest? A careful and prayerful consideration of the meaning of this memorial day and our relation to this Divine Master will go a long way toward answering them all.

Sunday trafficking, Sunday newspapers, Sunday mails, Sunday baseball and Sunday theaters will make a day so like Monday and Tuesday that there will soon be little occasion to print it with red ink on our calendars unless it be to single it out as a red-letter day of pleasure. A great psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, says, "The command to keep the Sabbath as a day of rest is written in our physiological constitutions. In no land should the Sabbath be so hallowed as in this land of hustle, tension and Americanitis."

**Christ's Permanent Contribution to the World's Gladness.** "All the people re-

joiced for all the glorious things that were done by Him." Christ's gracious act of healing doubtless added to the confusion of the synagogue official, but the glad and almost universal appreciation of the congregation was typical of the great wave of quiet Sabbath rejoicing which now every Sunday morning sweeps like a smile over the face of the world.

How impressive is the sight to stand in the street of a great Sunday-loving city like Brooklyn at the Sunday school hour and watch the children by companies and battalions flocking to their various churches. You may be sure they wear their best clothes, they are on their best behavior, and they will be under the best of influences. Picture to your mind also the red-cheeked lads and lasses of the country, coming over the hills afoot, climbing the rail fences, or tucked into a neighborhood load behind the strapping work team. These are the pictures of gladness that give an enduring glory to our national life. And perhaps Canada, our splendid neighbor to the north, venerates the Sabbath more than we do. The writer spent a Sunday recently in the honorable and ancient city of Guelph, Canada. There was nothing else to do but go to church. All the street cars were stopped. All the stores were closed. And that there might be no misunderstanding about it, the shades were drawn down tightly in front of every business place. While the church bells of the city rang their glad invitation in unison the people flocked to their places of worship, filling the sidewalk to the curb. Within one ivy-clad church the pews were filled by families—father, mother and the children. And as the young English clergyman spoke in his sermon so feelingly about the mutual interests of the Kingdom of God in Canada and the United States our minds traveled back swiftly through the centuries to the young Man of Galilee, who went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day as His custom was.

It is the hand of the Lord Jesus that rings all our church bells round the wide world. It is His resurrection birthday that the nations observe every Sunday. It is to His name and for His worship that the chapel, the church and the cathedral are built. The deep, settled joy of religious trust, the inspiration to loving service, and the glorious hope of immortality, these are Christ's permanent contributions to the nations of the world.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. On what occasion were Christ and His disciples accused of laboring in the field on the Sabbath day? 2. What reference did He make in reply, to David and the priests? 3. What man did Jesus heal in the synagogue on the Sabbath? 4. To defend His action what parable did Christ utter? 5. To whom did Christ attribute the disease of this woman?

**Challenge Text.** "It is — to do — on the — day. Matt. 12:12."

**Practical Thoughts.** It is possible to convert a rest day into a very wearisome one through petty, annoying and restricting exactions. 2. It is possible this woman would not have been healed but for her devotion to the synagogue. 3. Seven of Christ's miracles were wrought on the Sabbath. 4. Over three million American workmen labor on Sunday, two-thirds of whom labor unnecessarily.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER.

Then said he unto him, A certain



made a  
great



and bade many: And sent his



at supper time to  
say to them that  
were bidden, Come;  
for all things are  
now ready. And they  
all with one consent  
began to make excuse.  
The first said unto  
him, I have  
bought a piece of



and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. And another said, I have bought



and I go to  
prove them: I  
pray thee have  
me excused.  
And another  
said, I have  
married a



and therefore I cannot come. So that



came, and  
shewed  
his lord  
these  
things.  
Then the  
master  
of the



being angry said to his servant,



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 14:15-24.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, In Thy great heart of love I find a place. By the great ones of this world I may be passed by and neglected, but the Gospel feast was spread for such as I. I make no excuses for staying out of Thy banquet house of love. I can offer no plea in coming but that Thou didst invite me. O Lamb of God I come. Amen.

Come, sinners, to the Gospel feast;  
Let every soul be Jesus' guest;  
Ye need not one be left behind,  
For God hath bidden all mankind.  
Come, all ye souls by sin oppressed,  
Ye restless wanderers after rest;  
Ye poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind  
In Christ a hearty welcome find.

—Charles Wesley.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, a Sabbath day, shortly after the return of Christ from the feast of the dedication, which closed Wednesday, December 8, A. D. 29. Place, the home of a chief Pharisee. Persons, Christ, His disciples, the host, and other Pharisees.

**Scripture Setting:** The Gospel Invitation. The table spread. Isa. 25:6-9. The call to the feast. Isa. 55:1-7. The great refusal. Prov. 1:24-31. The Holy Ghost given to the Gentiles. Acts 10:34-45. The woman of Canaan at the Lord's table. Matt. 15:22-28. The marriage supper. Matt. 22:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This parable describes

man's treatment of God's gracious provisions. 1. The excuse of the rich man is the care of his possessions, forgetting thereby the care of his soul. 2. The excuse of the busy man is the pressure of secular duties, forgetting thereby that the chief purpose of time is to afford preparation for eternal matters. 3. The excuse of the society man is the pleasure of more congenial company, forgetting that at God's right hand there are pleasures forevermore. 4. Poverty and misfortune have led many into acceptance of Christ. 5. Men farthest down in the social scale often show the keenest relish for spiritual food.

### FINDING FIT FEASTERS FOR THE FEAST.

**Jesus at Table with His Enemies.** "Them that sat at meat with Him." On this very Sabbath morning Christ has healed a man of dropsy and again antagonized the Sabbath-law of the Pharisees. He follows the miracle by a two-fold rebuke of their perversion of the law of Moses. And though He sits down with the Pharisees to a morning meal as their Guest, He does not hesitate to chide them for the lack of spirituality in refusing to invite the poor and afflicted to their feasts. Since they were laying wait for Him, He would in their presence disclose their hardness of heart and unspiritual motive. In common with all the Jews, they were waiting in expectancy for the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom to be ushered in by a great feast. To this one of the company makes reference. This furnishes the Lord with the appropriate occasion for picturing the Messianic feast in a parable, and showing how they, by their false spirit, are absenting themselves from it.

**The Nabobs of the Avenues and Boulevards.** "A certain man made a great supper; and bade many." The scene of this parable is laid in a great city, supposedly Jerusalem. A great supper has been announced with elaborate preparations by Jehovah, who, according to Isaiah, provides "a feast of fat things." To it were specially invited the great ones of the city, the men who knew, and read, and expounded the prophecies—priests, Pharisees, and scribes.

The Host sent out His servant, John the Baptist, to announce that everything was now ready. But

these very ones who understood best the prophecies and institutions of the Old Testament conspired together to refuse the invitation. Perhaps the three forms of excuse may refer to the three classes who refused. Leastwise there was nothing inviting to them in such a feast; they had no real reverence for the Host; and to become guests at such a feast required they should surrender certain possessions, pleasures and pursuits, which they were unwilling to surrender. The apostasy of the Jewish leaders came only after they voluntarily refused the apostleship. Christ had first come to them, but they would not come to Christ.

**Excuses That Are Not Reasons.** "They all with one consent began to make excuse." The leaders of Israel had shown themselves clever at excuse making, though they were clever at nothing else. In couching their regrets in such polite and courtly language they did not deceive Christ as to the real nature of their hearts. They might invite Him to dine, but they would rejoice when He was slain. The first excuse is pride; the second, business; the third, pleasure. It must be remembered they had all previously promised to attend. Each excuse differed from the other; each had its own plausibility; but all came to the same result. In all there is implied that they would come but for more pressing things, and when these are out of the way they will come. Says the Spanish proverb, "The road of by-and-by leads to the town of Never." How plausible can sin make our wrongdoing to appear!

Alcaeus, the poet, like many modern drinkers, found a new argument for drinking in every new season. The spring called for renewed drinking as a sign of joy for the renovation of nature; summer invited to drink to cool the blood; it was due autumn to drink,

as a tribute to the season of the vintage; and winter required it to expel the cold. So men in the four ages of life find excuses to delay repentance. In childhood it is a vanity; in youth it is pleasure; in middle life it is the pressure of business; in old age it is infirmity. Plausible pretences cannot blind the eyes of God.

## **The Plebeians of the Streets and Lanes.**

"Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor." When those great citizens, Israel's ecclesiastical leaders, turned away with empty excuses, from the goodness and liberality of God, the loving Host sent His servant into the common streets and the narrow lanes. Such a feast was more than the ignorant, the maimed, and the blind might expect to ever enjoy, hence the direction to not only invite, but to bring them in—to overcome their natural shrinking. Should they declare "we have no clothes for so grand a social affair," these sincere fears were to be met by the assurance that they might come as they are; that the Host would supply suitable festive garments.

So stupendous was the scale of the supper that the whole city within the Theocracy, the whole commonwealth of Israel, was to be sifted and searched for guests. God is angry at the rejectors who hold themselves aloof from the Gospel appeal, but He sends His ministers down to the homes of the common people, making an appeal, warm, direct and easy of acceptance. In the propagation of the Gospel we see that historically it is the lower stratas of society that have first been permeated. "Not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble; but the foolish things, the weak things, the base things, the things despised, the things that are not." The church does not especially seek the cultured and the wealthy, but the Gospel in a generation transforms the poor and ignorant into the affluent and intelligent.

**The Hoboes of the Roadside and Fenc-corner.** "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in." The love and liberality of God was not confined to the Hebrew nation. The provisions of the Gospel were adequate for the Gentile world. Ever from the table of God's compassion goes out the glad tidings, "There is yet room."

The servant must go once more, this time far beyond the confines of the city of the Hebrew Theocracy, to the weary, wayfaring heathen world. There were no hedges around the fields of the Jews, hence this call was to the strangers beyond, on the dusty highways of life, or those who had fallen down weary, resting by the hedges. Thus it was that God's banquet house was filled, and the rejectors rejected, not getting a taste, when they might have enjoyed a feast.

When Christ said to the Jews, "Come, for all things are now ready," there was one government, one language, world-peace, a great system of roads, and synagogues everywhere. Then came the great

refusal, and silently but surely the invitation was transferred to the Gentile world. In forty years Jerusalem was destroyed, and there has been no Jewish nation since.

God's invitation is as wide as humanity, as lofty as the love of God, as ample as the wants of man. All things are ready, the atonement made, the doors open, the Spirit present, duties waiting, mansions prepared, God willing, and angels waiting. Come!

**The First Bidden Are the Finally Forbidden.** "For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." At first sight it seems that if those already bidden had proved themselves unworthy there was little likelihood that those chosen from the cross-roads would prove more worthy. Yet this last point is, perhaps, the chief point of the parable. The first invitation had been sent to selected guests—to the Jews—who because of their special training and peculiar privileges might be supposed to carry themselves most worthily. By a Divine pledge made to Abraham and renewed to Jacob Israel stood in a favorable relation towards Jehovah not enjoyed by any other people.

Could Christ have made the national meaning of His parable plainer than He did as He pictured these favored sons of Abraham turned away from the feast because they rejected the Divine mission and supernatural claims of Jesus? He was picturing the wholesale rejection of His own time when "He came unto His own and His own received Him not," and He was forecasting the national rejection when the early church a little later was forced to turn away from the Jews and seek her converts in the lands of the barbarians. Not the chosen city or nation, but to all who traveled on the world's highway in whatever direction was the proclamation presented, "Come, for all things are now ready!"

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What king made a great feast to his lords? 2. What man made a great feast in honor of Christ? 3. In what other parable did Christ liken the Kingdom of Heaven to a feast? 4. At what church council was it decided that the Gentiles should have equal opportunities with the Jews? 5. Who was the Apostle to the Gentiles?

**Challenge Text.** And in this mountain shall the — of — make unto all — a feast of — things, a — of — on the lees. Isa. 25: (7).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God is never so happy as when the house of His mercy is full. 2. It is the part of the Gospel ministers to report to the Lord in their prayers the compliance or refusal of their hearers. 3. If the proud and disobedient are lost, remember there was an invitation and a place prepared at the table. 4. There is never room for saying (a) "No man careth for my soul." (b) "I was never invited to start for Heaven." (c) "No one will show me the way." 5. There is always room: (a) in the affections of Christ; (b) in the fellowship and work of the church; (c) in the many mansions of Heaven.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



Either what



if she lose



doth not



and



and



diligently till she find it? And when she hath



she



her friends and  
her neighbours  
together, saying,



Likewise, I say  
unto you, there  
is joy in the  
presence of the  
angels of God  
over one sinner  
that repenteth.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 15:3-10.

**Prayer,** Lord Jesus, I look upon myself as a miracle of Thy grace. It was Thy love that taught me the value of my soul. It was Thy Word that showed me that I was lost, and lighted my way back to Thee. Grateful for my own recovery, make me more sympathetic for those who stray, and show me how I may be used to lead them back. As the angels in Heaven rejoice over a repentant sinner make my heart glad when souls return to Thee. Amen.

"Dear Savior, I am weary,  
And my life is incomplete,  
But I bring the tangled meshes  
And lay them at Thy feet;  
Thou'lt unravel all the tangle,  
And straighten out each thread,  
And what I've failed in weaving,  
Thou wilt make a perfect web,"  
—Mrs. Thomasina Carter.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, during His teaching tour through the cities and villages of Peraea as He journeys toward Jerusalem, shortly before raising Lazarus from the dead. **Place,** uncertain, but probably within or near the house where He ate the morning meal with the Pharisees. **Persons,** Christ, His disciples, a great multitude including a new element, the publicans and sinners.

**Scripture Setting:** **The Lost Restored.** One sheep rescued. Matt. 12:10-14. The Shepherd true. 1 Pet. 2:21-25. The Shepherd's wounds. Isa. 53: 5-7. Bringing back the lost. Ezek. 34:13-16. Saving the lost. Matt. 18:11-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** These two parables represent God's search for the sinful. 1. The mercy of God is equal to the misery of man. 2. The coin was in the house but a lost coin; the Pharisees were of the house of Israel, but lost to pardon and repentance. 3. The penitent sinner is a coin stamped with the Divine image, though marred and dim, and precious for its own worth. 4. Both the woman and the shepherd searched until they found. No less thorough a search will satisfy the loving heart of God.

### THE SHEEP RESTORED; THE SILVER RECOVERED.

**The Relation of the Parables.** The three parables grouped in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, spoken in the presence of publicans and sinners, have a common theme: the restoration of the lost. The sheep was restored by the unwearied search of the shepherd; the coin was restored through the anxious care of the owner; the son was restored through the unceasing love of the father.

The objects lost in the three parables increase in their intrinsic value as we proceed from the sheep to the coin, and from the coin to the son. They increase also in their relative value; the sheep was only one of a hundred; the coin was one of ten, while the son was one of two. How gracious it is to be a sheep of God's flock; how fortunate to be a treasure of His possession, but how supremely blest to be a son of His home! It seems best to treat the Lost Sheep and the Lost Coin together in one lesson, and reserve our treatment of the Lost Son for a separate lesson.

**The Single Sheep That Strayed.** "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine, and go after that which is lost?" The larger part of the men whom Christ addressed were interested in sheep grazing. They prided themselves on their devotion to their flocks. The practical question which Christ put to them admitted of only one answer. As it was the sheep nature to wander, it was the shepherd nature to restore the wanderer. This was taking the Pharisees on their own ground, for even

from the common practices of ownership they would go after the strayed one, leaving the flock secure. Should not He, the Good Shepherd, then, search after the lost sheep of the house of Israel? Yet they had condemned Him because He had gone frequently after the lost sheep. They pretended to be surprised and humiliated because He dined with publicans and sinners. But since the weary and heavy-laden listened to His wondrous words of hope and encouragement, what mattered it to Him that the official leaders of His people rejected Him? The poor to whom He was sent to preach, the maimed to whom He was sent with healing, the lost to whom He had a mission of seeking and recovery, these all thronged about Him with heartfelt gratitude and hailed Him as their Shepherd kind and true. All the contrast between Christianity and Pharisaism may be seen in two statements. Christ said: "There is joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth." Pharisaism in its sacred books says, "There is joy before God when those who provoke Him perish from the world."

**The Shepherd That Searched Out His Sheep.** "I have found my sheep which was lost." This pastoral scene of the Good Shepherd bringing home on His shoulders the lost sheep was cut upon many gems and seals which still remain as relics of the Christian church. It was painted upon the communion cup. It was found chiseled upon the ceiling of the catacombs. Sometimes He holds the seven-reeded pipe to show the attractions of Divine love. Sometimes He is



sitting down, weary with the length of the way He had traversed to find His sheep.

It is not difficult for us to see in the wandering sheep our own human tendency. In folly and ignorance it strayed farther and farther, and at last was lost in the solitary and stony place. Long did the shepherd search for that one. He found it, weary and footsore. He had no chiding nor punishment; only compassion. He lifted it on his shoulder and carried it home, glad only that he had found the lost. But before he could sleep that night he calls together his friends, and bids them rejoice with him. This parabolic picture needs no interpretation more than the saying of Peter, "Ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls."

## **Sweeping and Searching for Lost Silver.**

"Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost." This second parable represents the great church of God as a house, and the Holy Spirit as the mother of the home who counts carefully her possessions, unwilling to give up a single soul as lost. The substitution of the piece of silver as designating the sinner gives progression to the value of the soul. Out of the woman's scanty store of ten pieces, she cannot remain indifferent to the loss of one.

It is held by some that the lost coin was one of ten given by her husband as a marriage token and worn as a frontlet. The loss of one marred its beauty and she could not wear it thus. Without it she was an object of reproach to her friends and neighbors. She could not seek in the dark, hence in order to see she must have a light. So the Holy Spirit has kindled the lamp of preaching, by which in the dust and darkness of earth lost souls are found. Lighting, sweeping, seeking—this is to be the Spirit's work. When the Spirit sweeps a church what hindrances and offences are removed. Every church needs such a sweeping by the energy of the Spirit. The end and aim of all this lighting and sweeping, the regular preaching and the work of revival, is the real and thorough seeking for souls. However much may be the essential value of the coin, lying under the dust in the corner, lost and useless capital, it has no practical value until it is sought and found. How quickly the friends and neighbors hear of the loss, and how quickly and gladly they hear that the lost is found! The window is raised, the glad news of recovery is shouted, and in a little space it has traveled far down the street. The friends and neighbors of the parable are the angelic hosts who rejoice with the saints of the church in the glad songs of recovery and restoration.

**The Story's Happy Ending.** "Likewise there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." The two parables of this lesson close in the same

joyful strain and almost in the same words. The man who finds his sheep and the woman who finds her coin express their thankfulness alike in calling in the neighbors to help them celebrate. In the next lesson we shall see that the parable of the prodigal son ends similarly.

The application which Christ draws in these parables is that Heaven rejoices in the triumphs and victories of earth. A thrill of joy runs through all Heaven whenever the glad announcement is made that another life has been restored to safety and service. Salvation was so glad a message that it overflowed Heaven and came rippling down the milky way in the melodious songs of angels, "Peace on earth."

Not only all good men, but God and the angels rejoice whenever a young life is turned from the waste and neglect of sin to become a constantly growing investment in the Kingdom of righteousness. A single life placed back in harmonious relation with God is a greater event than the creation of a new world. And while the neighbors may be glad and assist in the rejoicing, and the family may have a satisfaction beyond the power of words to express, it is the Heavenly Father's heart that rejoices most of all, for He made man to be the expression of His purpose and the sharer of His joy. If God, then is so deeply interested in our welfare, and rejoices in our restoration, we should be greatly interested in ourselves.

"I've got a word like a sword in my heart, that has pierced it through and through.

When a message comes to a man from Heaven he needn't ask if it's true;

There's none on earth could frame such a tale, for as strange as the tale may be,

Jesus, my Savior, that Thou shouldst die for love of a man like me!

It was for me that Jesus died! for me, and a world of men

Just as sinful and just as slow to give back His love again;

He didn't wait till I came to Him, but He loved me at my worst;

He needn't ever have died for me if I could have loved Him first."

—Dora Greenwell.

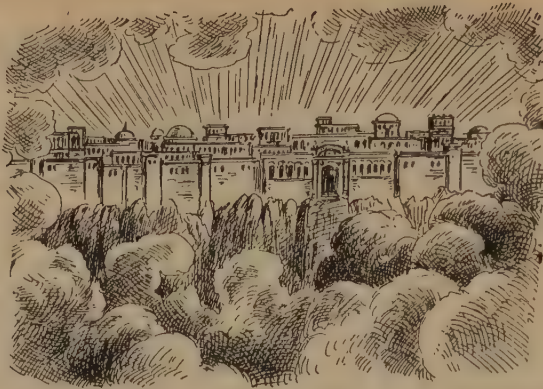
**Quiz and Study:** 1. What sheep propensity is found in man? 2. If a coin can be lost in the house, can a soul be lost in the church? 3. Up to what hour did Jesus keep the original Twelve from scattering? 4. What did He do to restore Peter to the fold? 5. What precious stone in Revelation is promised the Christian believer?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. There are no just persons needing no repentance, but there are many self-righteous who will not repent. 2. The faithlessness of the Pharisees and the faithfulness of Christ in pastoral duties are seen in their isolation from and condemnation of sinners, while He associated with them and gave them hope. 3. There is a close sympathy between the servants of God and the angels of God in both the sorrows and joys of life. 4. The joy of Christ's finding compensated for all His toil in seeking.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

# THE PRODIGAL SON.

And the son said  
unto him, Father,  
I have sinned against



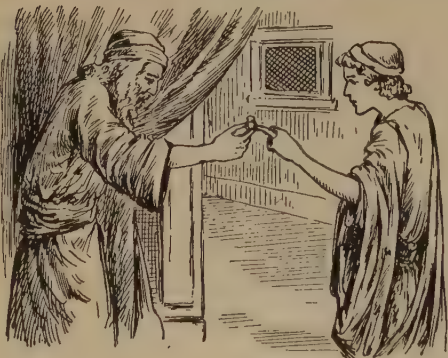
and in thy sight,  
and am no more  
worthy to be called  
thy son. But the  
father said to his



Bring  
forth  
the best  
robe,  
and



and



and



And bring hither the fatted



and  
kill it;  
and  
let us



For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.



# THE PRODIGAL SON.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 15:11-32.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, It is by Thy life and death that I come to know the great love of God my Father. I have been away in that far off country where men forget the home of the soul. Homesick and heartsick, tired of the husks, I follow back the long road to where waits my Father and Friend. Let me go out no more forever. Amen.

"One there is above all others  
Well deserves the name of friend;  
His is love beyond a brother's,  
Costly, free and knows no end."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Place and Persons same as previous lesson, which see.

**Scripture Setting:** The Return to God. Humbled by affliction. Ezek. 33:12-16. The voice of repentance. Jer. 31:16-20. New garments and ornaments. Zech. 3:1-5. The merciful Father. Psalms 103:8-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This parable is the

world's best portrait of God as the loving Father. 1. The prodigal was lost to himself, to his father, to his career, and to Heaven. 2. The son who proclaims his own merits has not the merit of humility. 3. The older son finally lost his father's love, his brother's affection, a place in his father's house, the fame of his own virtues. 4. To the true son God says, "All things are yours."

### THE SINFUL SONS AND THE FORGIVING FATHER.

**Hatred on the Old Homestead.** "A certain man had two sons." This is universally considered the most beautiful of all Christ's parables, the favorite pearl of grace. While in general it was spoken for all time and shows how the heathen and the Jews are both God's sons, yet at this particular time He divided the mass of men into two classes, both standing before Him, the publican, the son afar off, and the Pharisee, the son in the house, who is just as surely lost, if not through the unrighteousness that degrades him, through the self-righteousness that blinds him.

It is easy to imagine that the two sons, despite the father's indulgence, were not in accord, so that the younger, the most light-minded, craving for freedom, prevails upon the father to advance him what he had a right to only at his father's death—his portion of the estate. It cannot be doubted that the elder son saw his brother turn away from the homestead with glad satisfaction, for anger springs up in his heart as soon as he is apprised that the brother has returned. The sin was not all in the far country; it was in the hearts of two young men who had a loving father, a pleasant home, and a good outlook for the future. But the most favored surroundings cannot produce content or happiness when sin and selfishness are in the heart.

**Folly, Famine and Failure.** "The younger son took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." The far distant land to which the younger boy turns his feet is an image of the sinner's deep apostasy from God. His outward separation from his father is no greater than the inward separation, for he launches at once upon a life of vice and

bold abandon. The famine which appears is not so much a Divine visitation as a natural attendant upon such a course of living. He chose a community where the easy-going, pleasure-loving inhabitants would soon feel the pinch of a famine, having made no provision against it. They have little pity for the Jewish stranger. The extremity into which he is plunged is best seen by his acceptance of the position of swineherd, perhaps offered at first in derision, because of the well-known Jewish hatred for swine. Even access to the swine trough was refused him in that land of strangers. He is beside himself with loneliness and hunger. And the shadows of the depths lead him to the heights. The son, beside himself, now comes to himself; awakes from his nightmare.

A Jewish proverb declares, "When Israel is reduced to the carob-tree, they become repentant." The inward change comes first, as home, dear home, with all its peace, plenty and freedom, starting into view, breaks his heart. Quickly follows the outward change; he rises without delay to carry out the resolution taken. Here is the heart of the parable, and about it we will not dogmatize. We cannot explain the "how" of conversion. When with overwhelming magnitude and power the light breaks upon the soul the realization that the door of hope is ajar and the Father's face is wreathed in smiles. The change of conversion is here couched in terms of exquisite simplicity and beauty, as if framed for all heart-broken penitents, "I will arise and go to my Father."

**Love on the Old Homestead.** "His father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." The lost coin must be hunted for, the lost sheep must be gone after, but the lost son is a rational man, a free agent who must come to himself before he can come to God. But the home and the heart of the Father are wide open. The father in the parable is anxious

and expectant, seeing the boy in the torn garments of the swineherd, but knowing his familiar form from afar. The boy never one moment doubted that the father who had been so kind even to the servants, so indulgent to the headstrong wanderer, would welcome him with open arms.

"Perfect love casteth out fear," and the whole previous course of the father showed his love could be trusted. To the servants the old man shouts the command, "Bring out the calf, the fatted one." The shrewd and provident father had said little through these sad months of waiting, but he was very sure that one of these days he would need the young folks in to celebrate the home-coming of his youngest. What a fine touch of affection, that on that very day the wanderer broke through his pride and sin, there was waiting in the stall, against the day of rejoicing, the fatted calf.

Another beautiful touch of compassion may be pointed out in the father's treatment of his son's shameful ingratitude. The wandering boy's first words of greeting are the confession of his sin, "Father, I have sinned!" But nothing that escaped the father's lips, heard by the family, the servants, or the neighbors, would suggest the son's wrong-doing. Rather he would extol and dignify the lad who returns in his wretched garments, by commanding the servants to attire him in the best robe, new sandals and a ring of gold.

So far as the father was concerned, his son's relation with harlots would have remained a secret guarded and kept in the bottom of the parent's loving heart, had it not been for the bitter enmity and the condemning tongue of the older brother. We will search the whole world's literature without finding a figure so dignified, a mind so impartial, and a love so changeless as this picture of God drawn by His only Son.

**The Kind of Religion That Attracts.** "Let us eat and be merry: for this my son was dead. . . . And they began to be merry." Under the marvelous descriptive powers of Christ religion became attractive. This home whose "spare" room had been closed so long because of a dark tragedy was now bright with lights and gay with laughter. The parental eyes were beaming with kindness, young faces from neighboring homes shone with health and winsomeness, the old folks looked attractive with magnetized sympathy and sweetness. The Christian religion, especially home religion, as portrayed by Christ, is not only good and true, but attractive by its beauty and joyfulness. In all of Christ's parables God, instead of being a monster or a tyrant, is the attractive, impelling, and loving Father.

Some would rather hold before their own eyes the animal that was brought from the stall for sacrifice as typical of repentance and forgiveness, and forget utterly the songs, the viols, the dancers and the endearing words which sprang from the father heart. But religion must be felt as a blessing; it must attract before it can save.

**The Self-Righteous Son Standing in the Shadows.** "And he was angry, and would not go in." Only hearts of stone and consciences seared with sinful pride could have prevented the Pharisees from seeing in the elder son skulking in the shadows of the house a life-like image of themselves. The music and the dancing symbolized the joy of the Divine household over the repentance and forgiveness of the lost. But the Pharisaic spirit was only angered by this leniency toward the sinner. The only religion it knew was that which worked out its own salvation, spending the day in the field, working overtime at hard, slavish, exacting toil, and going supperless that it might boast of its own goodness. In such a heart there was no room for mercy or for grace.

The Pharisee by hereditary privilege was in the home, the older son of Israel's inheritance. But because of his unloving selfishness he was not of the home. In the spirit of his opposition he was farther from home than the publican in all his heart-wanderings. Think not that the bringing of this contemptible, defiant older son back into the story is a literary blunder, an anticlimax to an otherwise perfect bit of delineation. For against the dark background of malice shines again the father's love. He leaves the banquet table and the merry-making; stepping outside the lighted circle to entreat the rebellious and refractory son. With a long-suffering and not-to-be-wearied kindness he listens to the poured-out wrath of the son who never ran away, never wasted property, never disobeyed but who never was paid for his services, not even given a kid. It is the last stand of paternal love: gray locks uncovered, pleading in the darkness. The Pharisee has heard the loving entreaty of God.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what consisted the sin of the younger son? The older son? 2. Why were swine so obnoxious to the Jews? 3. Why were the publicans like the younger son? Why were the Pharisees like the older? 4. When did Jesus charge the Jews for the last time with unwillingness to come to God?

**Challenge Text.** "For God so — the world that He — His — Son, that — believeth on Him might not — but have — life. John 3:(1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The prodigal, craving freedom, falls into wandering, through wandering into slavery, through slavery into want and misery, through misery into repentance, through repentance into forgiveness and recovery. 2. The Spirit of the Saviour is revealed in the kiss the father gives the son. 3. It is meet that the church should rejoice and the angels sing when prodigals come home. 4. The thought is ever father to the act, restlessness before wandering, and homesickness before return.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

There was a certain



which was clothed  
in purple and fine  
linen, and fared  
sumptuously every  
day: And there  
was a certain



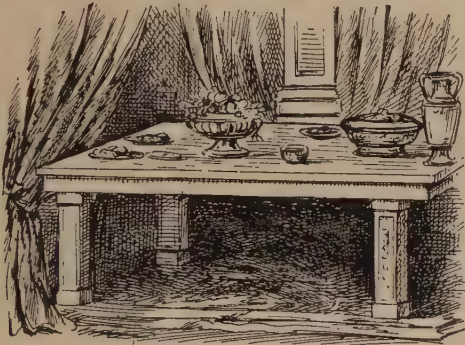
named Lazarus, which was laid



full of sores.  
And  
desiring



with the crumbs which fell from



moreover  
the



And it came to pass, that the



and was



into Abraham's bosom:

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 16:19-31.

Prayer, Lord Jesus, I would not snatch away the veil that hides the future, nor try to see beyond what Thou hast revealed. In the revelation of Thy Word is my duty now, as well as the assurance of my exceeding great reward.

I ask for daily grace to pursue my way, assured that Thou wilt give me dying grace. So may I live that death will not be filled with sad and vain regrets. I am Thine now and forever. Amen.

"And I have seen thoughts in the Valley—  
Ah me! how my spirit was stirred!

And they wear holy veils on their faces,  
Their footsteps can scarcely be heard;  
They pass through the Valley like virgins,  
Too pure for the touch of a word.

Do you ask me the place of the Valley,  
Ye hearts that are harrowed with care?  
It lieth afar between mountains,  
And God and His angels are there;  
And one is the dark Mount of Sorrow,  
And one the bright Mountain of Prayer."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, near the close of the Peraean ministry, perhaps December, A. D. 29. Place, one of the villages of Peraea. Persons, Christ, the disciples, Pharisees, publicans and others.

**Scripture Setting:** The Relations of Life Here and Hereafter. The rich and poor on earth. Deut. 15:7-11. Life's reaping. Prov. 22:1-12. A picture of the future. Matt. 8:11, 12. Saved and unsaved. Luke 13:24-30. The grave's release. Job 3:17-22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This parable graphically pictures the masks of earth and the realities of the unseen world. 1. We shall give account for heartless indifference to suffering. 2. The beggar at the gate was the rich man's opportunity, test and undoing. 3. When time ends there is an end to the so-called good things of life. 4. The empty cry of the lost is, I was not sufficiently warned.

## THE GULF IMPASSABLE BEYOND THE GRAVE.

**The Earthly Gate That Barred the Beggar.** "And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate." The parable of Lazarus and the Rich Man is a figurative discourse in which Christ makes the most astonishing disclosures, lifting the veil from the secrets of the future. With a few rapid penstrokes He shows us two characters in life, whose lots are strangely reversed after death. A beggar lies at a rich man's gate, full of sores and contending with the numberless curs of the street for the scraps which the lord of wealth threw from his daily feasts.

We surmise that the beggar had many lovable traits and that the penury of his lot did not rob him of faith or serenity, but as the man of the world rolled by they tagged him as a beggar, leaving him to lie with the dogs, or die with hunger. They saw the rich man, too, clad in the purple of royalty and in linen worth twice its weight in gold. A costly gate, barred and guarded, separated the son of fortune from the child of misfortune. It was a purely artificial distinction that separated them, an accident of wealth and a crippling of health. But the gate remained, and their relative places in society seemed fixed.

We may be safe in assuming that he who locked his gate against the beggar locked his heart also. The nameless dogs were also locked outside, but they showed more pity than the rich man, for they licked the beggar's sores. It is not strange that the beggar died first, since he longed to die, and was better prepared than the other.

**The Anguish of a Tormenting Memory.** "But Abraham said, Son, remember." We do violence to this marvellous and unique description of the after life when we try to force dogma and theology out of every detail. We must remember that Jesus was an Oriental speaking to Orientals who were used to thinking in the richest colorings of the imagination. We have no authority for assuming that the rich man frizzled in a literal fire any more than that the beggar was feasting at a literal banquet. But, on the other hand, if we assume that Jesus used here figurative language we have a right to ask, Figurative of what? For a figurative interpretation in no wise will change the hopeless despair of the one or the eternal felicity of the other.

The deepest thinking even of those who do not read the Bible reaches the conclusion that the mind is eternal. It carries within it an automatic, indestructible register of its own activity. All the exposures made upon the sensitive film of the mind will one day be unrolled, developed, and printed. Be sure we will face our record! Character, that which alone endures, is but the sum total of our emotions, impulses, impressions, experiences, ideals, aspirations, and self-masterings. Dives in his lifetime had been free to make his choices, ease, comfort, pleasure, sumptuous fare, expensive garments, an un pitying, unloving, selfish life. The remembrance of them was grievous unto him. His destiny was of his own making. Memory wove for him the bars of a death-chamber, for he had murdered his own soul.



**The Eternal Gulf That Barred the Gormandizer.** "And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed." The rich man in time also died; but he would have rather lived, for he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. Imagine his surprise to see, across an intervening chasm, a great table spread such as he had never seen in all the banquets of earth, with Abraham the patriarch at its head, and at his side, in the place of honor, was Lazarus, the one-time beggar. The man who once had wealth, and because of it great authority, forgets that both are gone, and calls out to Abraham for Lazarus to come and serve him, for his tongue is burning with a raging fever. Cool and unimpassioned, for the fate of the lost cannot disturb the rest of the blessed, Father Abraham addresses him, but can give him no hope. As there had been a gate separating in life, now there is a gulf separating in the world of spirit.

There is a sharp inward difference existing between those who in life existed merely for what they could get of pleasure out of earth's estates, its dinners, its gay garments and whatever contributed to the comfort of the body, and those who by faith and prayer and submission patiently bore the ills of this life looking for a city which hath foundation whose builder and maker is God. The parable teaches that all life is continuous; that the color and character of the life to be is conditioned on our conduct in the life that now is.

"The tissue of the life to be  
We weave with colors all our own;  
And in the field of destiny  
We reap what we have sown."

### **Superstition, Spiritualism, and Spooks.**

"I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house: for I have five brethren." The dialogue between Abraham and the rich man does not describe absolutely what actually takes place in the world of spirits, but gives such pictures as are fairly intelligible to inhabitants of this world. A red light or a white light flung out in the night does not inform the passing engineer of the exact nature of the track ahead, but it does warn him sufficiently that ahead in the distance is that which is to be dreaded or desired, as the case may be. Whether this account is actual history, or a parable, or a warning dream which the rich man has, it throws suggestive gleams into the future which otherwise would have been darkness and uncertainty to the living.

Here is a clear and powerful condemnation on the part of Christ of all those extravagant and extraordinary attempts to wrest from the future world its secrets by means of clairvoyance, knocking-spirits, table-tippings and trumpet-meetings, at one

dollar per interview. In our day it has become very profitable for professional tricksters to exploit the young, the gullible, and the credulous through spiritualistic seances. Their tricks have been repeatedly exposed, but they are fertile in providing new ones.

These men unite with their shadowy arts a secret unbelief in God's Word, and have no faith themselves in the revelations they pretend to receive. On the authority of Christ we have it that no departed spirits are commissioned to return to living men with messages from the dead. Instead of spiritualists, let us seek the spiritual Isaiah who says, "When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits and unto the wizards (mediums) that chirp and that mutter: Should not a people seek unto their God? on behalf of the living should they seek unto the dead? To the law and to the testimony!" (Isa. 8:19, 20.)

**Sufficiency of the Scriptures.** "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Moses and the prophets here appear as the summary of a complete Divine revelation of all that which was needful for Israel in order to find the way to life. Those who wait for more powerful voices of instruction will wait in vain, for already at this time Jesus had preached to them the very heart of the New Testament revelation, His own resurrection from the dead.

The uselessness of such a sign to their stubborn hearts can be seen by their unwillingness to believe and enter into the Christian life even after Lazarus, the brother of Mary and Martha, had risen from the dead. Out of idle curiosity they crowded the house at Bethany and looked upon the man snatched by miraculous power from the depths of the grave, but they continued living the old self-life; there was no resurrection of a new life within them. If a wicked and perverse generation will not read the red signal of danger flashing from a hundred pages of God's Holy Word, nor heed the loving calls reiterated by the Spirit and the Bride, neither would it repent and believe if it saw through the floor of Heaven as through transparent glass and looked down upon an uncovered hell.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what sermon did Christ bless the repentant poor, and curse the unrepentant rich? 2. In what Psalm is Christ represented as in danger from the nameless dogs of Jerusalem? 3. What disciple had the place of honor at the last supper? 4. Why was Abraham addressed as father? What, then, was the nationality of the petitioner? 5. What possible reason might there be for giving the name Lazarus to the good man in the parable?

**Challenge Text:** And these shall go — into — punishment: but the — into life —." Matt. 25:(?)

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. The beggar licked by dogs was a saint carried by angels. 2. The rich man had a splendid burial, but the world forgot his name. 3. The power of memory may make the grave a bed of fire. 4. The presence of others in torment which the wicked man has ruined will be an additional source of torment. 5. The words of a risen man cannot accomplish more than the Word of a living God.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

# THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

Then they



from the  
place  
where the  
dead was  
laid. And



lifted up his eyes,  
and said, Father, I  
thank thee that  
thou hast heard me.  
And I knew that  
thou hearest me  
always: but  
because of the



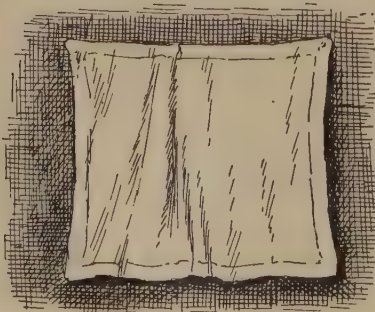
I said it, that they may  
believe that thou  
hast sent me. And  
when he had thus  
spoken, he cried  
with a loud voice,  
Lazarus, come forth.  
And he that was dead  
came forth, bound



and his



about with



Jesus saith  
unto them,



and let him go.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS JOHN 11:30-44.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Lord of the resurrection and the life, we draw near to Thee in all our sorrows, for Thou art the Man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. In life's heaviest losses we still turn to Thee, because Thy heart is moved at human sufferings. In our bereavements we are not left alone. What good news Thou hast brought to all the mourning brothers and sisters of earth! In Thee is our hope, for Thou hast said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." In every cloud of affliction reveal to us the silver lining of Divine mercy. Amen.

"From every house the neighbors met,  
The streets were filled with joyful sound,  
A solemn gladness even crowned  
The purple brows of Olivet.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!  
The rest remaineth unrevealed;  
He told it not; or something sealed  
The lips of that Evangelist."

—Tennyson.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about the middle of January, A. D. 30. Place, Bethany, the home of Mary, Martha and Lazarus. Persons, Jesus, His disciples, the two sisters, and a company of mourning Jews.

**Scripture Setting:** The Voice of the Victor. The call to the dead daughter of Jairus, Matt. 9:18, 19, 23-26. The voice in the streets of Nain, Luke 7:12-17. The voice in the darkness, Matt. 27:45-50. The voice that wakes the dead, 1 Thess. 4:13-17. Christ and the general resurrection, Rev. 20:11-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The miracle of raising Lazarus manifested Christ's resurrection power. 1. It is easier to raise a dead body than to persuade infidelity to yield to Christ. 2. Lazarus had nothing to tell of another life. In the economy of God the life beyond remains veiled in mystery and silence. 3. Christ was childlike in innocence, a man in human sympathy, but Divine in His power over the grave. 4. Not to seraph, angel, or priest is intrusted the key of death, but to Christ alone.

## THE LORD OF LOVE AND LIFE.

**Point of Contact.** A remarkable passage of Scripture declares that the reason why God has so highly exalted Christ is because in His earth life "He emptied Himself." A necessary part of this self-emptying was the early breaking of home ties. Surely the carpenter's Son was entitled to have a house He could call His own, yet after being driven from Nazareth by violence, and from Capernaum by unfaith we hear Him sadly saying, as if to Himself, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head." There was, however, one home always open to Him. It was in the quiet little village of Bethany, lying amid the peaceful uplands outside Jerusalem. John tells us that Jesus loved this family, and certainly, as we shall see, they had reason for loving Him. There is every reason for believing that the most restful and quiet hours of His life were spent in this retreat. This home, where dwelt Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, offers the fitting scene for one of the tenderest and most loving acts left us in the record of the Master's life.

**The Scene of the Sisters' Sadness.** "Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her." The beautiful home at Bethany had become a house of mourning. In the sickness of their brother Lazarus, the two sisters had sent for their best Friend. The message was received in Peraea, twenty-five miles away, but Jesus does not immediately come. In the meantime the brother dies. It was a home of wealth and consid-

erable influence, the family being a distinguished one, and many from Jerusalem, only two miles distant, had come to comfort them.

The Jewish funerals with their extreme forms and hired mourners sometimes assumed violent excesses of grief, as when the women tore out their hair, but we may be quite sure that in this household the funeral and the first three days of special sorrow passed quietly, and that an earnest effort was made to comfort these sisters who were sorely stricken. The older sister meets Jesus first outside Bethany. She returns and summons Mary to meet the Master. At the sight of His familiar face and the remembrance of how dear He was to her dead brother, her grief breaks out afresh, and those with her are moved to genuine and uncontrollable expressions of sorrow.

**A Saviour's Sympathy and Sorrow.** "Jesus wept. The Jews therefore said, Behold how He loved him." In the shortest and one of the most eloquent verses in all the Bible we look upon the Lord in tears. On one other occasion is it recorded that He wept, though it may have occurred at various times. That was when He looked for the last time on Jerusalem unrepentant. Some have suggested that the Master's tears were not that His friend, Lazarus, was dead, but that he had to live again; come back from the haven of rest to the waves and storms of life. Rather would we see in those silent tears the seal of His perfect oneness with us in all the experiences of our stricken humanity. Sixty

years after the event John writes it down that the world might remember how the Son of God was touched with a feeling of our infirmity. And the visitors from Jerusalem unwittingly and spontaneously gave testimony that He who was the strongest of the gentle was also the gentlest of the strong. "Behold how He loved him!"

**The Help of Human Hands.** "Jesus saith, Take ye away the stone." Even the moderately well-to-do had their own tombs, sometimes natural caves, sometimes rock-hewn, but usually situated in a garden. The vaults were sealed by rolling a great stone across the entrance to it. Concealed by such a stone, the body of Lazarus had lain in the farther end of the tomb for four days. The ceremonial law of defilement by touching a dead body was very strict, but Christ came to roll away that barrier also. Step by step He was leading up to the great act which should form His last and greatest miracle. He might have commanded the stone to roll itself away, as He commanded the wind or the sea. In fact, He might have commanded Lazarus to come forth through the rocky impediment. But what could be done by human hands He orders to be done, reserving only to Himself the mightier work which transcended all human power.

As Elijah himself placed the stones of the altar, arranged the wood and cut up the victims, but made the bystanders bring the water and fill the surrounding trench, that there might be no possible deception, so here does Christ prepare to recall his friend back to life without laying His own hand on the great stone that hid him from sight. In nearly all the miracles of Christ there was a command to some standing by for assistance and coöperation. Not that the Lord needed such assistance, but that the eyewitnesses needed some active participation to encourage faith and sympathy. As we pray for the Divine power to achieve victories for us, we should be keen to see the stones which it is in the power of human hands to first roll away.

**The Voice That Awoke the Dead.** "He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. He that was dead came forth." What majestic composure and self-possession Christ exhibits when all was fear and awe about Him. A gentle word of chiding and reminder He offers to Martha, whose faith trembles as the body is about to be uncovered. Then He offers a simple prayer, which is not so much a petition for the power He wanted, as praise for the power He knew He already possessed. Not for Himself did He pray, for the Father always heard Him, but for those who stood by, that they might believe that the Father sent Him.

One loud command was spoken in the silence of the sepulchre; one loud call to the sleeping brother; one flash of omnipotent power sped through the darkness, and instantaneously Lazarus stood forth, bound still with grave cloths, but pulsing with re-created life. The loudness of that cry broke the accustomed calmness of His life. The prophet had foretold, "He shall not cry," and in all His ministry, in the thronged streets and in the country side, He had moved with quiet dignity. On only one other occasion was His voice raised to a shout of victory—on the cross.

And Jesus had foretold that in death as well as in resurrection He was to be victor. "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up." So that both in His call to Lazarus and in His cry upon the cross we hear the grandeur of that voice which shall summon all the dead to life. It has been well said that Jesus needed to call Lazarus by name, else when he shouted in omnipotent might, "Come forth!" all the dead would have left their graves. This was a wonderful moment in the life of Christ and the history of the human race, since in its typical significance it was a prelude of the final voice at the last day.

**Life Restored and Released.** "Jesus sayeth unto them, Loose him, and let him go." From that dark and silent cave the brief words of Christ called forth a figure, not decomposed, not horrible in death, as they had supposed, but a figure with the bloom of youth, with the healthy blood of a restored life flowing through his veins.

Four days before that jaw had fallen, cold in death, never again to speak, the sisters thought. But the white cerements with which it was held are at the order of Christ to be cut that he may go forth to gladly tell of the crowning miracle, thus far, perhaps, in Christ's life of miracles. The hands which bound his feet together so securely were also ordered to be unfastened and tradition says that for thirty more long years he walked in the light and love of the old path at Bethany. The tightly wrapped hands were also released that the full service of Lazarus might be restored to the world. It was Christ's mission to loose the bonds of men, to loose the bands that blinded their eyes from seeing the truth, to loose their tongues, and to set them every whit free.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What previous incident in the home at Bethany reveals Christ's intimacy with the members of the household? 2. Name two other instances in which Christ raised the dead. Name one such instance in Paul's career. 3. How far apart was the raising of Lazarus and the resurrection of Christ in distance? In time? 4. Why did the disciples consider Christ's withdrawal from Perea at the time dangerous?

**Challenge Text:** "For as in Adam all —, even so in — shall all be made —." I Cor. 15: (9).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Death is inevitable, love is unquenchable, the atonement is universal, hope is eternal. 2. In the hour of their privilege the two sisters clashed, but in the hour of sorrow and death they were united. 3. The voice of God rings loud in the sorrows of the household. 4. Because He loved him Christ could summon Lazarus from the grave, but because He loved us He could not come down from the cross.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



And it came  
to pass, as he



that he passed  
through the midst of



And as he  
entered  
into a certain



there met him



which stood afar off.  
And they lifted up  
their voices, and said,  
Jesus, Master, have  
mercy on us. And  
when he saw them,  
he said unto  
them, Go shew  
yourselves unto the



And it  
came to  
pass,  
that, as



they were cleansed.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 17:11-19.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Give me the grace and gladness of a grateful heart. May Thy love burn upon the altar of my soul, and Thy praise break from my lips.

In my necessity I called upon Thee, and Thou didst hear. May none be too humble to receive my help; may I never be too proud to go in the dark places to cheer the children of want and woe. Amen.

"That Christlike thing that reaches down  
To the depths of human woe,  
And sheds o'er darkest paths and sad  
A benediction glow.  
But thank God most for His great love  
That living source Divine  
Which stoopeth down to earth, and cares  
For your love and for mine."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, early spring, A. D. 30, as Christ and a festive band start out from Galilee to attend the paschal feast at Jerusalem. Place, near a city called Ephraim, not now identified, in Peraea, not far from Galilee. Persons, Christ, some of His disciples, and great multitudes following, including ten lepers.

**Scripture Setting:** Leprosy Healed. Priestly rites for leprosy, Lev. 14:1-9. Miriam healed of leprosy, Num. 12:9-16. Naaman cleansed of leprosy, 2 Kings 5:5-14. A Galilean leper cleansed,

Mark 1:40-45. The leprosy of sin cleansed, Psa. 51:1-7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage emphasizes the sin of ingratitude. 1. The Israelitish nation had sinned against light and bartered away their birthright. 2. The faith of Samaria often surprised Christ. 3. Public recognition of Christ is a debt of gratitude we owe Him. 4. The highest ingratitude of which the mind of man is capable is to refuse God's pardon and reject His mercy.

### ONE-TENTH THANKFUL, NINE-TENTHS THANKLESS.

**Point of Contact.** Between the borders of the two provinces, Galilee and Samaria, there lay an unfrequented stretch of country, the valley of Bethshean. If we inquire how Jesus came to choose this solitary, untraveled way, the answer is clear. His determined purpose was to go to Jerusalem and face His enemies at the very center of the Jewish hatred. Already both Galilee and Samaria were closed to Him, so necessity compels Him to choose His way along this frontier territory.

Necessity also had compelled ten leprous men, nine of them Jews and one lone Samaritan, to cling to this secluded valley on the border. There was always something in this loathsome and horrible disease that awakened in the heart of Christ a keen and instantaneous compassion. But now especially as He felt His countrymen and the Samaritans alike had rejected Him, did He feel a kinship towards these who were by their deadly malady obliged to forego nearly every privilege of human life. If misery needed company and compassion, Jesus was never in a more tender frame to give it than at this moment.

**The Valley of Tears.** "As He entered into a certain village, there met Him ten men that were lepers." The Psalmist declares that when God's glad children pass down through the valley of weeping they make it a place of springs. (Psa. 84:6.) How well Luke describes this scene that occurred outside a nameless village when Christ and a festive band is setting forth for the paschal feast at Jerusalem. As they wend their way through the valley there comes from the hill-

side the old sad but familiar cry, "Unclean, unclean!" Nine Jews had united with a single Samaritan, driven by their common need to forget the customary distinction. Obligated to remain at least four ells distant from the untainted, they were waiting in their isolation to see Jesus, for the greatness of His fame had reached them.

How this scene calls to mind one of the great art treasures of Europe, that magnificent painting of Dore's in London, entitled "The Vale of Tears!" He finished it just before he died, and it is considered his best work. At the head of a deep valley stands Christ, and all the light that shines upon its sides emanates from Him. All kinds of human suffering wait in the valley for His healing, and all are being healed. The lame are walking, the lepers are rejoicing in their cleansing, dying mothers are holding out their little children to Him for His blessing, conquerors are handing Him their swords, and kings are taking off their crowns before Him. A great tide of redemptive love is flowing down the valley where Jesus walks, and the valley of weeping becomes a place of springs.

**The Voices of Misery.** "And they lifted up their voices and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Though these marked lepers stood afar off, and the disease had doubtless reduced their strength, yet Jesus heard the cry and heeded it. Because of the impurity and repulsiveness of the disease these loathsome outcasts might well have doubted whether Jesus would turn to them. They were shut out of the temple, the synagogues, and the social life of their fellow beings.



But to Christ's compassionate heart the very depth of their degradation intensified the force of their appeal. To John the Baptist, held a prisoner, He sent word as one of the credentials of His Divine mission that the lepers were cleansed. And from that time to the present hour Christian sympathy and help has gone out to the leper.

Father Damien, of the Roman Catholic church, heard the voice of the leper calling him, and gave his life in response. A leper called to St. Francis of Assisi from the roadside as he rode by one day. This knight of Christ rode away in horror, but soon returned to give the sufferer what money he had and kiss his hand. A brotherhood was later organized which did much for the lepers of Europe.

From the window where this is written may be seen the house where live the parents of Mary Reed. For almost twenty years this consecrated woman has presided over an institution in the Himalaya Mountains, 6,400 feet above sea level, which houses nearly a hundred victims of this scourge. After the first six months of suffering there, the disease in her own case was stayed, if not cured. Almost single-handed she has proved that Christian love is ready to go "far as the curse is found."

**Faith for Healing.** "And it came to pass, that as they went, they were cleansed." These ten men held a sincere but imperfect faith. In addressing Jesus as Master they recognize Him as a prophet mighty in deed and word. Impelled by stern necessity, they take refuge in Him. Not having all faith, they had enough to know His power was sufficient to heal them. He does not repel them, even with their imperfect conceptions, but is pleased with their cry for mercy and the promptness of their obedience. Great misery met great grace by the roadside, and took the first active steps of obedience it knew. And in the very act of obedience their misery and malady were at an end. This is the only way to spiritual salvation: to act upon whatever faith one possesses, not doubting. Not faith in the abstract, but faith appropriated and applied, produces religious character.

The supernatural part of conversion is all of grace, but the human part is the response of the will to the Spirit. A colored preacher thus presents the doctrine: "Brethren, it is this way: The Lord is always voting for a man; and the devil is always voting against him. Then the man himself votes, and breaks the tie!" The prodigal son voted when he arose. The lepers voted when they went to show themselves to the priest. Faith grew with every step of the journey. Faith and works are inseparable in a healthy life.

**The Samaritan Stranger Becomes a Citizen**

**of the Kingdom.** "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." There is a peculiar aptness in the use commonly made of leprosy as a type of sin. Every leper was a moral sermon, a living admonition to keep unspotted from the world. The Jews always viewed it as a typical representation of the pollution of sin. The rabbis taught that leprosy comes upon a man for any one of eleven sins: idolatry, profanity, unchastity, theft, slander, perjury, false witness, false judgment, causing discord, malicious planning, or trespassing on another's rights. Only cedar wood and hyssop could ceremonially cleanse. Cedar wood grew the highest, and hyssop grew the lowest. The remedies thus recognized that pride was the cause of the distemper, and humility would cause exemption from it.

So Christ seized upon gratitude as the sure symptom that the Samaritan was cured in heart. Through chance fellowship with Israelites he had received gracious benefits, and he accepted them as the marks of Christ's compassionate love in all humility. The faith of the nine Jews looked to the power of the Theocracy in which they were sons, and accepted their cure proudly as in justice due them. So, it was the Samaritan, the alien, who through faith and gratitude, became a living son of God, while the nine Israelites, the chosen ones, turn away healed of leprosy but unthankful and unrepentant. The lesson forms a striking example of the high esteem in which the heathen world held Jesus, while Israel would not receive Him as her Saviour.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who was it pointed Naaman the leper to the prophet of Israel? 2. What words did Jesus speak to the maid whom He recovered from leprosy? 3. What king was struck with leprosy for usurping the function of the priests? For what was Uzza smitten with leprosy? 4. Why would Luke have special interest in the incident of this lesson?

**Challenge Text:** Purge me with —, and I shall be —: Wash me and I — be — than —." Psa. 51:(?)

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. The Levitical priests could declare a man cured, but Christ could cure him. 2. To break the power of sin Christ died as a leper without the camp. 3. Some go to tell their friends, others hasten to the temple, others to their homes or merchandise, but few return to Christ in grateful acknowledgment. 4. We write our injuries in marble, and trace our benefits in the dust. 5. We are healed by the word of mercy, not by the observance of law.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and



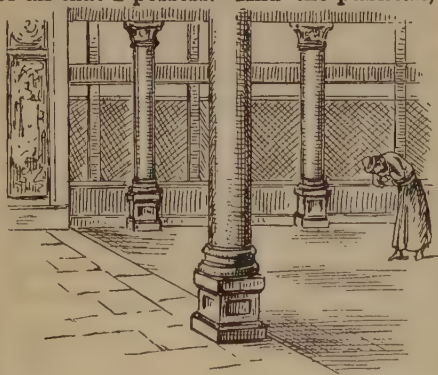
to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee



thus with  
himself, God,  
I thank thee,  
that I am  
not as other



are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican,



would not lift  
up so much  
as his eyes  
unto heaven,  
but smote



saying, God be  
merciful to me  
a sinner. I tell  
you, this man



justified rather than  
the other: for every  
one that exalteth himself  
shall be abased; and  
he that humbleth  
himself shall be exalted.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 18:9-14.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Teach me how to pray that I may know how to live. Give me a heart that is humble and sincere, to control my outward acts. Anoint me with grace in my heart, and come to possess the inwardness of my being. Not my merit, but Thy mercy I plead. Accept me as I am, but make me what Thou wilt. And as I leave Thy gracious presence to go out into Thy fair world, may my duty and my pleasure become one. Amen.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear,  
The inward glancing of an eye,  
When none but God is near.  
Prayer is the contrite sinner's voice,  
Returning from his ways;  
While angels in their songs rejoice  
And cry, 'Behold, he prays!'"  
—James Montgomery.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, early in the year of A. D. 30, shortly after the raising of Lazarus. Place, one of the villages in his final journey from Galilee through Samaria to Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, the disciples, a group of Pharisees, and many others.

**Scripture Setting:** The Nature of True Prayer. Seen of men, Matt. 23:1-12. The humble exalted, Luke 14:7-11. The prayer of gratitude, Luke 1:46-53. The penitent's prayer, Psa. 51:1-7. Answered prayer, Psa. 138:1-8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The parable teaches the exalting power of an humble spirit. 1. The Pharisees who listened to this parable were as

proud and self-righteous as the one pictured in the parable. 2. The Pharisee rejoiced he was not as the publican; the publican grieved that he was not like Christ. 3. The Pharisee returned having prayed to himself, looked at himself, and praised himself; the publican returned having prayed to God, looked into his own heart, and praised his Deliverer. 4. He who comes to pray satisfied goes home empty, he who comes empty goes home satisfied. 5. The world's estimate is a see-saw where the light weights go up and the heavy weights go down; God's estimate reverses, sending Mordecai to be honored and Haman to be hung.

### PRIDE AND PENITENCE AT PRAYER.

**Preaching to the Pharisees.** "He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves and despised others." The directness and opportuneness of Christ's teaching made His hearers say, "Never man spake as this man." In the parables He uttered it will be seen that His eyes were as active as His mind. The parable of the Pharisee and publican was spoken to certain men and for their special benefit because they were there that day to hear it. Beginning with His sermon on the Mount, Christ never ceased to expose the hollowness and hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Josephus says they existed 144 years before the Christian era. Called Pharisees because they had separated from the national corruption with a pure motive to establish more spiritual worship of Jehovah, they had sadly degenerated still keeping the outward regulations, but having entirely lost the original spirit.

Since prayer is altogether a spiritual exercise, the Pharisee showed off his weakness and contemptible hypocrisy when he went to the temple at the hour of prayer as he would not in any other relation of life. His characteristic self-righteous spirit may be shown best by quoting from the egotistic writings of rabbi Simeon, son of Jochai: "If there were only thirty righteous persons in the world, I and my son should make two of them; but if there were but twenty, I and my son would be of the number; and if there were but five, I and my son would be of the five; and if there were but two, I and my son would be those two; and if there were but one, myself

should be that one." This was the righteous religionist that Christ saw before Him, who must be shaken out of his self-content, so He paints an almost impossible picture of two men walking into the temple side by side, who were actually no more seen in each other's company, than in India a Brahmin is seen walking with a Pariah.

In the temple worship the proud-spirited Pharisee had completely triumphed; his party was stronger than all the others, and the penitent, broken-spirited publican could scarcely dare to find a place within the sacred enclosure. If he lifted up his voice in the temple at Jerusalem, he would have to be very earnest, indeed, to enter at all, and would feel like standing afar off.

**Pride Pleased at Its Own Proportions.** "The Pharisee stood and prayed with himself. God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are." Undoubtedly this man was at the place of prayer, at the hour of prayer, and in great need of prayer. But he did not pray. He was only looking in a mirror at his comely moral proportions. They looked good to him in contrast to those of the poor figure crouching there in the corner. The mirror he looked into was one of the highly magnifying kind, and he loomed large in his own self-esteem. His hands were clean of graft and greed, his honor was unimpeached, and his heart was free from uncleanness.

Moreover, he observed the ordinances of religion. He remembered that every Monday and Thursday he kept the fast in memory of the ascent and descent of Moses when the

law was given at Sinai. But God remembered also that these were the regular market days, when special services were held in the synagogues, and all the country people came to town. And He who reads the secret intents of the heart, saw that the Pharisee got what he desired, a large share of attention on the street, and considerable notoriety in the temple.

He called his words a prayer; they were merely a catalogue of moralities, a list of what he did do, and what he refused to do. His words lacked the first two elements of prayer, adoration and supplication. There was no note of real thankfulness, only boastfulness. Yet the downright zeal and earnestness of the Pharisee can never be questioned. His personal life, so far as its outward expression was concerned, was beyond reproach. His prayer never was answered, never could be answered, because it was not prayer. Whatever righteousness he claimed, that he retained, whatever its value. Mr. Pharisee's prayer was only a loud profession of goodness and boasting of strength.

He joined the church that he might say, "See how much better am I than those miserable fellows without." But joining the church of Christ should be rather an humble acknowledgment of weakness. The Christian disciple should say, "I come to Christ and to Christ's people that He and they may help me to a better and a holier life."

**Penitence Praying for Pardon.** "The publican smote upon his breast, saying, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" The Pharisee looked in his mirror and smiled; the publican looked into his heart and smote his breast. The kingdom of God is entered through the gateway of penitential prayer. Above its portals, in letters of gold, it is written, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." That gate is narrow and low. All must stoop who enter, though within there is the fullest exercise of freedom and dignity. The Pharisee could not pass that gate, because of his high looks and unbending pride.

The publican, with eyes upon the ground, and body bent as a suppliant, passed easily beneath the low archway into the royal palace of Divine acceptance. The proud worshipper had formally prayed with uplifted eyes and hands and, more conscious of those behind him watching than of the all-seeing One above him, he felt satisfied that in form and figure he furnished a model statue of devotion worthy of being preserved in marble.

The poor sinner, in contrast to all this

ceremonial outwardness, represents in a most realistic way the eager inwardness of true prayer. He was not a temple frequenter. Nothing but his sense of desperate need would ever force him past the searching glances of the Pharisee to some retired spot in the temple enclosure, where God would hear the cry of his burdened heart. Like the deer, when wounded by the arrow of the archer, is driven to the thick woods to bleed alone, so this man, feeling for the first time the mighty impulse of repentance, hurries to the place of prayer, but stands afar off, apart from the other worshippers.

An old proverb declares that where the pain lies, there the hand presses. He smites his breast because his wound is in his heart. His prayer, all unstudied, is in its affecting unity and directness, perhaps, the most simple and profound of all the prayers ever offered by a world of penitents. It is a call of emergency to God for mercy in behalf of a sinner. In its heart-felt brevity is the quintessence of supplication, the desperate disease of sin, the identity of the suffering patient, the sufficiency of the Physician, and the efficacy of the remedy. Like the penitential prayer of David; like the spirit that possessed "the chief of Apostles," who never ceased to call himself the chief of sinners; like every struggling soul that has forced its way through the externals of religion to where God hears and answers, the heart struggle of the publican brought down the reconciling grace that sent him back into the world, justified and satisfied.

**The Prayer Principle Put as a Paradox.** "Every man that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The purpose of Christ, as we have seen, was not to paint two persons, but to present two principles. John truly says that Jesus knew what was in man. It would be a mistake to suppose that Christ in this parable dogmatically distributes all men into two classes represented by these two examples. But He looks down into human hearts, reads the controlling motives there, lays them bare, condemning the one, approving the other.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Which of the disciples was a publican? Which of the Apostles a Pharisee? 2. As a pretense for what did Jesus say the Pharisees made long prayers? 3. How many more times did the Pharisee use the first personal pronoun than the name of the Deity? 4. How many times longer was his prayer than that of the publican? 5. What was the Pharisee grateful for, and what was he proud of? The publican?

**Challenge Text.** "A — and a — heart, O —, Thou wilt not —." Psa. 51:(9).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. As well measure the spirituality of a church by the height of the steeple as to measure spiritual attainments by one's conspicuousness in religious meetings. 2. God discriminates between the player of his part and the prayer of the heart. 3. The roots that strike deepest send their branches the highest, and the humbler the prayer the higher it reaches. 4. Sincere petitions, not meritorious acts, are cashed by the bank of Heaven. 5. After the play behind the scenes each player is unmasked.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# JESUS AND THE LITTLE ONES.

And they brought young



to him,  
that he  
should



and his



rebuked those  
that brought  
them. But when  
Jesus saw it,  
he was much  
displeased,  
and said unto  
them, Suffer the



and



not: for of such  
is the kingdom  
of God. Verily  
I say unto you,  
Whosoever shall  
not receive the  
kingdom of  
God as a



he shall not enter  
therein. And he took  
them up in his arms,



and blessed them.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 10:13-16; ALSO MATT. 19:13-15; LUKE 18:15-17.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I thank Thee for receiving even the small and the weak. Let me not leave Thy presence until Thou hast blest me. And as I have been dedicated to Thee in holy baptism, let me even live as Thy child. If wicked thoughts arise, be Thou the thought of my mind to keep its chambers pure. And as I grow older make me to grow as it was written of Thee, increasing in

wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"And one was helpless, a little child, In a world that frowned when it should have smiled.

Till the Good Samaritan came one night

With a gift of shelter and food and light,

In the name of Him, who in Galilee

Said, Suffer the children to come to me."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Spring of A. D. 30. Place, In Peraea, probably one of the border villages Christ visited before starting for Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, the disciples, a group of Peraean mothers with their children, and doubtless many interested onlookers.

**Scripture Setting:** The Place and Preparation of the Child. Israel blesses the two lads, Ephraim and Manasseh, Gen. 48:14-20. The preservation of the child, Isa. 11:6-9. The child in the midst, Matt. 18:1-10. The childhood spirit commended, 1 Cor. 14:20. Training the child, 2 Tim. 3:14-17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This incident sug-

gests the duty of getting the children to Christ. 1. The mother preëminently holds the key that opens the entrance to a child's heart. 2. Those who are commissioned to extend the Kingdom are blind indeed who would compel children to postpone entrance thereto. 3. Infant baptism portrays the parent's responsibility, the child's receptivity, and the Savior's welcome to childhood. 4. The same heart that is big enough to receive children is vigorous enough to chastise all who stand between the child and the Kingdom. 5. The child's innocency and hopefulness act as a new creative force in the church and the home.

### CHRIST-ENCIRCLED CHILDHOOD.

**A Mother's Imaginings.** "And they brought young children to Him, that He should touch them." No picture of childhood is complete without the mother standing in the shadows. It may be the picture of the baby Moses being drawn from the basket that floated on the Nile, and only Miriam, the faithful sister, and the beautiful princess stand forth clearly, but be sure there hides behind the flags, growing on the bank, a mother heart wildly beating with eagerness and anxiety.

In this scene of Jesus blessing the children, so dear to the heart of the church, Christ and the child occupy the center of the picture, but it would be a sad oversight to miss the mother, retiring from the gaze of all, after she has led her little one to Christ. It never detracts from the beauty of the Bethlehem Babe to see Mary standing by the manger. It never robs the cross of Calvary of its pathos to see standing at its foot the lonely widow who suffers most of all.

The artists of all the centuries have labored to leave as their noblest work, the picture of a childish Face guarded by the Madonna face. The mothers of Palestine were true mothers. They knew the value of childhood better than the disciples; and better than the disciples, they knew the tender, loving heart of Christ. For while these ambitious disciples were eager about the appointments of the Kingdom to come, these mothers were anxious for the generation to come, represented by their own little ones.

By the strange presentiment or intuition

common to woman, these mothers of Peraea seemed to feel that Christ was about to leave them forever, and as they bid Him solemn farewell, they would win as a precious legacy His blessing upon the heads of their children.

**The Disciples Murmuring.** "His disciples rebuked those that brought them." Between the approaching children and Christ stepped some of the disciples with the intention of guarding their Great Teacher from any trivial interruptions. In words of stern rebuke, not only would they repulse the children, but chastise their mothers also. They were guilty of obtruding on the Master when grave matters occupied His mind.

Judged by the standards of their day, we can hardly condemn the conduct of the Twelve. For women were not honored in antiquity as now, and the tender solicitude now felt for childhood was largely unknown. It did not comport with the supposed dignity of a rabbi to be accosted by these mothers in public, nor to have his ministrations descend to a group of children. But His disciples surely did not read His great loving heart nor fathom his deep ageless purpose if they supposed He would turn away from these youthful candidates for immortality.

It is wholesome to see in our time leaders in the Jewish church paying tribute to Christ as the Friend of children. Rabbi Kaufmann Kohler, of Cincinnati, says, "The matchless ideal of Christ redeemed the despised and outcast. It checked infanticide,



and founded asylums for the young; it invested the home with purity, and proclaimed the value of each human soul as a treasure in the eyes of God."

But the disciples could not see the possibilities of childhood which Christ saw, though they were looking with frowns upon the same children which He blessed with smiles. They saw only frailty and futility, while He saw futurity. They held that these children must develop into men like themselves to be worthy the Master's attention; He declared that the disciples themselves would never win their Master's approval except they returned to the humility, confidence, and simplicity of childhood.

**Christ Displeased.** "But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased." This is the only place in all the Bible in which this strong word is used of our Lord. By rejecting the children, the disciples were laying themselves liable to that woe Jesus had pronounced against all who offended against the receptiveness and meekness of childhood. To stand between Christ's love and the heart longing of a little child is a dangerous place for any man. It were better for such an one to cast himself with a great millstone about his neck beneath the deep and silent waters.

He who feels the hot fires of his indignation burning within him when one of God's little ones is being trodden under the foot of the oppressor, has a heart akin to that of his Great Master.

One of the best college text-books on the industrial life of England contains Mrs. Browning's "Cry of the Children." It is a tribute to her fearless heart when she rebuked Christian England for robbing the pale-faced children of the mines and factories of a chance to play, and sing, and grow. And England heeded the call of that Christian lady. In the heart of Senator Beveridge was a holy indignation at the sight of children toiling in the cotton fields of the South, the anthracite mines of Pennsylvania, and the factories of New England. He has called a halt on all this greed and oppression. And by the extent to which he has exalted childhood in America has he exalted himself.

**Christ's Welcome for the Little Ones.** "Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God." Jesus far exceeded the request of the mothers who hoped He would touch their children, for He took them in His arms, and laid His hand upon their heads. No one can have the passion for the coming of the Kingdom without seeing in a child a bundle of wonderful possibilities. In the absence of that passion the importance of the child is lost sight of. When the

church becomes worldly and formal the child is forgotten.

Campbell Morgan says, "Better never touch children unless you are ensphered in the truth." The old heresy that the child belongs to the devil is dying out. And we are bringing our children to Christ not as aliens but as His own. The church that is wholly devoted to Christ must be wholly devoted to the child. And if I were asked by some discouraged John the Baptist, languishing in the prison of pessimism, for a sign that Christ was now in the world I would tell him of the new Gospel for childhood which is being preached. And it will be preached more and more with thrilling power through coming years that the children belong to Christ, and that a child's heart is the symbol of the Kingdom.

**A Garland on the Brow of Childhood.** "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." The child suggests truthfulness, cheerfulness, and loveliness. A little child leads us into the very presence of God by its purity. An old school teacher reviewed in memory the bright young lives he had helped to train, and then expressed the deep obligation to them for all they had taught him, saying "There is nothing on earth half so holy as the innocent heart of a child."

Only when the child arrives does the family really begin. Henry Drummond has well said that till the little child appeared man's affection was non-existent, and woman's love was frozen. The child drew forth the first bud of love from the breast of the mother. When a child is born a new force enters the world. There is a new attitude toward life, the attitude of hope and expectancy. The mother looks upon her fond treasure, expecting so much, and praying she may never be disappointed. That immortal thing, born for growth and endless maturing, brings the glory of God into the valleys of earth.

"As a little child." How we are reminded of our own childhood! How like David we long for a drink from that old well at Bethlehem! The lost innocence of childhood and the glad days when the blue of heaven bent so low to touch our earth,—they will never return. But God's own Son offers us the next best gift,—a heart made clean, a child-like faith in the goodness of our Father, and adoption into the family and fellowship of Heaven.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what light does the Old Testament regard a large family of children? 2. Who caused a great slaughter of children when Christ was born? Why? 3. What child was consecrated by his mother at birth to God's service? 4. When did childhood pay its great tribute to Christ? Who complained? 5. What prophetic utterance have we concerning children in Heaven?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The childhood life is plastic in the hands of Christ. 2. A seed thought of truth planted in a child's heart yields a golden harvest of conduct and character. 3. A child that merely grows up uncared for becomes a noxious weed in the garden of society. 4. The Great Teacher in mighty emphasis placed His hand and influence upon the beginning of a life. 5. Human and Divine influences, like the sail and the sunshine, unite to develop a character.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

# THE RICH YOUNG RULER.

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came



and



and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto

him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy



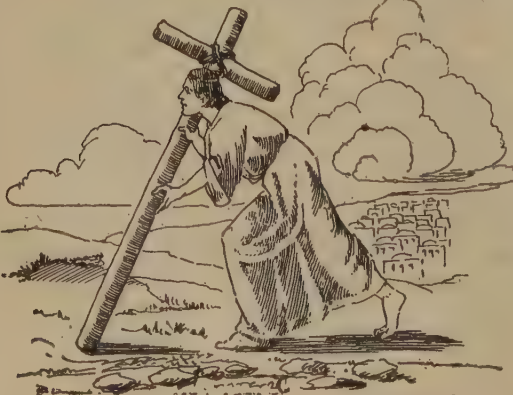
And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way,



what-soever thou hast, and



and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come,



and follow me And he was sad at that saying, and



grieved: for he had great possessions.





## CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER

BY HOFMANN

As Christ went about among the people, saying many precious words, a certain rich young ruler came to him asking, seriously, the way of eternal life. Christ told him that he, knowing the commandments, must keep them. When the rich young man replied that he had faithfully kept all the law, Christ became interested and said that one thing still was lacking; that he should sell all his belongings and give to the poor, and become His follower. As the young man was very rich, these conditions did not please him.

Hofmann's picture is beautifully painted and finished, and the faces studied intelligently. Christ's penetrating eyes reveal his earnestness, and his mouth is firmly set. It is an appealing face. As he points to the sick man with the crutch, and the inquiring look of his woman attendant, there is real regret expressed in the handsome face of the rich young man. He bears himself with conscious dignity, his richly embroidered coat hangs well and supplements the beauty of his face. He wears an elegant turban and wide bands of embroideries mark the edge of his garment. He has a silken sash, and those belongings which come of wealth. Christ is in His simple dark robes, giving Him dignity and character. His hands emphasize eloquently His message to the rich young ruler.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 10:17-22. READ ALSO MATT. 19:16-22; AND LUKE 18:18-23.

**Prayer:** Dear Father, Amid all the temptations of youth, show me the straight path leading to a successful life and to life eternal. Teach me Thy Word and by the Holy Spirit apply its precepts to my conduct and my thinking. Help me to love high thinking more than rich living; the ornaments of a meek and lowly mind more than costly apparel. Give me courage to take up my cross and follow Thee. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"The wealthiest man among us is the best;  
No grandeur now in nature or in book  
Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,  
This is idolatry, and these we adore.  
Plain living and high thinking are no more:  
The homely beauty of the good old cause  
Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence  
And pure religion breathing household laws."  
—Wordsworth.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the final hour of His departure from Peraea, or beyond the Jordan, the last of a series of events recorded chronologically, as He begins His last journey to Jerusalem in the spring, A. D. 30. Place, the highway on which the worshippers journeyed from Peraea to Jerusalem to the passover. Persons, Christ, His disciples, a rich young ruler, and company of pilgrims.

**Scripture Setting:** **Worldly Weights That Disqualify for the Heavenly Race.** The early church in training, Acts 2:41-47. The burden of riches, Mark 10:23-31. Stripped of superfluities, 1 Cor. 9:19-27. Laying aside the weights, Hebr. 12:1-4. The contest and the crown, 2 Tim. 4:5. Coaching the lovers of wealth, Rev. 3:17-18.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This incident sets forth the heroic challenge and sacrificing conditions of the Christian race. 1. Any struggle for mastery draws interested witnesses, but the decision to enter the race, each makes for himself. 2. To be ready to run is to leave the superfluous, to be trained to fitness, to know the rules, and to be sure of the course. 3. To observe all the rules of moral training will help, but the winning of the race calls for a passionate and supreme ambition. 4. To be called by Christ is an honor so great and a career so exalted that one can afford to leave all behind. 5. How sad to miss companionship with the goodly company of apostles, martyrs, and saints, because one is possessed by his worldly goods.

### THE RICH RULER RULED OUT OF THE RACE.

**Entering with Eagerness.** "And when He was gone forth into the way, there came one running." In the running, eager, breathless figure that hurried up the road to catch Christ before He should leave Peraea, we look upon an athletic young man who possessed much to make him attractive. He possessed great wealth. He had lived a strictly moral life. He had been deeply impressed by the ministry of Jesus, and was doubtless sincere in the humility he showed as he prostrated himself before the One whom he addressed as "Good Master." He would understand from this great Rabbi at the last possible moment of His sojourn there the true meaning of life. It was an opportunity too great to be lost, and this distinguished man throwing his reserve and dignity to the winds made all possible speed. The weakness of his nature was his impetuosity. He was not like that one who first sat down and counted the cost. He was the kind of an athlete to win in a hundred-yard dash, but to fail completely in a cross-country run, or an endurance race. He did not lack enthusiasm, but he did lack rugged endurance. He thought he was ready to enter the lists and compete in the Christian race, but he needed someone to explain the nature of true discipleship.

**Standing at the Starting Post.** He asked Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" By this time the

highway was full of pilgrims to the passover. In the open road, in the hearing of the crowd, this ruler pays honor to the One who had been bitterly opposed by the ruling class. With youth, influence, wealth, and morality all in his possession this ruler craves in his restless heart for eternal life. A mere keeping of the commandments did not satisfy him, hence he asks, "What lack I yet?" And Christ was quick to see that for one thing he lacked a true conception of the Messiah. To call Him "Good Master" merely in the sense of a human teacher was to lose all sight of His Divinity. He would not be called "Good" by those who had not the faith to call Him God. Nevertheless Jesus does not ignore either the question or the questioner, but answers on the lower plane of the inquiry. Since this man supposed he could "inherit" eternal life as he had inherited his fortune, Jesus points him to the second table of the Decalogue, prescribing the duty of man to man. Adultery, murder, theft, false witness, fraud, these five things he is to avoid while the sixth, reverence to parents, he is to observe. The first table of the law, the duties of man to God, is purposely omitted, that the inquirer, noticing the omission, might be led to a self-examining test. Obedience to the requirements of the law was too easy to get one to Heaven, and he knew it. He had already learned enough of Christ to know He was

calling for absolute subjection of the heart to God. But if he could only comply with Heaven's requirements by doing something, even something very hard, he was ready to do it. This very day and hour before all the world he thought he wished to do something heroic. Let Christ but shout the word and he would be off. And when he is referred to the ten commandments, the reply is so obvious and so simple he is disappointed.

**The Conscientious Contestant.** "And he answered, all these have I observed from my youth." The young man felt hurt, thinking he was misunderstood. He was not content with the commonplace. He was not satisfied with careless morality. He had kept the strict letter of the law from youth up. More than this, he was willing to do anything. He had knelt at the feet of Him who was all perfect, and from whom came all perfection. Standing there so genuine, so generous and enthusiastic, Christ loved him. But the young man had never fathomed the depths of the commandments, or interpreted them as meaning all they signified to Christ. One short crucial test was necessary to reveal to the young ruler his own condition. Would he enter the contest under conditions that would demand all there was in him? We shall see.

**The Rules and Regulations of the Race.** "Sell whatsoever thou hast; and come, take up the cross, and follow me." The conditions to Christian discipleship are not external but internal. The one invariable rule is in seeking the Kingdom to seek it first. All must, in spirit, at least, be surrendered to the preeminent purpose in life. In every life, as in this young man's, there is a fundamental fault, so deep we may not have known it, but we must know it and correct it, if we would be crowned victors in the race. Something must be left behind, and more than that, we must forget the thing that is left behind as we press forward for the prize. To him this thing to be cast off was wealth, to us it may be something quite different. The law of discipleship is this: without forsaking there can be no following. Who is the Christian hero? Herbert Welsh has said: "It is that young man for whom it would be so easy to drift in the current of doubtful pleasures, to bend to custom, to be turned by ridicule, but who in the strength of an upright manhood puts beneath his feet impurity, dishonesty,

gambling, and drunkenness, and will not be shackled by sin. It is the man, the woman everywhere who has found a purifying purpose and passion, whose life is given to the Kingdom, who stands for the things which are honorable and lovely and of good report. These are the heroes who make the world worthy of the respect of angels and of God."

**A Test Too Trying.** "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved, for he had great possessions." The measure of a real athlete is his power to withstand fatigue. But some lives are tested by the call to face the crowd and take a stand as a contestant, for they have not even the courage to make a start. The rich young ruler was called upon to make a sacrifice too great. By so terrible a test as the surrender of all his wealth did Christ take the measure of his earnestness.

The spiritual decision must be made before the spiritual life can be lived. Some first act of self-denial; the first open profession of Christ; the first public prayer; the standing forth alone to be counted for Christ, reveals to many for the first time that the Christian life is a struggle. It certainly would be more pleasant to believe that this rich young ruler was given another trial and made the right start. But he vanishes from the Gospel history, hugging his wealth, pricked to the heart, with a cloud upon his brow. The evangelists know nothing further. But the poet Dante in imagination follows him further, far into the shadowy realms where souls are blown about like autumn leaves on the confines of the outer world. There he recognizes him, rejected by Heaven, despised by hell, the rich young ruler who could not make the race,— "Who made through cowardice the great refusal."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what parables did Jesus warn against the selfishness of riches? 2. What Christian convert vowed to restore four-fold to all whom he had defrauded? 3. What became of the silver paid Judas for his treachery? 4. By what conflicting motives was the heart of this ruler torn? 5. What did Paul decide was more profitable than bestowing all his goods to feed the poor?

**Challenge Text.** But they that will be — fall into — and a —. 1 Tim. 6:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. It is supreme folly to become absorbed in perishable treasure until the eleventh hour, and then rush madly after the treasure of eternal life. 2. Lacking one thing, perfect obedience, the whole temple of possible character overburdens that one rotten pillar, and all is lost. 3. Think of the need and place for this rich young ruler in the company of the Apostles; and think of the honor of the offer he refused! 4. None can ever be quite happy afterward in possessions for which they did once sacrifice eternal life. 5. Great failures become great warnings. Dante calls this scene "The Great Refusal," and pictures the young ruler wandering through the Inferno, seeking his lost opportunity.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE LABORERS IN THE VINEYARD

So when even was come, the lord of the



said  
unto  
his

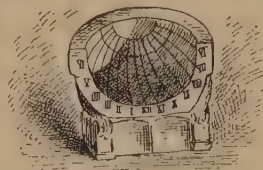


Call the



and give them their hire, beginning  
from the last unto the first.

And when  
they came  
that were  
hired  
about the  
eleventh



they  
received

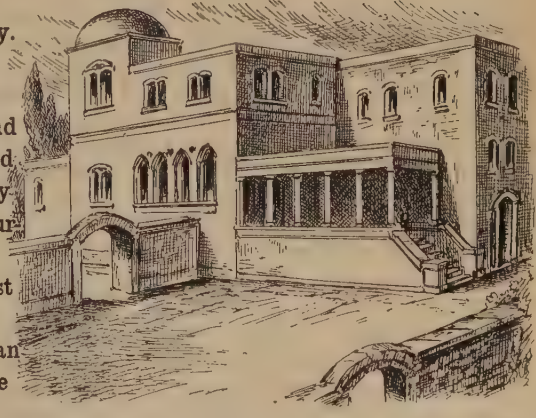
every man a



But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every



a penny.  
And  
when  
they had  
received  
it, they  
murmured  
against  
the  
goodman  
of the



Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny? So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS MATT. 20:1-16.

**Prayer:** For the daily tasks that are set me, Heavenly Father, I am grateful. May my every hour, whether spent in work, in study, in play, or in sleep, leave me better than before. May I not neglect these golden harvest days of youth. Teach me how to do with my fingers, how to learn with my mind, and how to love with my heart. I praise Thy name for calling me in the glad morning hour of life. Keep me busy till evening comes, then take me to Thy home. Amen.

"Be mine some simple service here below—  
To weep with those who weep, their joy to share,  
Their pains to solace or their burdens bear;  
Some widow in her agony to meet,  
Some exile in his new-found home to greet;  
To serve some child of thine, and so serve Thee.  
Lo, here am I: to such a work send me."

—Edward Everett Hale.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This parable was spoken by Christ primarily to His disciples, especially to Peter, following the sorrowful departure of the rich young ruler and immediately before setting out for Bethany preceding the passover, A. D. 29.

**Scripture Setting: God's Repeated Calls.** Repeated calls to the child Samuel, 1 Sam. 3:1-10. The repeated call to old age rejected, Jer. 6:4-11. The called and chosen friends of Christ, John 15:7-16. The fate of rejecting the repeated call, Jer. 7:3-15. The call in the wilderness, Isa. 40:3-11. The call in the city's streets, Prov. 1:20-29.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage teaches

how God calls, tests, and rewards His workmen. 1. Christ's disciples are called into the vineyard of the church to help culture and train lives for fruit bearing. 2. Christ's approaching death suggested the pressing nature of the Gospel work and the scarcity of workers. 3. Man's appeal to Divine justice brings only justice; his appeal to Divine mercy brings life eternal. 4. He who invites has ability to pay, fairness to discriminate, the right to reject, but the desire that all might be saved. 5. A final reckoning time will come for all classes: those who work gladly; those who work complainingly; and the loiterers as well.

### THE LORD CALLING THE LOITERERS TO LABOR.

**The Heavenly Householder's Early Morning Call.** "The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard." A question from Simon Peter was the occasion for the Lord's parable on the vineyard laborers. In Peter's remark that the disciples had forsaken all to follow Christ and in his blunt question, "What shall we have therefore?" there is a false emphasis on the Lord's preference for them. This base element of selfishness in Peter's nature often marred the music of his life.

All the disciples, including the spiritually-minded John, were placing too much importance on the time element in their call, thinking that because they received the earliest call that therefore they were to have pre-eminent positions. Christ reminds them that God had been calling men into His vineyard from the very dawn of creation. Again and again His prophet Jeremiah represents God as saying, "I have sent unto you, rising up early and sending." He began by calling such as Enoch and Abraham, and His voice has been heard in entreaty ever since.

His successive acts in creation made the vineyard ready, and His earliest thoughts made man a laborer together with Him. All of the years of God have been full of hours of grace. True in epochs of history, as in individual lives, there have been certain times when the call of grace sounded louder

and more insistent, marking the first, the third, the sixth, the ninth, and the eleventh hours, nevertheless God's earnest entreaty has continued to sound through all the intervening time.

**God's Workmen Promised Ample Wages.** "When he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard." This sermon-story teaches that it is in the Divine plan to engage every man from the first hour to the last. When at the eleventh hour some were found standing on the streets as loiterers they were condemned and urged to go to work. If any individual stood at a disadvantage in going to the field late he had only himself to blame. He knew of the field, he knew of the grape season, he knew of the need of laborers.

The "penny" was the Roman *denarius*. Tacitus says it was the usual ample day's wages for the soldiers in campaigns who, besides enduring severe and difficult labor, also faced grave danger.

When Peter reminded Christ of all they had forsaken Christ reminds Peter of all they shall receive in return,—houses, lands, and homefolks an hundred fold. Even in this life God pays His workmen generous wages. And after death Christ declared we should inherit eternal life. An inheritance is a gift, not the cash end of a business agreement. Paul makes this distinction, "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life." How thankful we are that a gracious God has given us employment; how careful we should be that our motive is disinterested love, not self-seeking.

**The Promise of the Eleventh Hour—the Precious Hour of Grace.** About the elev-



enth hour he went out and saith, "Why stand ye here all the day idle? Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive." Call after call had sounded forth from the vineyard, but the careless idlers still stand gaping in the market place. So far as the results which might profit the husbandman were concerned there was no necessity for the last call. So far as the real work of the kingdom is concerned it would matter little whether some who have wasted their lives in sin ever heard the last call of grace. But it does matter to them whether the night of death finds them still idlers refusing the Lord's call, or belated laborers, trusting the Lord to do with them what He will. These late ones know that it is through grace they are permitted to enter the vineyard at all. Despising all former calls, wasting all the work hours of the day but one, shame at last seizes upon them, and feeling how richly they deserve the Lord's rebuke, they hasten to the field without asking about the hire, but trusting the good Lord's grace.

Perhaps here is the explanation why Gentiles more readily accepted the Christian invitation than the Jews. The Jews had the prior invitation as God's chosen people, "To the Jew first but also to the Gentile." Though they entered first they served as under a contract, rather than trusting in the compassion of God. Hence they received their full pay as servants but missed the inheritance of sons.

**The Morning Men Murmur at Their Money.** And when they had received the penny, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, "These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us which have borne the burden and heat of the day." But he answered, "Take that thine is, and go thy way."

The evil disposition cannot be hidden. Those who early in the morning had agreed on a penny for twelve hours of labor come now at the day's close grumbling over their burdens, the heat of the sun, and their pay. The good man has no use for such either in his house or in his vineyard. The envious hireling serves sourly and discontentedly for his penny only, and having received his perishable reward he is himself rejected. Only the hireling of a day will forbid the husbandman from being kind and gracious to others. They can only be his friends who understand his mind, recognize his sovereign rights, and are happy in his goodness.

Another and a better day awaits all who have served with a glad and willing mind. Such not only do their Master's work, but learn their Mas-

ter's mind. Christ says to them when the day is over, "I call you no longer servants but friends." And the Father says of such, "They shall go out no more forever."

**Calling the Many, Choosing the Few.** "So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen." God's call is for an honest and full day's work for every man. Some begin in the early morning and are commended for so doing; some begin in middle life and are accepted on equal terms; some idle away their days but come at last repentant, and God's wondrous compassion is extended to them. Life's little day ends. The curtains of death are drawn. And afterwards come great surprises. Some who perhaps were thought of least and last shall sit on thrones of spiritual power and splendor. Some who amid the rude jostlings of the world found no place at the tables of the rich and powerful, shall find themselves seated with the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs.

Not the boasting Jews but the trusting Gentiles; not the proud Pharisees but the penitent publican; not the apostolic treasurers, but the crucified thieves; not the church members of half a century but the converts of a few days. And some who like Judas served only with a cool and cunning calculation as a mere mercenary matter shall go out clutching their bag of gold,—go out into that night of dark dismissal.

The last word of the lesson is its priceless gem: that little word *chosen*. To be selected for the Heavenly Husbandman's House we must possess the lowliest humility. Where He is there can be no murmuring, no jealous comparisons between disciples, no unholy struggles for preference, no bitter disputing over rival claims. Our Husbandman will do us no wrong; whatsoever is right that shall each receive and far more.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what parable of Christ's recorded by Matthew is the vineyard call refused but afterwards accepted? In what one is the husbandman's son slain? 2. What vineyard owner did Jezebel cause to be slain? How was she punished? 3. Where is found Isaiah's song of the vineyard? What did it bring forth? What would Jehovah do to it? 4. What did Christ say of God and Himself as workers? Of His own finished work? What did Paul say of the laborer's right to wages? Of the idler forfeiting his right to eat?

**Challenge Text.** "Son, go — today in my —," Matt. 21: (9)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christ used the slender wire of simple parable to bring to us from Heaven truth powerful as lightning. 2. The rust of idleness eats faster than the rub and wear of labor and dulls instead of brightens. 3. No pains, no gains; no sweat, no sweet; no mill, no meal; no vine, no wine. 4. The marketplace is a profitable place to go if we carry the fruit of our labor, but an unprofitable place to stand in idleness spending valuable time.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM.

And Jesus going up to



took the



apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be



unto the chief



and unto the



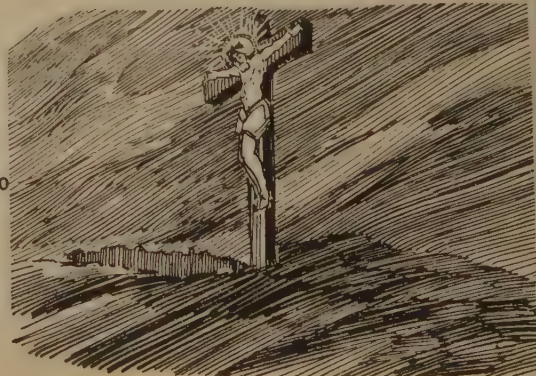
and they shall condemn him to death, And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to



and to



and to



him: and the third day he shall rise again.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 20:17-28—READ MARK 10:32-45, LUKE 9:51-53.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Give me grace to follow in Thy steps. Baptize me with a courageous spirit to go where I ought to even if I must go alone. Strengthen my will to do the hard things when Thy will calls me that way. Let neither ease nor pleasure mean more to me than duty. May the pathway of Thy suffering ever awaken my love and loyalty to Thee. Amen.

By the light of burning martyr-fires  
Christ's bleeding feet I track.

Toiling up new Calvaries ever

With the cross that turns not back.

—J. R. Lowell.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the last month of Christ's ministry, March, A. D. 30, after the raising of Lazarus. Place, Peraea, beyond Jordan, and the journey to Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus, the Twelve and Salome.

**Scripture Setting:** The Path to the Cross. Submitting to suffering. Isa. 50:4-9. Patient endurance, Heb. 12:1-4. Sustaining joy in sacrifice. Phil. 2:12-18. Obedience through suffering. Heb. 5:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage presents the spiritual and physical leadership of Jesus. 1.

Like a seasoned general, Christ accelerated His movements as He pushed to the final victory of the campaign. 2. His followers were willing to share the honors, but had not been tested out under the fire of service. 3. Fear, hunger, weariness, faithlessness, treachery flew like arrows, but they did not hinder Christ's advance. 4. The way to Calvary was a daily battle to find or make a way for a lost world back to God. 5. Christ trod the wine-press alone that His triumph might be complete and His salvation His own free gift.

### CHRIST CONFRONTING CALVARY'S CROSS.

**Striding Before, and Seeing Beforehand.** "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid." The call of the Northern leaders near the close of the civil war was "On to Richmond!" The call to Christ near the end of His earthly career was "On to Calvary!" His disciples were amazed and afraid. And well they might be; amazed at the audacity of this Lonely Man; afraid that they might perish in the catastrophe that awaited their Leader. They counselled Him to keep away from Jerusalem during the passover feast, for the Pharisaic party had threatened His life. But the fires of a Divine courage burned within Him, and He went.

What a picture this is of a fine impatience to plunge into the baptism of fire! It pictures Christ striding along the steep mountain path far in advance of His timid, shrinking disciples who could only wonder at the resolve unconquerable that blazed from their Master's eyes.

Christ could march in advance of them because He could see in advance of them. He had a knowledge they did not possess of the meaning and mystery of His death. They feared He would be killed; He knew it was necessary He should die. For years He walked steadily forward in the clear realization of an agonizing death awaiting Him. His whole life was a journey to Calvary.

A prophetic painting by Bouguereau represents Joseph and Mary in their flight into Egypt with the child Jesus. In the early morning the infant Christ is taking His first steps. With His little arms thrown wide He

balances His body which upon the sand makes the drawn-out shadow of a cross. In the presence of that prophetic shadow of suffering He walked most of the days of His life. It was this that made Him say, "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

**The Iron Will and Steadfast Face.** "And it came to pass when the days were well-nigh come that He should be received up, He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem." Christ was always the Master and Controller of events. He was not carried to Jerusalem by the force of circumstances, for there were plenty of hiding places around Nazareth. But He actively precipitated a collision between Himself and the Jewish authorities. He drew the eyes of His enemies upon Himself after He knew that sentence of death had been pronounced upon Him. No force of foreordination, or decree, or necessity overpowered His will, for, speaking of His own life, He said, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up." In His death as truly as in His resurrection Christ was active. In the Garden He unsheathed the sword of His omnipotent will, and as the zigzag lightning played through the darkness the Roman soldiers fell as dead men. On the hill of crucifixion He refused the stupefying drug, dying not of exhaustion, but yielding up His Spirit with a mighty shout.

Isaiah in prophecy saw the soldiers smiting His back, spitting in His face, heaping shame upon shame, but heard Him declare, "The Lord God will help Me; therefore have I set my face as a flint." In the expressions

"set My face as a flint," and "steadfastly set His face," we can see the muscles of determination tighten across His jaw like a man desperately in earnest. He went conscious that death was waiting; He died because He willed to die.

**His Human Hesitancy.** "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" The necessity of Christ steadfastly setting His face for that last journey grew out of a natural reluctance, a human shrinking from the cross. He was willing to go all the way, but He did not gladly go. The agony of Gethsemane was not a shadow; it was an awful reality as He prayed, "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass." When He saw its great place in His Father's purpose, nature recoiled, but His great soul cried, "Nevertheless, as Thou wilt." His flesh and blood quivered beforehand with the suffering He felt in anticipation. It was necessary, therefore, that He should instinctively grip Himself lest He should swerve or recoil.

"He endured the cross, despising the shame." Without the human shrinking there could not have been the endurance; except for the sense of shame and ignominy He could not have despised it. His disciples felt they could drink this cup with Him, but he knew they would fail. There was provided an easier path for them. When the Lord sweat blood and agonized in prayer they slept. When He hung upon the Cross they fled. As Christ set His face to go to Jerusalem each step along that consecrated road was a separate victory of the resolute soul over the reluctant body. And since the steadfast love and unmeasurable suffering of Christ were unique, it follows that the throne of His Heavenly glory should be unique. To use His own words, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?"

**The Law of True Greatness.** "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." The last journey of Jesus was marred by the self-seeking of two of His disciples, James and John. Evidently they had been ashamed to approach the Master, and so had encouraged their mother, Salome, to ask Him for conspicuous posts in the new Kingdom about to be set up. He had declared previously that the Twelve should sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes. Their ambition led them to ask for the right hand and the left hand place, the chief places of honor. They were good men, but their motives were mixed. They must be prepared by hard training and the Spirit's filling to occupy the great posts they did afterwards fill.

Christ's answer would suggest that spiritual pre-

eminence is not so much a gift to be bestowed as an honor to be deserved. Their exaltation was to come not from an outward promotion, but an inner consecration. Some one has said, "You cannot travel within, and stand still without." The great characters of earth, like Christ, have built their lives on some great sacrificial law; have not aimed at greatness at all, but have appeared at last to tower head and shoulders above their fellowmen, because their spirit of sacrifice and willingness to serve has led them to the very summits of being. It is only a new affection that will give the impelling power to a life, treading down difficulties, mounting obstacles, persevering through apparent defeats, and winning at last the heights of moral grandeur.

**The End of the March in View.** "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." In Christ's life there was no backtracking, no retreating. He moved right on to the end. For He possessed the advantage of knowing beforehand that He was to triumph by the sacrifice of Himself. All the holy resolve, the bloody sweat and dying agony of Jesus would not avail to wash away our guilt were it not that His sacrifice was conceived in love. It was love canceling law.

But by His agony we gain some measurement of the greatness of His love. In the sacrifice of Jesus God's love was written in letters that could be read from the stars. He who could rightfully say, "All power is given unto Me," emptied Himself of His strength and authority for the time, and under the weight of His own cross staggered toward Calvary. "Having loved, He loved unto the end." And the world needs today more of this love that lasts, the love that toils the long, thorny pathway to the end even though it toil alone. In our law courts, in our rescue missions, in our missionary work we need more of the love that "never faileth." Because Christ lived and loved we have today judges of juvenile courts who use their influence, not to punish, but redeem; big brothers in college towns, and great teachers like Arnold of Rugby, who lead their scholars to Christ.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What special privileges, with Peter, were given James and John? 2. What six things did Christ foretell the Twelve would happen to Him at Jerusalem? 3. What did Christ mean by asking if the two brothers could drink of the cup He should drink of? 4. In what pronounced way was attention called to His entrance into Jerusalem?

**Challenge Text.** But I have a — to be — with; and how am I — till it be —. Luke 12: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christ's offering of Himself was purely voluntary; He could not save Himself because He would redeem the world. 2. The greatness of Christ's heroism is in that He deliberately counted the cost; He suffered with no words of applause, but of infamy and scorn; He gave himself to His enemies, prayed for them, died for them. 3. Christ moved on to what seemed defeat and disaster, but which faith made a fadeless diadem. 4. The disciples by traveling far behind Christ were engulfed in denial and cowardice.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



And they came to Jericho:  
and as he went out of  
Jericho with his disciples  
and a great number



blind Bartimæus, the son  
of Timæus, sat by the



And  
when  
he heard  
that  
it was  
Jesus of



he began to cry out,  
and say, Jesus, thou son  
of David, have mercy on  
me. And many charged  
him that he should hold his  
peace: but he cried the  
more a great deal, Thou  
son of David, have mercy  
on me. And Jesus stood  
still, and commanded him  
to be called. And they



saying unto him, Be of  
good comfort, rise; he  
calleth thee. And he,



rose, and



And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

MARK 10: 46-52.

**THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS MARK 10:46-52. READ ALSO MATT. 20:29-34;  
LUKE 18:35-43.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, how glad am I that Thou didst come our way and offer to us Thy gifts of light and salvation. How dark would be our way without the light of Thy Word, and how sad would be our lot without Thy sympathy. Help us by all means that we may use to carry Thy light to the lands that are in darkness. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

While life prolongs its precious light,  
Mercy is found and peace is given;  
But soon, ah! soon, approaching night  
Shall blot out every hope of Heaven.  
—Timothy Dwight.

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday, March 31, A. D. 30, during Christ's last journey to Jerusalem. Place, the road leaving Jericho, six hours' journey from Jerusalem. Persons, Christ and His disciples, a blind beggar, named Bartimæus, accompanied by a nameless one similarly afflicted and a great crowd of attendants.

**Scripture Setting:** Calling Upon Christ for Light. A prayer of confidence in darkness, Job 23:1-12. Waiting only upon God, Psa. 62:5-12. Answer to whole-hearted prayer, Jer. 29:10-14. Healed by the prayer of faith, Mark 5:25-34. Christ's answering call, John 11:3, 20-28.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage presents Jesus as Healer and Saviour, inspiring both love and joy. 1. The anxious inquirer who hears Jesus and refuses to be silenced will be heard and helped. 2. The cold-hearted disciple would silence the call for help and rebuke the seeking soul. 3. The compassionate Christ listens to need and relieves it, changes darkness to light, and transforms hinderers into helpers. 4. The disciple, warmed by Christ's sympathy, invites, comforts and instructs the needy. 5. Multitudes, changed by the love of Christ, joyfully journey on with Christ in their midst towards the Heavenly Jerusalem.

**THE BEGGAR'S PLEA THAT HALTS THE KING'S PROCESSION.**

**A Blind Beggar Embowered in Beauty.** "As He went out of Jericho with His disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimæus sat by the highway side, begging." Jericho in the time of Christ was a famous and beautiful city standing on a green oasis watered by many springs. Its large and prosperous population called it the "paradise of God." The bees worked amid its numerous flowers, producing honey that was famous, and the air was heavy with the odor of roses and palm trees.

Amid all this beauty and plenty Jesus was passing, together with a great company of pilgrims. Already the spirit of the triumphal entry, soon to occur at Jerusalem, was in the hearts of His followers. The procession moved on from Jericho with Christ and His disciples at its head, looking very much like a king surrounded by his court, going to his coronation. Two there were by the highway who heard the marching feet and the mingled voices, but saw nothing of the splendid pageant sweeping by them. Bartimæus and his nameless companion may have had a shaded place under a roadside tree for many years, and travelers accustomed to pass that way were doubtless familiar with their repeated calls for alms, "The blind, the blind, remember the blind!"

Blind in a paradise of beauty—are they not the type of many who grope in spiritual darkness, sitting daily where they might see the King in His beauty, but having their eyes blinded by the god of this world? For

it is only the pure in heart who see the spiritual beauty of Jesus.

**The Despairing Cry of Desperate Need.** "When he heard that it was Jesus, he began to cry out." It is a well-known fact that the blind beggars of Palestine have most acute hearing. A recent traveler there declares that they almost know every man's voice who passes, unless he is a stranger. Bartimæus, intently listening, had caught the name of Jesus, and he is seized with a sudden fear that unless he is heard now he will be forever robbed of the opportunity that is slipping past. Some there were in the procession who tried to quiet the blind man, but his voice was strong, and he felt that his need was imperative. Instead of holding his peace, "he cried the more a great deal."

In his downright earnestness he is the type of the anxious inquirer after religion. In his sense of need, his feeling that this is his last chance, the increasing intensity of his cries, and his remarkable faith, we have the very elements that draw forth the Saviour's sympathy and help. It was then or never, for Jesus was leaving Jericho for the last time. What a pity that the cold disciples and the heartless multitude administering an undeserved rebuke did not rather become eyes to the blind and lead them to Jesus!

We sometimes wonder whether Christianity is an ecclesiastical procession sweeping by, or a relief column marching to save the besieged. If Jesus is



allowed to be at the head of the procession the line will halt whenever the cry of the needy is raised. Wherever the procession sweeps by, indifferent to the heart hunger of the poor, though it call itself a Christian church and carry religious banners, be sure it is only an ecclesiastical parade with the Son of David left out. It may not be in the official program to halt that beggars may be healed, but it was in the official program of Jesus always, for He declared on setting out from Nazareth, "He hath anointed Me to preach deliverance to the captives, the recovery of sight to the blind."

**Hinderers Changed to Helpers.** "Jesus commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; He calleth thee." Here as at many other times stands forth the marked leadership of Jesus over the disciples and the multitude. Not infrequently the disciples had attempted to protect their Master from the obtrusiveness of others, feeling also that no one should interfere with the teaching and companionship which Christ specially offered them. How adroitly does Christ transform these unintentional hinderers into enthusiastic helpers! By a word from Christ these who a moment before chided the blind, now comfort. "Be of good comfort." Instead of silencing the cries, they entreat to come to Christ. "Rise; He calleth thee." It is beautiful to see how the spirit of the whole multitude is altered by the tact, courage, and compassion of Christ. The compassion of Jesus is contagious.

The multitude is not wholly evil, nor even intentionally selfish, but they need the masterful leadership and unflinching sympathy of Jesus. The church today, like the disciples of old, turn a deaf ear to human need unless the living Christ is in the midst directing and inspiring. Whenever the church in discouragement feels like saying, "Send the multitude away," Jesus calls back with unfaltering faith, "Give ye them to eat." He divides the company; He commands the disciples; He multiplies the bread. But through His leadership and inspiration the clumsy, fearful, hindering disciples become most efficient workers.

**Christ Gives Right Royally.** "The blind man said, Lord that I might receive my sight. Jesus said, Thy faith hath made thee whole." It was a custom in ancient times for kings when visiting each other to exchange royal gifts. Each king was allowed to express his preference in the choice of his gift. Christ treats the blind man's beggary as if it were royalty by asking, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" The beggar had addressed Christ with a royal title, "Jesus, Thou Son of David," and now Christ clothes the beggar with the privilege of a king—

that of selecting his own gift. With Christ even beggars may be choosers.

It was a perilous moment for ragged, coatless Bartimæus, this moment of choice; for before him was a whole kingdom from which to choose, since the King had given him unrestricted right of choice.

It will be remembered that God gave such a choice to Solomon when first he came to the throne. It will be remembered also that beautiful Queen Esther was given a royal choice. Both of these young rulers chose wisely and unselfishly. But when drunken Herod gave vain Salome her choice she listened to evil counsel and chose murder and the blood of God's great prophet. Before every young life does there not stretch a whole kingdom from which to make our choice? What then to me is the summum bonum, or the greatest good? Bartimæus might have chosen alms, for certainly he needed money. He might have chosen clothes, for he had thrown away his ragged coat in his eagerness to find Christ. But his decision falls without delay, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." There is an old adage which runs,

"If wishes were horses,  
Then beggars might ride."

With Bartimæus, to wish was to receive. No longer a blind beggar pinned to that bit of ground in the shade of the tree, but instantly flooded with light, free to move and to take his own place among the world's workers. Under the circumstances his was not an unwise choice, for by it he leaped into his lost manhood. But with the gift of sight came also the glad experience of faith. Christ's giving was larger than the beggar's asking. He asked for sight, he received salvation as the free gift of God. Said Jesus, "Go thy way," but the grateful soul decided that Christ's way would be his way, and with gladness of heart he began following Him surrounded by an exulting multitude.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What title did the multitude give Jesus; what title did Bartimæus give, and what difference of faith was thus expressed? 2. For what did Bartimæus first ask? What afterwards? What two things did he receive? 3. Name three Bible characters who were given royal choices, and state what they chose? 4. What evidence did Bartimæus give that he was healed? That he was saved? 5. What did Christ declare was the quality in the blind man that produced his transformation?

**Challenge Text:** "Open Thou mine ———, that I may behold ——— things out of Thy ———." Psa. 119: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The natural light is pleasant, but "Covet earnestly the best gifts." 2. The knowledge, courage and zeal which Christ inspires puts men on their feet and sets them moving toward the Holy City. 3. The soul that seeks and finds rises from a general prayer for mercy to a specific, personal call for help. 4. Faith is progressive; first, sitting where Jesus passes; second, hearing coming footsteps; third, learning this is "Jesus of Nazareth"; fourth, hailing Him "Son of David"; fifth, beseeching Him as "Rabboni," or Lord; sixth, following Him as Master through life.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

## ZACCHAEUS. THE PUBLICAN.

And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And, behold, there was a



named  
Zacchæus,  
which was the  
chief among  
the publicans,  
and he was



And he  
sought to see



who he was; and  
could not for the



because  
he was



of stature. And he



and



into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS LUKE 19:1-10.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I have nowhere in the home of my heart a room that is worthy for Thee. But if Thou wilt honor me with Thy presence I will try to live more worthy of Thee.

May Thy presence hallow my life as the glory of Thy infancy did hallow the Bethlehem manger.

Abide in my home today and bring salvation to it as Thou didst save the home of Zacchaeus the publican. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

Judge of man's destiny, God's Christ!  
Hope, Love, and Mercy on My footsteps wait.

O'er earth's vast fields I walk; wild tribes forsake  
Idols and heathen shrines to keep My tryst.  
Sound I today thy heart-door;—soon or late  
My lantern dartles once at every gate.  
If sleeping wake—if feasting, rise before  
I turn away. Now is the hour of fate.  
For they who follow Me reach that blest state  
Called life immortal, and conquer sin's domains,  
E'en Death. But those who, doubting, hesitate  
Consign themselves to hell's perpetual pains,  
Seek peace too late, and perishing, implore.  
Seek Me this day lest I return no more.—T. B. R.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** .Time, Friday, March 31, A. D. 30. Place, a street in Jericho and the house of Zacchaeus probably not far distant. **Persons,** Jesus and the Twelve, a caravan of His disciples, Zacchaeus and other residents of the city.

**Scripture Setting:** The Search for Jesus and its Rewards. Andrew and John seeking Christ, John 1:35-42. The Greeks inquiring for Jesus, John 12:17-23. The rewards Christ offers the rich, Rev. 3:17-21. Christ dwelling with men, Rev. 21:1-5. Righteousness through restitution, Ezek. 33:14-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage symbolizes the mutual joy when the seeking Christ and searching humanity find each other. 1. Things

to be overcome in seeking Christ: (a) the crowd that would press us back; (b) our own natural limitations; (c) our sense of unworthiness. 2. What Christ will lead man to do: (a) to eagerly wait His coming; (b) to descend from false positions of pride and self-esteem; (c) to seek a new heart; (d) to establish a new home life; (e) to adopt new business methods. 3. Some evidences of conversion: (a) public confession of faith; (b) restitution for wrong; (c) practice of benevolence. 4. The order of Christ's progress: (a) to the individual; (b) to the home circle; (c) to the city; (d) to the nation; (e) to the race.

### SEEING JESUS UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

**A Sinner's Haste to See the Saviour.** "He sought to see Jesus, who He was. And he ran before and climbed up into a sycamore tree." One afternoon in early spring a short-bodied customs officer might have been seen running down the already crowded street of Jericho. The crowd repulsed him as an unwelcome intruder, for this Jew, Zacchaeus, was the head of the tax and customs department, the paid representative of Rome's cruelty and power. His discomfort was increased by the fact that he could see nothing over the shoulders of that dense double tier of humanity, so this prominent citizen in his eagerness condescends to shin up an overhanging sycamore, or Egyptian fig tree. Its leaves would partly hide him, and its branches would offer a vantage point for observing the approach of a notable Visitor.

What strange impulse could it be to urge this rich man to take such an exceptional position? Was it mere curiosity to look upon One of whom the whole nation was talking? Was it the power of conscience that long had struggled within to bring forth a confession of dishonest transactions? Was it some powerful attraction towards the Teacher who, unlike the harsh leaders of Israel, had often spoken words of hope for publicans and sinners? We would rather think it was the Divine Spirit that leads, all

unconsciously, every soul to its golden hour of spiritual opportunity.

**Placing Ourselves in the Place of His Promises.** "For He was to pass that way." Christ's passage through the "City of Palms" was signalized by two remarkable incidents. As He entered in He finds the two blind men waiting His coming, and calling for mercy. As He leaves He finds Zacchaeus has taken a position on the route He was to take. These positions in both instances were well chosen, probably on the main thoroughfare along which the caravans always travelled. Zacchaeus had some good ground for the selection of his position. He had somehow predetermined the movement of Jesus. He hastened to this spot, in advance of the thronging, curious multitude, declaring thereby his serious and deliberate purpose to put himself under the influence of Christ. Such a determination is sure to lead to His acquaintance if persisted in. Walking in the counsel of the ungodly, standing in the way of sinners, or sitting in the seat of the scornful will not tend to cultivate His friendship.

David found that the sanctuary was the waiting-place where the Lord was sure to pass. "Righteousness shall go before Him, and shall set us in the way of His steps." The man who habitually absents himself from church, who shuns the gatherings of religious people as he would a contagious

disease, who never prays and never reads the Bible but is firm in his declaration that there is no God, belongs in the same class with the man who declares there is no sunrise because he lacks the enterprise to get up early and see it.

**The Saviour's Haste to Be the Sinner's Guest.** "Jesus came to the place, looked up, saw him, and said, Zacchaeus, make haste, come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house." Christ had power to discern the Spirit's working in the human heart. "He knew what was in man." He who read the spirit and character of Nathaniel while he was still under the fig tree instantly read the inner thoughts of this small body, partly concealed by the fig tree's foliage. He who calleth the stars by number and calleth His sheep by name beamed upon Zacchaeus with a glad look of recognition, and called aloud his name, knowing by Divine intuition that His Father's appointment required He should become the publican's Guest.

Zacchaeus was in no greater haste to climb into its branches than was Jesus to have him climb down. Old experiences, however heavenly, must be left behind when Jesus commands us to enter into better experiences ahead and duties that require haste. A few steps and Christ was at the home of the chief publican. We need not be surprised that in His life of strange contrasts He should pass the priests by and lodge with the publican. Wherever a son of Abraham is lost, there is He needed, and whenever such an one is restored, the purpose of His coming is attained.

**Murmuring at the Messiah's Mission.** "When they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is a gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner." The priests could see no good in the publican. To their prejudiced eyes he was only "a man that is a sinner." But to the more sympathetic eyes of Christ he was "a son of Abraham." Between the Pharisee and publican who went up to the temple to pray, Christ could easily detect the difference between pride and penitence. The home of Zacchaeus' heart was not fit to entertain a Heavenly Guest, but he gave over its key to Jesus to come in and cleanse it thoroughly. The priests would neither invite Christ nor allow Him to be invited.

The words so often spoken in utter contempt, "He receiveth sinners and eateth with them," is now inscribed upon a world-wide banner flung to the four winds of heaven, becoming the distinguishing mark of His religion. Jesus is the Friend of sinners.

**Zacchaeus Publishes His Program.** "Zacchaeus stood and said, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to feed the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold." The best proof of the publican's conversion is his renunciation of the fruits of his sin. Restored himself, he would, so far as was in his power, restore to others what by right was theirs. He would practice towards all a fourfold restitution required by Moses only in exceptional cases.

No restitution of stolen goods, however generous, can compensate before God for guilt, but before men it is a seal of sincerity. As his sin had been open and flagrant, so now is his intention to lead a new life declared openly.

From that moment his life becomes a stream of gracious influence. He is the friend of the poor; he is an example to the selfish rich; he is the means of bringing salvation to his own household; and to all he is a shining ornament of grace, bringing unknown luster to the calling of the publican. Though the Clementines record that he finally became bishop of Cæsarea, all other sources point to the fact that instead of being called apart, as was Matthew the publican, he remained in his office of tax gatherer, serving in faithfulness to the end of his life.

**Jesus Publishes His Age-Long Purpose.** "The Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost." Jericho the perfumed is described as the Eden of Palestine, but in this lesson we see it was the home of a fallen Adam.

Jesus, in His sad journey to the cross, passes through its streets, not to enjoy its indescribable scenery, but because by tarrying a little while with Zacchaeus He might restore to the fold one sheep that had strayed. This journey, therefore, through the City of Palms is a beautiful symbol of the Saviour's continuous journey through the world's history, becoming the Guest of all those who have the soul-eagerness to look upon Him and the soul-faith to accept His saving power. As Jesus leaves this city forever to plunge into the fiery baptism of His passion week, He remembers with joy that He leaves behind Him at least one house flooded with the salvation He was so soon to procure for a whole lost world.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Which of the Twelve was a publican? 2. What Bible character was converted on highway, in jail, in a chariot, in his own house, on a cross? 3. What look of Christ made a disciple weep, revealed the heart of a guileless Israelite? 4. What experience led Jacob to pledge one-tenth of his increase to God? 5. Name three proofs of the interest of Zacchaeus in Christ; three proofs of his conversion.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The rich need the Gospel and are not incapable of receiving it. 2. It is better to give now than to defer our charities till death is about to wrest our money from us. 3. When Christ becomes the guest of our heart we will take Him into our home and into our counting room. 4. Reason is of low stature and cannot see the promise; one must climb by faith to see Jesus.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY.

And being in Bethany in the



of  
Simon the



as he



there  
came a



having an alabaster



of ointment of



very precious; and she  
brake the box, and



And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.



# THE ANOINTING AT BETHANY.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 14:3-11. READ MATT. 26:6-16, ALSO JOHN 12:1-8.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Help us to bring gifts, however rich or poor they may be, and bestow them upon Him who said, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto Me." Thou who hast flooded our hearts with a love Divine, shall we not give Thee a perfect trust that like the fragment of ointment shall rise to Thee? May the spirit of discord never enter our

hearts. Keep them in harmony with thine own. In Jesus' dear name. Amen.

"It is not the deed we do,  
Though the deed be ever so fair,  
But the love that the dear Lord looketh for,  
Hidden with holy care  
In the heart of the deed so fair."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the first day of April, A. D. 30, five days before the passover and six days before the crucifixion. **Place,** the house of Simon the leper in Bethany, where Jesus was an invited guest at a supper. Mark departs somewhat from the chronological order and inserts this narrative here because of its association with the betrayal of Jesus.

**Scripture Setting:** Love Expressed in Deeds. A mother's love, 2 Sam. 21:8-10. Devotion to a king, 2 Sam. 23:13-18. Love for a stranger, Luke 10:30-35. For Jesus at His death, Matt. 27:57-60. The temple offering, Luke 21:1-4. God's love for us, John 3:16. As unto Christ, Matt. 25:35-40.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This incident furnishes us one of the most beautiful scenes in Jesus' life, for it was seldom indeed that He who so continuously bestowed His gifts upon others was ever Himself so honored. 1. The outpouring of a reverent and grateful heart, vs. 3. 2. A discordant note is sounded in this symphony of love, vs. 4, 5. 3. Jesus would restore the harmony by suggesting that the rare occasion justifies the rare gift and an impending crisis lends it holy significance, vs. 6, 7, 8. 4. The immortality of good deeds, vs. 9, 5. This beautiful act of devotion is heightened by the dark background of a traitor's deed, as he goes to negotiate the price of blood, vs. 10, 11.

### THE FRAGRANCE OF A BEAUTIFUL DEED.

**Two Possibilities.** In every experience of life there are two possibilities, benefit or harm. It depends upon us which of the two we shall receive. Jesus and His disciples have reached the village of Bethany after the long, tiresome journey over the steep, rough road from Jericho; and in this quiet village, on the eastern slope of the brow of the Mount of Olives, they tarry for the Sabbath. Here there are hearts that have learned to love the Master as few of His friends had ever learned. The evening of the Sabbath, Simon, the leper, prepared a feast and Jesus was his guest. Some have thought that Simon was related to the family at Bethany so well known to us. There seems to be but little foundation for this theory, but from the title that he bears we may conjecture that he is one whom Jesus has rescued from his sad life among the tombs, and with His healing touch restored him to his home and friends. Little wonder that Jesus should be a welcome guest in such a home.

Mary, who had received a brother back to life, shows her thankfulness by bringing a very costly gift, an alabaster box of purest ointment; breaking it, and anointing the Saviour's head. Stronger than the perfume of the ointment was the fragrance of the heart's devotion and wherever the gospel has been preached this has been spoken of as a memorial to her love. In strange contrast is the effect of this deed upon the disciples, or to be more explicit, as John relates the story, upon Judas Iscariot, to

whom the offering seemed but a waste of wealth. From that hour the traitor resolved to betray his Lord.

**Why This Waste?** The guests in Simon's house were not sitting at the table as is our custom in this day, but were reclining upon couches placed about a low table. Jesus and His disciples, Simon, Lazarus and probably other of the chief citizens of Bethany were about the table. Many of the town's people, who were not invited guests were permitted, according to oriental courtesy, to stand at a respectful distance and watch the progress of the feast. Martha, dear, faithful, motherly soul that she was, was serving; and Mary, gentle and loving, comes with her precious gift, breaks the box of alabaster and anoints the Savior's head. Then it is that the disciples, and especially Judas, murmur against the seeming waste.

It is easy for us to condemn Judas as he asks: "To what purpose hath this waste of ointment been made;" but oh, heart of mine, hast thou not formed this question and woven it within thy thoughts as some devoted soul poured out a life where no one else would go? Among the lepers of India where men and women who might have won laurels for themselves at home, have gone to break their alabaster boxes upon those whose wretchedness they have relieved, as they taught them of Him who said to the lepers of old: "Be thou clean." Have you and I not wondered, why this waste?

Mary's offering was a very costly one. Its value in our money was about fifty dollars and consid-



ering the purchasing power of money as contrasted between that day and this, it would be valued today between three and four hundred dollars. It was the costliness of the offering that caused the question to be raised. There are today disciples of the utilitarian school who would have us believe that this is a legitimate question in the realm of the costly and the beautiful, but when that which is costly and beautiful ministers to the soul culture of man there can be no waste. Our American cities are appropriating great tracts of valuable land that the poor may enjoy the beauties of nature and the children of the slums may find culture of body and soul. This is not waste. The poor man coming home on Saturday night with the provisions for the Sunday meal and flowers for the one who has labored at home, has not wasted his money.

**What She Could.** It was not long before this incident that a great sorrow overshadowed the home in Bethany. (John 11:1-45.) Lazarus, the beloved brother, sickened and died and the hearts of the sisters were crushed with grief. A messenger brought the sad news of illness to Jesus and before Jesus reached Bethany the body of Lazarus had been laid in the tomb and the heart-broken sisters greeted Him with the words "Lord, if Thou hadst been here, my brother had not died." He who is the Resurrection and the Life called to His friend and Lazarus returned to his loved ones. How grateful were the sisters at Bethany! How can they find expression for their gratitude? The supper at Simon's home affords an opportunity and Mary brings the precious gift.

Had you spoken to Mary that day and commended her for this act of love she would have assured you that it was nothing to which any notice should be given: just a little gift she felt prompted to bring to one she loved. Great souls never know how rich are their deeds. There were many things Mary could not do. She could not influence the scribes and the Pharisees of Jerusalem to put aside their prejudices and accept the Messiah; she could not stem the swiftly moving tide of opposition that must have filled the hearts of the Master's friends with apprehension, but she could let Him know that her own heart was overflowing with love and gratitude. She could bring this box of nard and anoint the Saviour's head. Oh, life, so bound by the sphere of daily duties that make the opportunities for service in His name seem so small, remember, not the greatness of the gift but the grace of the giver and the fact that it was just what could be done, these won the Master's favor.

**For the Burying.** Was there a fear in Mary's heart that the hatred of the Jewish authorities might lead them to put to death

the Son of God as He went from Bethany to keep the passover at Jerusalem? There is nothing in the text to warrant this conclusion, but who can say that the deep intuition of a woman's heart quickened by a love that is of so close a kin to the Divine could not have conceived of the fate that awaited her Lord. As the fragrance of the ointment fills the room the shadow of the impending event steals over the Spirit of the Master and leads Him to think of the fitness of the deed. Only a few days and faithful women did bear spices to the tomb that they might anoint His body but "she hath anointed My body beforehand for the burying."

How much better to bestow our gifts upon the living than upon the dead. "If my friends have alabaster boxes full of the fragrant perfume of sympathy and affection laid away which they intend to break over my body, I would rather they would bring them out in my weary and troubled hours, and open them, that I may be refreshed and cheered by them while I need them. . . . I would rather have a plain coffin without a flower, a funeral without a eulogy, than life without the sweetness of love and sympathy. Flowers on the coffin cast no fragrance backward on the weary road."

**And Judas Iscariot Went Away.** Poor Judas! Blind and deaf and dumb to the beauty and sacredness of Mary's gift and yet in the very presence of Him who would have healed him, had he only yielded to Jesus' healing touch. Judas was not always so. The sin of covetousness had crept into his heart and he had fostered it until it had become his master and found expression in his base act of betrayal. Mary had let love have its perfect way in her heart and it led her to bring her gift to her Lord, and the fragrance of her act will outlast the centuries.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How long before the crucifixion did the events of this lesson occur? 2. How far is Bethany from Jerusalem? 3. Of what particular event was Mary's offering an expression of gratitude? 4. Name several forms of waste in life. 5. Mention the waste in connection with our industrial, social and financial systems. 6. What memorial has Jesus left us of His love? 7. How can we best bestow our gifts upon Him today?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Jesus has taught the human heart in every age to find objects for all its love and channels for all its efforts. 2. There is nothing that so vexes a narrow, stingy soul as to see generosity in others. 3. "To what purpose is this waste?" the worldly-minded ask when the church makes her offering for missions. 4. Jesus not only reminded us that we have the poor with us always, but He added, "When ye will ye can do them good." 5. Consciously or unconsciously we are erecting memorials that stand as witnesses to our character.

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



# THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And



and



and they



And a  
very  
great  
multitude



others



and



And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATTHEW 21:1-16.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for the loyal hearts who knew Jesus as King. For the innocent children who proclaimed their hosannas. For that triumphal procession which has been passing through the centuries under the leadership of the Christ. We thank Thee that we can be a part of this great company. Help us, not only in praise,

but in practice, to be loyal to the King. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Oh that with yonder sacred throng  
We at His feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown Him Lord of all."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Sunday and Monday, April 2 and 3, the year 30 A. D., the last week of Jesus' life. Place, the Mount of Olives between Bethany and Jerusalem. The temple within the city. Persons, Jesus, disciples, multitudes, children.

**Scripture Setting:** Calls for Decision. A call to Israel. Josh. 24:15. Jehovah or Baal? 1 Kings 18:21. A voice in the wilderness. Matt. 3:1-12. Calls to discipleship. Mark 1:16-18. Luke 9:59. The Gospel call. Acts 2:37-42. The Spirit and the Bride say come. Rev. 2:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Once a company of angels heralded the coming of the King as He lay a Babe in the manger cradle. In the Scripture

that we are studying, men, women and children of the earth take up the theme of the angels and sing "Hosanna to the Son of David." 1. Blessed are the unnamed subjects of the uncrowned King, vs. 1-3. 2. The prophetic vision of the coming King fulfilled, vs. 4, 5. 3. How faithfully His subjects obey the King, v. 6. 4. The King comes in triumph with the glad acclaim of the multitudes, vs. 7-10. 5. The King comes to His palace and drives out the usurper, vs. 12, 13. 6. The King's spirit is manifested in helpful ministries, v. 14. 8. How blind the eyes, how deaf the ears of those whose hatred crucified their King, vs. 15, 16.

### JESUS PROCLAIMED KING.

**The Messianic Christ.** The prophets and seers of the Old Testament had been constantly telling of the coming of the King who should be established upon the throne of David. Now for three years the King had been living among His people as a teacher and a prophet, but the rulers and men of authority had despised Him and rejected Him as their Messiah, and when the multitudes of the common people would have proclaimed Him as their King, He withdrew from their presence. As the passover season was approaching in the third year of His public ministry, Jesus had "steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem," and after quietly spending the Sabbath in the peaceful village of Bethany, on Sunday morning, two of His disciples are sent into the neighboring village of Bethphage, where they shall find the colt upon which Jesus is to ride in triumph into Jerusalem and thus fulfil the Scriptures (Isa. 62:11), and by this demonstration proclaim Himself as their Messiah.

**Use for the Lowly.** When Jesus sent the two disciples into the village to bring the ass and its colt for His triumphal entry, He requested His disciples to say to any who might ask concerning the taking of the animals, "The Lord hath need of them." It was not always that these lowly animals could be of service to the Master, but at this particular time they, and they only, could supply the need. How often we despise the day of lowly service and of humble gifts

and wrap our single talent in the napkin of distrust because it seems a gift so small for the Master's service. And yet the greatest progress in the Kingdom is made, not because there are a few men, wonderfully endowed, who are leading in the work, but because there are multitudes of humble disciples who are bringing what they have, the lowly gifts and the humble talents, realizing that "the Lord hath need of them."

**The Palms.** Going out to meet an approaching guest, and escorting him to one's house with a show of honor, is a common custom throughout the East.

Thus it was that Abraham was welcomed by the kings of Canaan when he returned from his pursuit of Chedorlaomer; that Jephtha was welcomed by his daughter and her companions; that David was welcomed by singing and dancing women, out of all the cities of Israel, as he came back from the slaughter of the Philistines. Herodotus records that when Xerxes was passing over the bridge of the Hellespont, the way before him was strewn with branches of myrtle, while burning perfumes filled the air. Quintus Curtius tells of the scattering of flowers in the way before Alexander the Great when he entered Babylon.

What a contrast between the triumphal procession of the conquering heroes of earth and that procession which entered Jerusalem with the Son of David. They had come from a work of terror and desolation, He from a ministry of healing and restoration; they bringing their captives and the trophies of war, He surrounded by a multitude kindled with the impulses of wonder and of love. Among those who waved the palm branches and spread their garments in His way were some whose eyes had never seen the light of day until Jesus touched them. There were hands waving palms that once were palsied, voices shouting hosannas

that once were dumb. Love and gratitude blended in their hearts as they proclaimed their King.

**Lawful But Not Expedient.** There was need of the money changers in the court of the temple, for the worshippers had come from all parts of the world and the temple tax must be paid in the Jewish coin. It was a great convenience to those who came from a distance to be able to purchase the sacrifice so near the place of its use. How easy it must have been for the temple authorities to have justified this condition! How this privilege was abused!

When Jesus entered He found a perfect rabble in the court of the Gentiles. Oriental bargaining is always accompanied by much demonstration for there is never a fixed price; the priests made gain out of the traffic and there was much opportunity for extortion and all of this in that part of the temple where the Gentiles could come to gain impressions of the worship of Jehovah! The very house of prayer had become a den of thieves. Do we wonder that Jesus indignantly drove from the temple those who were profaning the house of God? How careful we should be that our houses of worship should not become marts of trade where questionable practices are indulged in and the fair name of the church dishonored.

**Justice and Mercy.** How quiet and peaceful and worshipful must the temple have seemed after Jesus had cleansed it! It was just to the worshippers and just to God that the atmosphere of the temple should be conducive to worship, and now that Jesus has dealt justly, He turns in mercy to heal the lame and give sight to the blind, and the children sing their hosannas. Before there were angry, bitter words and unscrupulous business; now a ministry of healing and the carols of innocent children. What a contrast! And all because Jesus came to the temple. What a change there is when He enters our hearts and, cleansing them, becomes our Saviour!

**The Children's Chorus.** Parents were in the habit of taking their children to the great feasts at Jerusalem and especially to this, the passover. Of all the years, what a privilege to have been there when Jesus came in triumph into the city! There is something in the child heart that responds very quickly to the truth, and we can easily believe that it was not alone that they might imitate those who spread branches in His way and sang hosannas that the children blended their voices, but because they found in the great heart, in the pure, Heaven-born life of Jesus, that to which their own hearts were turned as flowers to the sun, and after the voices of their elders had ceased, they continued singing in the temple "Hosanna

to the Son of David." Bless God, the children's chorus has never ceased and today we suffer the children to come unto Him, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

**The March Through the Centuries.** The procession that formed on the Mount of Olives and slowly wended its way into the city of Jerusalem and accompanied Christ to the temple, dispersing in Jerusalem, did not end its march that day; it tarried for a while; tarried that the great Divine tragedy might be enacted; watched and waited with broken heart until the glorious Easter brought a living Redeemer, and then tarried until the King ascended His throne and sent the Holy Spirit to fill the hearts of men. On the great day of Pentecost, it took up the line of march through the ages, and thousands crowned Him King of kings and Lord of lords.

That procession marched from Palestine through Asia Minor, then into Europe, and northward with each conquering army until that continent knew the Christ; then it crossed the Atlantic and planted the standard of the cross on the shores of the new world; then onward triumphantly across our beloved America and over the great Pacific to the islands of the sea and the heathen lands beyond until it has encircled the globe. Again hosannas are sung to the Son of David and instead of the garments spread in His way, lives are laid at His feet, for "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the seas."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why was this an opportune time for this demonstration of Jesus' kingship? 2. Follow the course of the procession from Bethany to Jerusalem and note the accounts of this event as given by each of the Gospel writers. 3. What is suggested to you by the manner in which the disciples procured the ass upon which Jesus rode? 4. Why did Jesus choose this particular beast upon which to ride? 5. Do you believe the multitudes were sincere in their acclamations of praise? 6. By what authority did Jesus cleanse the temple? 7. Do you believe that those who shouted His praise a few days later cried "Crucify Him?" 8. Are you for Christ or against Him?

**Practical Truths.** 1. All employment for Christ is noble even though it seem a very humble service. 2. When God is careful that the words of prophecy shall be so minutely fulfilled, how precious must be His promises! 3. Christ is not to be honored by sentiment alone but by service. 4. Hosannas in the temple, but lives of perfect faith and trust in the mire and toil of the daily traffic. 5. The people always honor the Christ when they see Him as revealed through the Word of God. Too often our human creeds and the traditions of men have marred His visage. 6. Exalting experiences should leave us higher as they pass. 7. His triumphal entry into Jerusalem was followed by crucifixion, His triumphal entry into the New Jerusalem was followed by coronation. 8. The Lord's choicest earthly blessings misused become stumbling-blocks to the Christian and to others. 9. Can anything be more beautiful than the praise of the child heart?

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.





## CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM

BY PLOCKHORST

As Christ was nearing the end of His earthly career, He went with His disciples up to Jerusalem to eat the passover. Passing through a village on the road, He sent two of His disciples away, instructing them to find an ass and her colt, which they were to bring out to Him. When the animals were come, His disciples laid their garments on one of them for a saddle and mounted Jesus thereon. Then commenced that noted triumphal entry into Jerusalem. The enthusiastic multitude gathered and strewed the roadway with garments, scattering flowers and branches, after the manner of the greeting to a great king or victorious general. It was a recognition of Christ's royalty.

Plockhorst the artist is a painter of studied attitudes. As Jesus is not mounted on a war horse but on a humble donkey, He seems the more erect and gentle in His bearing. He comes sitting on the humble animal as His mission is to humble people. His followers march beside Him, all intensely interested and manifesting the highest enthusiasm. The various characters on the right hand explain themselves. The mother and children there touch upon humanity of different ages, and the three little boys joyously march along scattering palm branches and flowers in the road. At the left a woman spreads draperies in the road, and near her is a shepherd, perhaps one who has heard among shepherd lore the story of that wonderful night on the plains of Bethlehem, while opposite, John with his hand upon the rein is astonished beyond measure at the honor accorded his Master. This is one of the best of Plockhorst's great pictures.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST'S ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM





And on the morrow, when they were come from



he was  
hungry:  
And  
seeing a



afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but



for the  
time of



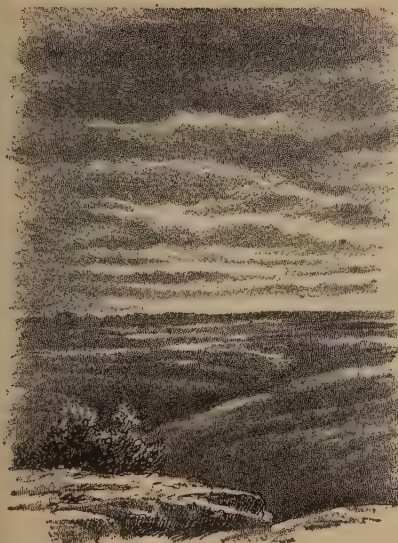
was not  
yet. And  
Jesus  
answered  
and said  
unto it, No



of thee hereafter for ever. And his



heard it. And when



was come, he





**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 11:12-19. READ MATTHEW 21:17-22.**

**Prayer:** Oh, Master, We shrink from the study of this lesson, for we are looking, as it were, into a mirror, and in the fruitless tree we behold ourselves—so bold is our professions; so anxious to appear well before men; but alas, so barren and unfruitful. Lord, do not let us leave the searching lesson until it has so permeated our minds and hearts that we shall go forth and live so truly

that we shall bear the fruits of the Spirit. And this we ask in Jesus' name, Amen.

“Increase our faith that unto Thee  
More fruit may still abound;  
That it may grow exceedingly,  
And to Thy praise be found.”

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, Monday of the last week of Jesus' ministry before His crucifixion. Place, Somewhere on the brow of the Mount of Olives and in Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and His disciples, the chief priests and scribes.

**Scripture Setting:** Fruit Bearing. The righteous man, like a fruit-bearing tree, Psa. 1:3. Known by the fruit, Matt. 7:16-20. Conditions of fruit bearing, John 15:4-7. Chosen for fruit bearing, John 15:16. Fruits of repentance, Matt. 3:8, 9. Fruits of righteousness, Phil. 1:9-11. Fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** When the boy Jesus, lost in Jerusalem, was found by His parents in the temple, His reply to their anxious inquiry was “know ye not that I must be in My Father's house?” or better, the more familiar rendering,

“must be about My Father's business?” How that impelling principle controlled every hour of His life! Even now, when the shadows are lengthening about Him and He has need of the companionship of those who love Him, He can tarry in the home at Bethany only for the night, and when the morning breaks He must needs go among the multitudes who had come to keep the passover and offer them the gift of eternal life. 1. Yesterday Christ wept over the barrenness of His people; to-day by an acted parable, He pronounces judgment upon them, vs. 13, 14. 2. The stream can never be pure unless its fountain source be cleansed, vs. 15, 16. 3. Teaching must follow cleansing, vs. 17. 4. How the shadows are lengthening in these last days. Calvary is not far away, vs. 18.

**NOTHING BUT LEAVES.**

**He Hungered.** How we love the little touches that the writers of the Gospel have given us that so truly reveal the humanity of Jesus. “And on the morrow when He came out from Bethany, **He hungered.**” Could it be that the household in Bethany tarried a little longer in sleep that morning so that Jesus was compelled to leave without breaking the fast of the night? Never! Martha, cumbered though she was about much serving, was too great a soul to have been inhospitable to any guest, and especially to one to whom she owed so much. (John 12:1.)

These were such important days. The multitudes, astonished at His teaching, crowded about Him as they had done in Galilee; the hatred of the scribes and Pharisees was growing more intense; the great crisis of His life was upon Him. How much He needed to commune with the Father, that He might have the needed strength. It may be that when the household at Bethany retired for the night, Jesus retired to the mountain and continued all night in prayer. Or perhaps, arising early, He had sought the solitary place before it was dawn, that He might spend a season in prayer. We may not know why He hungered, but we do know that the physical hunger was typical of the great soul hunger as He longed to find fruit in the pretentiously religious life of His people.

**Leaves Without Fruit.** The season for figs had not yet come and the neighboring trees were barren. The natural order of these particular trees was that first the figs and then the leaves appear. Jesus and his disciples found this tree abundantly covered with leaves but with no fruit. Symbol of Israel, do we say? While other nations gave no sign of fruitfulness toward God, Israel performed her devotions with much ostentatious pride, but in the heart there was no devotion and the lives of her people were barren of the fruits of righteousness. How easy it would be to pass this lesson by and lay the charge to Israel's sin. Instead it should be a great heart-searching lesson for us all. No fervor of language, no great achievements will compensate, in the sight of the Master, for the absence of the fruits of the Spirit.

John Bunyan in his quaint allegory tells us that Interpreter took Christiana and her family into a garden and “led them to a tree whose inside was all rotten and gone and yet it grew and had leaves. Then said Mercy, “What means this?” “This tree,” said he, “whose outside is fair, and whose inside is all rotten, is that to which many may be compared that are in the garden of God; who with their mouths speak high in behalf of God, but indeed will do nothing for Him; whose leaves are fair, but their heart good for nothing but to be tinder for the devil's tinder-box.”

**A Boy's Question.** When this lesson was being taught to a class of boys, one of them raised the question concerning this act of Jesus and wondered why He should pro-



nounce so severe a sentence upon an object that was not in itself responsible for its condition, since it had not the power of free will but was simply obeying the law of its kind. Upon the surface and without thought it might seem that this act of Jesus was severe. If it is a matter of destroying property that belonged to another, we need not trouble ourselves. Jesus, whose whole life was given for the blessing of His fellows, would not take that which was another's without a satisfactory adjustment. If it is a question whether it seems just to the tree itself we need not be troubled.

Justice or injustice pre-suppose certain rights to be respected or violated. These rights obtain in the animal kingdom but not in the vegetable. Trees are here for man to dispose of as he thinks best. We never think of raising a question when a tree is felled that we may use it in building our houses or in making our furniture. If the sudden destruction of a tree could do more than to furnish us bodily comfort by providing a moral or spiritual lesson, that tree has been honored above others. Little was the loss that any one sustained by the destruction of that verdant mockery, while instruction a thousand times more valuable than acres of fig trees has been left for us all.

**The Sentence of Doom.** Peter spoke of the sentence pronounced upon the barren fig tree as a curse. Was it not rather a judgment? Such a judgment as must be pronounced upon every barren and unfruitful life, for "he that hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." (Mark 4:25.) In the great judgment day it shall be said to those upon the left hand, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was an hungred and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; . . . verily, I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." We cannot too seriously consider the effect of our sins of omission.

**How Far?** Bethany was not far from Jerusalem as the surveyor's chain measures distance—not more than a mile and a quarter, according to our standard of measurement. After a day spent in Jerusalem, cleansing the temple (commented upon in our last lesson) and teaching the multitudes, Jesus, at the eventide, went forth out of the city unto Bethany. In Jerusalem men, fired with all of the unholy passions of the demon-possessed, were plotting and schem-

ing to put Him to death. In Bethany He was welcomed to hearts that understood Him and loved Him, and by friends who would have given their lives for Him. No, Bethany was not far distant from Jerusalem in furlongs, but in spirit and sentiment how far! It is not far from our Christian homes to the corner saloon, but when your boy or mine goes there and wrecks his body and damns his soul, it is far—so far that only the omnipotent arm of God can reach him.

In a boarding house in one of our great cities lay the lifeless form of a young man. Just a year had passed since he left the old farm house and tried to comfort his weeping mother by telling her it was not far to the great city where he was to seek fortune and fame. But as the father and mother, bent with age and broken with grief, came to the city in response to the summons announcing the serious condition of their boy, mortally wounded in a drunken brawl, it seemed a long journey. There on the farm was a Christian home, a praying father and mother, all of the sweet and helpful influences of pure and devoted living; in the great city demons were plotting for the soul of the boy and he had lost in the battle.

**Every Soul Needs a Bethany.** At Bethany sympathy and love received the weary, storm-tossed soul from Jerusalem. Every soul needs a Bethany, a place where one can find a refuge from the keen, sharp competitions of life, from the fiery temptations that assail the soul, and find love and peace and strength. There must be a closet of prayer somewhere, where the busy rushing world cannot intrude and the weary heart can be lifted to Him for strength and healing. Have you such a Bethany?

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why, at this time, did Jesus and His disciples go to Bethany each evening? 2. Why was this particular tree subject to the condemnation of the Master? 3. Name some of the characteristics of those of Jesus' day and of our own, whose lives bear nothing but leaves. 4. What had Jesus to say of the hypocrite? 5. Notice how scrupulously Jesus would have those of His day observe the sanctity of God's house. 6. Should there be the same standard for us today?

**Practical Truths.** 1. Jesus had often spoken a parable; here is a parable in action. 2. We must remember that Jesus the Saviour is also Jesus the Judge. 3. The individual is not lost in the mass; each must give an account of his own fruit bearing. 4. It is not aggressive sinfulness alone that damns the soul: just do nothing, just be nothing and yours is the condemnation. 5. Many have the form of godliness but deny the power thereof. 6. When Jesus entered the temple, He found the forms of worship but the presence of thieves and robbers destroyed its fruitfulness. Cleansing is necessary for fruit bearing.

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



# THE FIG TREE WITHERED.

And in the



as they



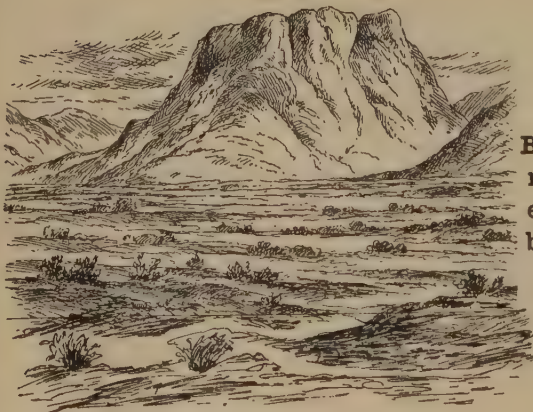
they saw the fig tree dried up from the



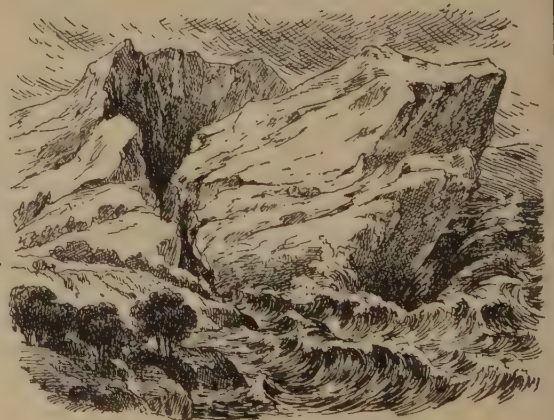
And  
Peter  
calling  
to  
remem-  
brance  
saith  
unto  
him,  
Master,



which thou cursedst is withered away. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this



Be thou  
remov-  
ed, and  
be thou



and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS MARK 11:20-28.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May the Holy Spirit lead us in the study of Thy Word so that it may become Thy very own message to each of us. Oh, how great is our unbelief! How Thou must be grieved at our doubts and fears! Lord, increase our faith! When mountains of difficulties loom in our pathway may we have the faith to remove them. Help us to fulfill all the conditions of prevailing prayer.

Help us truly to forgive others that we ourselves may be forgiven. In Jesus' name. Amen.

"Faith is a grasping of Almighty power;  
The hand of man laid on the arm of God,—  
The grand and blessed hour  
In which the things impossible to me  
Become the possible, O Lord, through Thee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tuesday morning, three days before the crucifixion. Jesus is in conversation with His disciples as they journey to Jerusalem from Bethany over the Mount of Olives.

**Scripture Setting: Prevailing Prayer.** Israel saved through prayer, Deut. 9:18, 20, 26. A mother's prayer answered, 1 Sam. 1:10, 11, 20. Elisha prays and a boy is restored to life, 2 Kings 4:33. The Gentile woman's prayer, Matt. 15:21-28. Jesus prays at the tomb of Lazarus, John 11:41-42. Gospel triumphs through prayer, Acts 4:24-31. Prayer for the Holy Spirit, Acts 8:14-18. The prayers of Cornelius heard, Acts 10:30, 31. The prayer of faith, James 5:15, 16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** When Jesus and His disciples are on their way to Jerusalem, the disciples express their astonishment as they see the

fig tree, upon which Jesus had pronounced a judgment, completely withered. This affords an opportunity for some of the Master's most profound teaching upon the subjects of faith and prayer. 1. When Jesus speaks the word, we must expect its fulfillment, vs. 20, 21. 2. We are so accustomed to the limitations of humanity it is sometimes difficult for us to comprehend an unlimited Deity, vs. 22. 3. What a challenge to our faith! Can we remove mountains? vs. 23. 4. To what dizzy heights must our faith ascend! Believe now, while praying, that we have the things for which we pray, vs. 24. 5. The way we live when we are not praying has much to do with the answer to our prayers. 6. The unforgiving spirit toward our fellow-man is a barrier between us and God, vs. 25.

### BELIEVING AND PRAYING.

**Have Faith in God.** Why should there have been the tone of surprise in Peter's voice when he called attention to the fig tree upon which Jesus had placed the ban of barrenness, so completely withered? Why do you and I so often express surprise when that which the Lord has spoken comes to pass? The answer to these questions is the same. It is a lack of faith on our part in the unchanging Word of the eternal God. The power to believe a promise depends entirely upon one's faith in the promiser. We should have that simple, and yet supreme faith in God to confidently expect Him to do for us all that he has promised.

"A little child, whose father and mother had died, was taken into another family. When night came she knelt and prayed as her mother had taught her; and when that was ended she added a little prayer of her own: 'O God, make these people as kind to me as my papa and mamma have been.' Then she paused and looked up as if expecting an answer, and added, 'Of course You will.' How sweetly simple was that little one's faith in God! We are but children,—God is our Father."

**A Mountain-Moving Faith.** Jesus knew that the disciples could have no desire that the mountain upon which they stood should be taken up and cast into the sea some thirty-five miles away, but this fact makes his illustration all the more forceful. Physical mountains were not in the way of the men he had chosen for the extension of His Kingdom on earth. There were other mountains that seemingly would be far more dif-

ficult to remove than the one upon which they were standing. "The whole world, heathen and Hebrew was against them; the unbroken power of Rome, the unsurpassed wisdom of the Greeks; the ancient philosophies and hereditary customs of the unchanging East; the fierce barbarism of the North; the jealous and tenacious bigotry of the Jews; the lusts of the flesh and of the mind, the pride and splendor of life; all to which men leaned with all the weight of habit, tradition and inclination. And yet, in a few years, all these mighty forces went down before the power of faith." That which was done in the first centuries of the Christian era is being repeated today. The disciples of Christ are crying out before the great mountains of Hinduism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Mohammedanism, "Be thou removed," and these ancient systems of religion are crumbling before the faith in the true and living God. "Every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the uneven shall be made level and the rough places a plain; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it."

**All Things Whatsoever.** How boundless, how unlimited is this statement of Jesus concerning our requests! But our faith is so feeble it staggers under the weight of "all things, whatsoever" and begins at once to find some limitations to put upon the words of Jesus. We can understand per-

haps that under some circumstances, and under some conditions, we might take these words literally. Oh, for a faith great enough to lift us to that plane of thinking and living where we can implicitly trust the Master and take Him at His word! If there are any qualifying statements let Him make them. We, the pupils, are not to decide that the thought in the mind of the great Teacher was less than His words would imply; if any further interpretation of His message is needed He will not fail to give it. Then we are anxious to know if at any time the Master has spoken other words that might help us to a better understanding of this bold assertion. A few days later Jesus was meeting with His disciples for the last heart talk before the great tragedy on Calvary. Their hearts were awed and a sense of great fear was taking possession of them as they realized the impending crisis. Jesus was giving them both strength and comfort as He revealed His relationship to the Father and in that hour he said, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in My name, that will I do." John 14:13-14. The promise is just as great as before. It is still "whatsoever," "anything" only there is an added phrase "in My name." Once again, a little later, in this same conversation Jesus says "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7. Again it is "whatsoever," no change or limit there, but we have the Master's thought more fully expressed "if ye abide in Me" and ask "in My name." Conditions that we must fulfil. To use terms with which we are familiar, it is not those who have a mere "speaking" or "calling" acquaintance with the Master, but those who live with Him, who abide in Him, to whom this privilege is given.

**Believe That Ye Receive Them.** Our translators have become a bit cautious here. They have translated the text "Believe that ye receive them" and in the margin they give us the more literal Greek "received." Is not the Master tempting us just a little too far? Can we actually believe that we have received something that as yet is not in our possession? We can have such perfect confidence in the Father and such a full assurance that our prayer will be answered that we can live as if we had received that for which we have asked.

**Stand or Kneel?** "And when ye stand praying." The posture in prayer was not

the important thing. When Jesus was in the garden he knelt in prayer. Luke 22:41. In this verse he speaks of standing in prayer. The physical attitude may help us some in our expression of humility and reverence but let us not be too anxious about a mere form and fail to be anxious about that which is of so much more consequence. When the heart really prays man gives no thought to the posture, that takes care of itself.

**Forgive and be Forgiven.** The importance that Jesus attached to a forgiving spirit in the hearts of His disciples can be determined when we note how frequently he spoke upon this subject. In the Sermon on the Mount we are told that the worshipper, coming to the altar with his gift and there remembering that in his heart he is not in accord with his brother, must leave his gift and go and be reconciled to his brother. Matt. 5:23, 24.

In the same discourse Jesus has given a model for prayer, with the familiar words, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matt. 6:12. At the close of that prayer, He adds, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." After the parable of the unmerciful servant, Jesus adds this solemn warning, "So shall also my Heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts." Matt. 18:35. Here, by the side of the withered fig tree, speaking of the efficacy of prayer, He again reminds His disciples of this positive condition on the part of the petitioner, in the words "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in Heaven may forgive you your trespasses." Dependent as we are upon the forgiveness of the loving heart of God we can only become like Him as we too forgive.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What lessons were impressed upon the minds of the disciples as they saw the withered fig tree? 2. Name some of the men mentioned in the Bible, who were illustrious for their great faith in God. 3. Who can you name from among the Christians of a later day who were noted for their great faith? 4. Is it possible to have a "mountain moving" faith today? 5. What are the conditions of prevailing prayer and by whom must they be fulfilled? 6. Why cannot God forgive us if we do not forgive others?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The great need in the world today is that men should really know God and in every phase of life have an implicit faith in Him. 2. Spiritual forces are stronger than the forces of evil, no matter how firmly entrenched they may seem to be. 3. Nothing seems more doubtful to us at times than the victory of faith over the world; yet nothing is more certain. 4. The greatest forces in life are the unseen forces. 5. How much the answer to our prayers depends, not upon rhetoric or logic, but upon our goodness. In our unanswered prayers let us find the mirror of our faults. 6. Unless our faith is greater, our lives purer, our prayers more effectual, this study of the Word has been in vain.

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



# THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

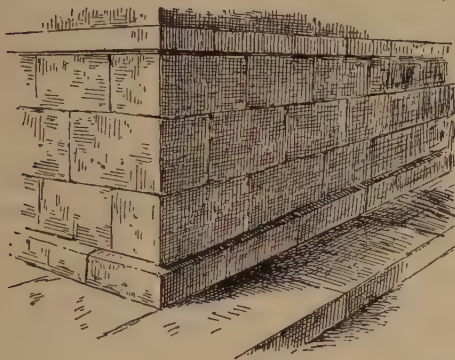
And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The



which the



rejected, the same is become the head of the



Whosoever  
shall



shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall



it will  
grind  
him to  
powder.  
And the  
chief



the same hour  
sought to lay  
hands on him; and  
they feared the



for they perceived  
that he had  
spoken this parable  
against them.



# THE PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 20:9-19. MATT. 21:33-46, MARK 12:1-12.

**Prayer:** Oh, gracious Father, patiently bear with us, we pray Thee. Deliver us from the bondage of our lower and selfish desires, and make us free to give to Thee all the love and service that is Thine own. May our hearts be ever anxious because men reject Thy Son today. May we not work against Thee, or apart from Thee; but may we be one with Thee, and share in Thy purpose, Thy work and Thy joy, through all the ages. Amen.

“Marvelous and very precious is the Corner Stone Elect;  
Though rejected by the builders, chosen by the Architect;  
All supporting, all-uniting, and all-crowning, tried and sure;  
True Foundation, yet true Headstone of His temple bright and pure.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, At the temple in Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and His disciples; chief priests, scribes and elders and the multitudes who had come to keep the passover.

**Scripture Setting:** Vineyards. Origin and antiquity, Gen. 9:20. Walled or fenced, Num. 22:24, Isa. 5:2, 5, Lev. 25:5, 11. Compensation for injury, Ex. 22:5. The stranger's portion, Deut. 23:24. The portion of the poor, Deut. 24:21. Laws respecting a new vineyard, Lev. 19:23-25. Letting out to husbandmen, Song of Sol. 8:11, Matt. 21:33. A figure of the Jewish nation and the Kingdom of God, Psal. 80:8-16, Isa. 5:1-7, Matt. 21:33-46.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jesus is in the midst of a great moral battle. His triumphal entry and the cleansing of the temple have raised questions

concerning His Messiahship and hence His authority. A strong denial of His claims by the rulers calls forth three parables. In the one we are studying Jesus sets forth: 1. The Kingdom as a vineyard. The owner has gone into a far country and entrusted its care to others. 2. An unmistakable picture of the conduct of Israel toward the prophets in the sending of the servants to receive a portion of the fruitage and their base treatment by the husbandmen. 3. His own coming in the sending of the son. 4. His rejection and crucifixion in the killing of the son. 5. That their destruction must follow and the promises be given to others. 6. From a familiar Scripture that the rejected stone is the chief or corner stone. 7. That he who rejects Christ has no hope. 8. The truth that should have reformed these leaders only goaded them to madness.

### THE REJECTED SON.

**The Servants Abused.** Jesus has just had an encounter with the three reigning powers of the Jewish hierarchy, the chief priests, scribes and elders. It is His last day of teaching in the temple and the issue between Him and the Jewish authorities has grown to be very tense. He had silenced them by a question. Luke 20:1-8. He now turns to the people, and in three parables, reveals in what a shameful manner the rulers had abused their trust as leaders of the people. Three times servants were sent to gather the fruit for the owner of a vineyard who had gone into a far country on a journey and placed his vineyard in the care of husbandmen. Not only did they fail to receive the expected fruit but they were shamefully treated and wounded. What a picture of Israel! For a thousand years God had borne with His people. Prophets had been sent unto them seeking the fruits of righteousness, but God received no return from the vineyard He had planted, and the prophets and teachers were stoned, beaten and rejected. 1 Kings 18:13, 22:24-27; 2 Chron. 24:19-22, 36:16; Acts 7:52; Heb. 11:36.

**What More Could He Do?** The owner of the vineyard is now thoroughly perplexed. He falls into a soliloquy. Thinking of all that had been done and anxious, doubtless, to avoid extreme measures, he asks the question, “What shall I do?” We are reminded of the pathetic words of Isaiah recorded in

the fifth chapter and the fourth verse, “What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?” It is useless to send another servant to these wicked husbandmen. Yet there is one thing more that can be done. There is the son, the heir to the vineyard. Surely they will have respect for him and give to him that which is his own. What an illustration of the very climax of God's goodness and His love! (John 3:16.) Here is Jesus' answer in parable to the question the council had just asked, “By what authority doest thou these things?” The leaders understood precisely what Jesus meant in this teaching, and in the light of it they proceeded deliberately to kill Him!

If we would get the real force and the beauty of the answer to the question raised by the owner of the vineyard, we must combine the account as given by Matthew, Mark and Luke and it will read, “Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? Having yet therefore one son, his well beloved, he said, I will send my beloved son. He sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.”

**The Son Rejected.** In the coming of the heir the husbandmen thought they saw an opportunity for their own advancement. They would put to death the heir, then the inheritance would be theirs. “So they cast him forth out of the vineyard and killed



him." How the plaintive words of Isaiah come to us, "He was despised and rejected of men." Did these zealous Jews understand that they were killing the Son, the "Supreme One," sent of God? They had every reason to know it. But they were opposed to such changes as they knew He would bring about. They hated God, as Jesus revealed Him, and proposed to keep their selfish hopes, and ambitions, and powers, and prerogatives at whatever cost. If Jesus and His teaching triumphed—

"The holy walls, that did enclose so much  
Unholiness, would all break down;"

the empty forms on which their hearts were set, would vanish; and the false sanctities "on which they rose to proud pre-eminence," would all be laughed at. The thought was intolerable. If Jesus were destroyed, the Pharisee might live on in his little kingdom; the "inheritance" would be his own.

**The Impending Doom.** How intensely interested Jesus' hearers had become in the story he was telling! He was addressing the people, but the rulers were absorbed in every word that He said, and when Jesus told how the husbandmen should be destroyed and the vineyard given to others, so intensely real did the story become that the words "God forbid" involuntarily escaped their lips. The thought that their peculiar rights and privileges should be given to others was unendurable. The prophecy of their own destruction might have been received in sullen silence; but the promise of salvation to the Gentiles had touched the most sensitive chord of their natures.

What a remarkable fulfillment of this prophecy in parable was the destruction of Jerusalem! Little did those rulers think that forty years after they had put to death the Son of God, the Roman army, under Titus, should subject their city to the most terrible siege on record, in which thousands died from the horrors of famine, 97,000 were taken prisoners and 1,100,000 perished. We cannot but wonder what might have been the place that the Jewish people would have occupied among the nations of the earth if they had been faithful to their God-given trust! But they were not faithful, they rejected their Messiah, and perished. America is a chosen vineyard; I wonder, will we be true? Will the principles that obtain in our national, our municipal and our individual life be the principles of the Kingdom of God, or will we reject the Son of God and be lost?

**The Corner Stone.** Jesus drives home the truth of His parable by a very familiar quotation from the Scriptures, Psalm 118:22, recognized by His hearers as a Messianic psalm. The very stone that the builders had rejected and cast aside as useless was the

stone intended by the architect as the chief stone of the building.

There is a tradition that when the stones were brought from Solomon's quarry for the building of the temple there was among them one stone, irregular in shape and uncomely in appearance. The builders laughed when they saw it and threw it aside as useless. The years of the building of the temple went on and the neglected stone was almost forgotten. When the great building was nearing completion they realized that there was needed a chief stone with which to crown the work. They searched diligently for such a stone, when some one, finding that which the workmen had cast aside with ridicule, discovered that here indeed was the stone that was designed to be the head stone, fitting exactly into the place prepared for it by the architect. What a picture of Him of whom Peter spoke when he said, "He is the stone which was set at naught of you, the builders, which was made the head of the corner." Acts 4:11.

**The Master's Warning.** When we fall upon a stone it is not the least affected, but the pain of our bruises testifies to the hurt that we have received. It is to those of us who reject the Christ to whom He becomes a stone of stumbling. Some of those who rejected Him in His humiliation on Calvary became pricked in heart, and accepted Him after His glorification. After the Gospel was fully preached, as it was on the day of Pentecost, and even after, he who rejects the Son of God has no hope of salvation.

**Murder in the Heart.** The truth that should have sobered and brought the rulers to repentance, only goaded them to madness. Fear of the people, who had no reason to partake of their hatred, restrained them for a season; but in two short days they had their revenge. So they fulfilled their part of the parable; and forty years later there came to them the final fulfillment when the city of Jerusalem perished and the Jewish nation ceased to be.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What encounter did Jesus have with the rulers just before this parable was spoken and how did He silence His adversaries? 2. Do you think that Jesus was ever puzzled by questions that were asked Him? Give some reason for your answer. 3. Is the figure of the vineyard a common one in Scripture and what does it express in this parable? 4. When was a vineyard first planted and by whom? 5. Who were the "servants" sent to gather the fruit and can you cite any instances of their mistreatment?

**Practical Truths.** 1. In your city, town or neighborhood Jesus Christ has planted a vineyard and you are one of the husbandmen. 2. Christ is in a far country so far as His visible presence is concerned, but He expects fruit from His vineyard. 3. "In a church of two hundred members you will do well if you can get forty workers. The others miss or misuse their opportunities, and make poor returns for what their Lord has bestowed." 4. We are responsible to God for what we have as well as for what we are. REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



# THE PARABLE OF THE MARRIAGE FEAST.

But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his



and  
destroyed  
those  
murderers,  
and



Then saith he to his



The



is ready, but  
they which were  
bidden were  
not worthy.  
Go ye therefore  
into the



and as many as ye shall find,  
bid to the marriage. So those  
servants went out into the  
highways, and gathered together  
all as many as they found, both  
bad and good: and the  
wedding was furnished  
with guests. And when



to  
see  
the



he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATTHEW 22:1-14.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Our hearts overflow with gratitude when we recount Thy mercies; it makes us humble and we feel our unworthiness when we remember all of Thy loving kindnesses toward us. We thank Thee for Thy gracious invitation to Thy table where Thy mercies become new unto us every day; and yet we feel assured that the present bounties are not to be compared with that which

Thou hast in store for us. When life's work is done may we be worthy to sit at the marriage supper of the Lamb. For His sake. Amen.

"Now has the dear, loving Savior  
Spread here a table for thee.  
Thus will He feed all the hungry!  
Yes, 'tis for you and for me."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, The last day of Jesus' public teaching, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, In the temple. Persons, Jesus, the disciples, and the multitudes.

**Scripture Setting: Marriages.** Divinely instituted, Gen. 2:18, 24. Should be only in the Lord, 1 Cor. 7:39. Indissoluble during the joint lives of the parties, Matt. 19:6, Rom. 7:2, 3. Divorce, Deut. 24:1; Matt. 19:7, 8. Celebrated for seven days, Judg. 14:12; John 2:1-10; Jer. 33:11; John 3:29. Illustrating God's union with the Jewish nation, Isa. 54:5; Hos. 2:19, 20. Typical of the union between Christ and the church, Eph. 5:23, 24, 32.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this parable Jesus sets forth: 1. The Kingdom under the figure of a wedding feast of a king's son. 2. That to this Kingdom, the Jews, during many centuries, had received the royal invitation. 3. The long suffering patience of the king in the repeated invitations. 4. That during all of the centuries Israel had boasted of this royal invitation but when the final summons came, it was abruptly declined. 5. The destruction of those who rejected the Messiah. 6. That the Gentiles would become guests at the feast. 7. That there can be no feast for the man without the wedding garment.

## THE CONSEQUENCES OF MAKING LIGHT OF GOD'S INVITATION.

**The Wedding.** What a busy day was the last day of Jesus' public ministry! It was His last great opportunity to present the claims of His Messiahship; it was a battle royal with the prejudice and hardness of heart of the Jewish leaders; there were sharp, bitter controversies upon puzzling questions and finally Jesus "let loose the storm of His indignation and delivered against them the philippic which is recorded in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew." Before this outburst of righteous indignation, Jesus gives them a most vivid picture of the rejection of God's invitation and the consequent punishment and in a most graphic way depicts the fate of those who seek to enter into the King's presence in a way of their own choosing. To set forth these important truths Jesus chose a setting that ever appeals to the human heart—a wedding feast. The interest in the story is enhanced when it is remembered that it is the marriage feast of a king's son to which the people are invited. How it charms the heart to think that Jesus should have chosen this figure to represent the Kingdom! The highest ideal of love and friendship is expressed through the marriage ceremony. What an abundance of joy and social delight such an occasion affords! God has reserved His best for those who accept His invitation and come to sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

**The Bride and the Groom.** Long before the days of Jesus, the prophets had used the relationship of husband and wife to express the devotedness and fidelity with

which God gives Himself to men. Isa. 62:5; Hos. 2:19. After Jesus' day the writers of the New Testament referred to the church as the bride of Christ. Eph. 5:28-32. We do not wonder that Jesus should have used this figure to tell of the union between Himself and His church. Love chooses its own; the stronger protects and cherishes the weaker.

**The Invitation.** How anxious the king was to observe every possible form of courtesy toward his invited guests! We do not fail to observe the forms of etiquette when we invite our friends to social affairs. Sometimes we hear people say, "The invitation was put in such a way that I feel I cannot refuse." Surely everything was done by the king to make his guests know how sincere was his invitation. In a country where invitations must be delivered verbally and where fixed hours are not observed, it seems almost necessary to send a final invitation. However, this necessity does not overshadow the cordiality of the host. God not only sent invitations by the prophets inviting them to partake of His bounty, but now that the feast is ready He sends John the Baptist to remind His guests and to bring them to the feast. How this parable must have come home to these men of Jerusalem!

**The Invitation Refused.** How perfectly was Jesus describing not only the men of His day but ours, when He told how some, with utter indifference to the invitation, went on with their worldly pursuits, making light of God's offer while others became openly rebellious! Neglect of the Gospel invitation is just as perilous as the open

rejection of it. The fact that the king sent armies to those who had murdered the bearers of the invitation only proves how in earnest the king was in sending it. The one purpose of God's heart has been to bring men to Himself that they might be blessed and it is almost beyond conception to think that men can make light of so gracious an invitation.

**The Parting of the Highways.** The invitation is no longer to be given to an especially chosen few, but the servants are to go to the intersection of the streets and out upon the highways and wherever men are to be found, they are to be invited to the marriage feast. God's plans must not, yea, cannot fail. The good are to be invited for the Gospel has something that will make them better; the bad are to be invited that they may be made good. What a glorious picture! The King's messengers out upon the highways everywhere inviting men to the feast God has provided. In every country in Europe; in the great thriving cities of America, and upon her plains and her hills; in the far away countries where Christ has never been known, the invitation is being given. It is your privilege and mine to say "Come, for all things are ready."

**The Wedding Garment.** What a brilliant scene this wedding feast must have afforded! The men who were gathered from the highways had been transformed into fitting guests for the king's table by the wedding garment which the king provided. The tables were richly spread with costly plate, the guests were resplendent in the robes the king had provided and smiles wreathed their happy faces. A tremor of excitement stirs the banqueters as the word passes from guest to guest that the king comes. They rise to meet him. How happy he is to greet his guests! His eye passes quickly over the brilliant scene and then becomes riveted upon the one dark spot in this great assembly. One man had refused to wear the wedding garment and is there as the one dark blot upon the beauty of the feast. Was it an accident, could there be any explanation for his presence there without the wedding garment? To the kind question of the king, he could give no answer, so the king commanded his servants to bind him and cast him into outer darkness where there should be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

How tragic is the scene and what a lesson it teaches us! It was quite clear to those who heard Jesus' parable that all were free to enter the Kingdom, the publican, the sinner and the harlot as well

as those who considered themselves far superior to these because of their religious status among men. The fact that the invitation was so broad might lead some to overlook the necessity for a change that must come into every heart and life that truly enters the Kingdom.

**A Rebellious Heart.** We wonder why this man refused the wedding garment. Was it because he thought himself so well clothed that nothing more was necessary? Whatever might have been his motive, it reveals a principle we cannot afford to overlook. The lack of harmony was not expressed in the outward appearance alone. His was a self-satisfied and a rebellious spirit and entirely out of harmony with this joyous occasion and out of harmony with the king whose proffered gift he had despised. There could be no happiness at the feast with such a discordant soul in the midst, so the king commanded that he should be cast into the darkness of the oriental street where even the intense darkness could not hide from his guilty soul the condemning eye of the king.

"How hard it is for any of us to grasp the radical nature of the inward change that is required if we are to be meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Conformity to God; ability to rejoice with God and in God; humble and devoted reverence; a real willingness to do honor to the King's Son; these constitute our wedding garment, without which we cannot remain in His presence or abide His searching gaze." Many, indeed, are called to the Gospel feast, but alas, how few are chosen to enter in.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who is represented by the king and who by the son? What is represented by the feast and who by the guests? 2. Who are represented by the servants both in the days of the Bible and in our day? 3. For what reasons were more invitations than one given? 4. How do men treat the invitation today? 5. To whom was the Gospel given when rejected by the Jews? 6. Repeat the "great Commission" given by Christ to His disciples just before His ascension. 7. Of what is the wedding garment symbolical? 8. Can you think of any excuse the guest might have given for refusing the wedding garment? Could he think of any? 9. What does the outer darkness represent? 10. What solemn warning did Jesus give at the close of the parable?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. God provided abundantly for the physical nature of man; stored the world with stimulants for his mental activities and best of all has provided a great feast for man's soul. 2. God has put so much love into the frequent invitations He gives that He makes it hard for man to refuse. 3. There are two classes of men who will never enter the Kingdom: the neglecters and the rejecters. 4. God's invitation is to be given to men wherever man is found. 5. All are invited to come just as they are but not to remain just as they are. 6. The wedding garment is offered to all so that one is without excuse who refuses it. 7. Though there are many called but few chosen, there is no reason why you may not be among the few.

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



# THE TWO GREAT COMMANDMENTS.

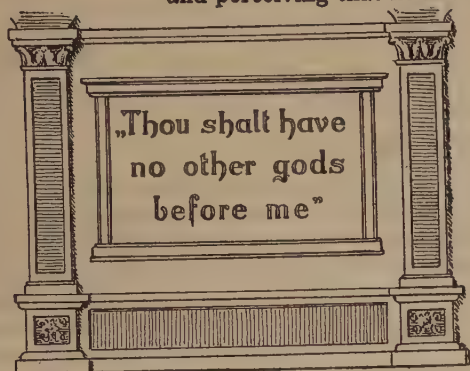
And



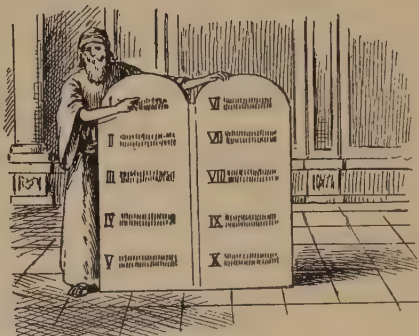
came, and  
having  
heard them



and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the



of all? And  
Jesus answered  
him, The first  
of all the



is, Hear, O  
Israel; The Lord  
our God is one  
Lord: And

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God  
With all thy Heart  
and With all thy Soul  
and With all thy Mind  
and With all thy Strength.

this is the first  
commandment. And  
the second is like,  
namely this, Thou shalt



thy



as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 12:28-34. READ MATTHEW 22:34-40.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Deliver us from the formal religious life. Help us to realize that forms and ceremonies, however sacred they may be, are as nothing unless they symbolize the inward principle of a love Divine. May our souls be filled with the glory of that self-sacrificing love that hung upon the cross and may we love God with all our heart, and with all our understanding, and with all our soul and with all our strength and our neighbor as ourselves. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Forget not this command of His,  
'Love as thyself thy neighbor,'  
And so obey God's law today,  
As in His field we labor."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem in the temple, where Jesus is discoursing with the chief priests, scribes and others.

**Scripture Setting:** Love to God and Man. God demands a whole-hearted love, Deut. 6:5; 10:2, 13; 11:1. It pays to love God, Rom. 8:28. God's love perfected in us by our love to men, 1 John 4:11, 12. Christ's standard of man's love, John 13:34, 35. A test of our sonship, 1 John 3:14. The fulfilling of the law, Rom. 13:8-10. What love is and does, 1 Cor. 13:1-8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. New ammunition

was needed for the battle waged between Jesus and the Jewish rulers. This was furnished by the question of a certain scribe. 2. The first part of Jesus' reply was the great foundation truth of the whole theocratic system, "the Lord is one." 3. Man's attitude toward Jehovah defined. 4. Man's attitude toward his fellowman defined. 5. He who came to argue and to test, remained to praise. 6. There is some efficacy in forms and ceremonies, but love must be their very life and without love they are but dead and empty. 7. Ofttimes the keenest point of failure comes when we are "not far from the Kingdom."

### LOVE THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW.

**Tested by a Question.** After the three parables spoken by Jesus, two of which were considered in the lessons preceeding this, the Pharisees, enraged at the evident application of the parable, but afraid to carry out their wish of immediately seizing Him, determined to set a trap for Him so that He might commit Himself in such a way as to make His capture safe because of the disfavor of either the Romans or the Jews. They, together with the Herodians, asked Him a question about the tribute money, which He answered in such a way as to fill them with wonder and send them off discomfited. Next the Sadducees tried Him with a puzzling question in regard to the resurrection. They, too, knew not what to say to His answer. During this last interview the word went out that He was about to silence the Sadducees, and the Pharisees came hastening to hear His argument. Finding the Sadducees utterly silenced, one of their number, a scribe or lawyer, asked a new question, Matthew says, "trying him" (Matt. 22:35.) The question was a proper one. "The Jews enumerated six hundred and thirteen ordinances! three hundred and sixty-five prohibitions, according to the days of the year; two hundred and twenty-eight commandments, according to the parts of the body. The Pharisees distinguished between lesser and greater commandments." We do not wonder that the lawyer should ask Jesus which one might be distinguished from all the rest as the first commandment.

**Monotheism.** In what a striking manner

this lesson exhibits the readiness, the wisdom and the power of Jesus! He consults no authorities, He asks for no time. Promptly He answers whatever question is asked and in such a manner as to completely silence His questioners, leaving them confused and baffled. In this instance the question was one of deep significance to everyone present. Jesus' answer, found in Deut. 6:4, expresses the basis upon which the Jewish religion was established. The oneness, the aloneness of Jehovah as God is the truth that permeates the entire history of the Jewish religion. Its maintenance distinguished Israel from all other nations in the days of its theocratic purity; its disregard brought all of Israel's woes upon her people. Christ well quotes these words as the introduction of His answer.

**The Measure of Love.** How the mere formal expression of our love to God as manifested in our prayers and in our daily lives rebukes us as we think of the true measure that comprehends an intensity of heart and soul and mind and strength. The consummate result of our nature is not in **doing** but in **being**; being like God who "is love." Love is the very life of the best things and without it they are mere bodies, dead and empty. Our love toward God must be of such a degree that no place can be given to any unworthy object. But there is another direction in which the measure of our love needs to be defined and that is toward our fellows. Love them, not as we love God, who is and must be supreme in our



affections, but as we love ourselves. A man ought to love himself—not his lower, base sinful self—but that higher self that links him to God and makes him like God. "Man ought to love his neighbor not as he **does** love himself but as he **ought** to love himself; after the same manner, freely and readily, sincerely and unfeignedly, tenderly and compassionately, constantly and perseveringly."

**The Whole Law.** Jesus declares that there is no commandment greater than those He had given, commanding man's love to God and to his neighbor. In the account as recorded by Matthew, Jesus is reported as saying, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matt. 22: 40.) A part cannot be greater than the whole and every commandment is included in these two. The first covered the first table of the law, for such love of God as is described would forbid polytheism, idolatry, blasphemy, and Sabbath-breaking. The second covered the second table, for such love of our neighbor would prevent filial impiety, murder, adultery, theft, perjury and covetousness. Thus the entire Word of God, the law and the prophets, and we might add the Gospel, spring from and are dependent upon these two principles.

**An Honest Heart.** How refreshing to find among these hypocritical Pharisees one man who is honest enough to acknowledge his convictions! We cannot doubt that the motive of the scribe was to place a trap for the Master, but so profoundly is he moved by Jesus' reply that he acknowledges the truth of the statements and adds a principle that condemned the very class of men he represented. When we remember the legalism of the whole rabbinical fraternity, the stress they had put upon the minutest acts in and for themselves (Matt. 23:23-27), we cannot but admire the honest sincerity of this man who dares to acknowledge the things that are in his heart.

**Love vs. Ceremonies.** In the answer of the scribe that to love God with all the heart and one's neighbor as one's self is much more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices, there is involved one of the vital principles of the Kingdom of God. Neither would Jesus nor this scribe deny the efficacy of burnt offerings and sacrifices if they are actually the expressions of sincere reverence and faith, but as mere ceremonies there is no genuine religious life in them.

What is more sad than to see the life of a professing Christian, with faculties that ought to live

and grow in all the freedom and joyousness of the Christian life, dwarfed and wilted in a mere round of ceremonies? "Religion without love is but a draped and chilling form; prayer without love is but the mockery of lofty compliment, or the awe and agony of servile fear." When love becomes the inspiring motive of our worship it becomes also the inspiration for all the acts of our daily lives. How vividly this is set forth in the thirteenth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians! How transfigured become even the sternest duties of life when animated by love! What a joy fills the heart when even the greatest sacrifices are borne for love's sake! Jesus, although "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" was "anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows" and "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross and despised the shame." So great was the Savior's love, so deep were the abiding springs of joy in His heart that on the very threshold of His great agony, and under the shadow of His cross, He says to His disciples, "My peace I give unto you." Burnt offerings and sacrifices, yea, baptism and the Lord's Supper, worship in the house of God, all of the forms and ceremonies of the religious life, without the spirit of love, are empty.

**Not Far.** There is a heartening message and yet a message of warning in the Savior's reply to the scribe, when He said, "Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God." We cannot but wonder if to him they were words of encouragement that led him to fully enter the Kingdom or, like so many in our day, did he come so near the Kingdom and yet not enter in?

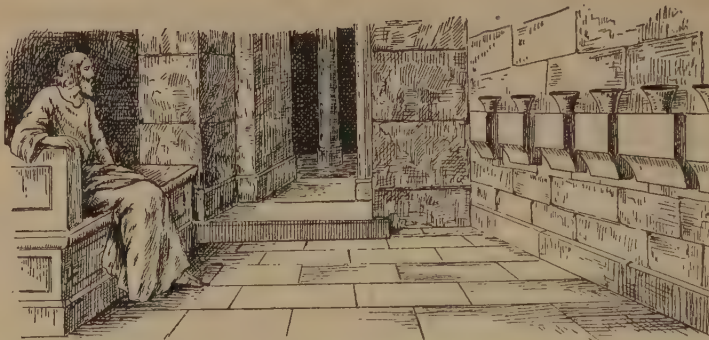
It is not enough to give an intellectual assent to the truths and principles of the Kingdom; there must be a surrender of the heart; a thorough committal of the life. Alas, how many there are not far from the Kingdom! Men who have become convinced that there should be an open confession of the Christ and whose hearts have been stirred with the Gospel invitation and yet they hesitate and turn, as so often men do, and are lost! "Not far," how mournful the words when the very truth they tell intensifies the sadness of disappointment, the shame of failure and defeat.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What can you say of the sect to which this scribe belonged? 2. What do you think was the scribe's opinion of Christ when he asked the question? 3. Where can Jesus' reply be found and what does it teach? 4. What is the second commandment? 5. Whom do you consider your neighbor? 6. What did the scribe mean by his reply? 7. What peril does it seem to you there could be for one who is not far from the Kingdom of God?

**Practical Truths.** 1. The Word of God has a good answer for every question if we will only look for it. 2. Though we are under the new dispensation, the truth contained in the commandments of the old remains and God must be supreme in our affections. 3. What a world this would be if we loved our neighbor as ourselves! 4. We cannot substitute baptism or communion or any other specific act or acts for the love of God and our neighbor. 5. The scribe was near the Kingdom, but he needed another step to get into it, the unreserved committal of himself to following Jesus. It is madness for us to stop at the point where he was. Where are you?

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.

And Jesus



and beheld

how the



and many  
that were  
rich cast  
in much.  
And there  
came a  
certain  
poor



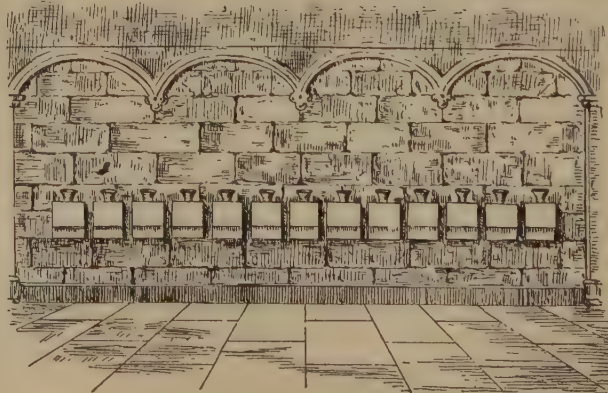
and she  
threw in  
two  
mites,  
which  
make a



And he  
called  
unto  
him his



and saith unto them,  
Verily I say unto  
you, That this poor  
widow hath cast  
more in, than all  
they which  
have cast into the



For all they did  
cast in of their  
abundance; but  
she of her want  
did cast in all  
that she had, even  
all her living.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 12:41-44. READ LUKE 21:1-4.

**Prayer:** Oh, Thou who sittest over against the treasury of life, into which men are casting their gifts, help us to come in the spirit of the widow of old and give Thee that which shall be indeed a test of our faith and our sacrifice. Help us to cultivate the grace of Christian giving. And best of all, Father, help us to give ourselves, and to Thee we will give all of the glory and the praise forever, Amen.

“He gives nothing but worthless gold  
Who gives from a sense of duty;  
But he who gives a slender mite,  
And gives to that which is out of sight,  
The hand cannot clasp the whole of his alms,  
The heart outstretches its eager palms,  
For God goes with it and makes it store  
To the soul that was starving in darkness before.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, the twelfth of Nisan or April 4, A. D. 30. Place, the temple at Jerusalem, where Jesus is sitting near the treasury. Persons, Jesus and His disciples, many who were bringing their gifts, and among them a poor widow.

**Scripture Setting: Christian Giving.** Every Christian should contribute to the Lord's treasury, 1 Cor. 16:2. Giving is an act of worship, Col. 3:17. The Lord regards us when we give, 2 Cor. 9:7. Our possessions belong to the Lord, 1 Cor. 6:20. Treasures in Heaven, Matt. 6:19-21. God honors those who honor Him with their substance, Mal. 3:8-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Jesus never has left the place that He occupied that day, sitting over against the treasury, watching the gifts of men. 2. How small must the widow's have seemed compared with the large gifts of the rich. 3. How blessed the thought that only man looks upon the outward appearance; that Jesus can discern the motive and spirit of our gifts. 4. How positively inverted the values of things as God sees them! A mere farthing to man, yet greater than all of the gifts of the rich in the sight of the Saviour. 5. How like her Saviour was this widow who gave her all.

### THE SAVIOUR'S SPIRITUAL TEST.

**A Pleasing Contrast.** The controversies with the Pharisees and the scribes has ended; His last warnings have been uttered; His last appeal has been made; all that can be done to save the nation has been done. It is probably because of the severe strain of the long hours of controversy that Jesus's weary body is sitting, resting in that part of the temple court where the people are bringing their offerings.

In all probability, many of the Pharisees and scribes with whom Jesus had had the bitter controversies referred to in the previous lessons, were among those who were casting their gifts into the treasury. Many were rich and their offerings were large as men measure them, and when the widow came with her two mites her gift must have seemed small indeed; but as Jesus saw the depth of her motive and the wealth of her heart, this widow, whose gift was charged with the sanctities of her soul, must have caused the heart of the Master to rejoice as He contrasted what she brought with the formal gifts of the Pharisees.

**Temple Offerings.** Under the colonnades which surrounded the court of the women, in the great temple in Jerusalem, provision was made for receiving religious and charitable contributions. All along these colonnades were the thirteen trumpet-shaped boxes where offerings were to be deposited, each box marked with an inscription stating the purpose to which the money would be used. Many people were in Jerusalem at this time, attending the passover, and it must have

been interesting to watch them as they deposited their gifts. “Many that were rich cast in much.” We can appreciate this statement when we remember that the gifts to the temple became so enormous that a law was enacted forbidding the giving of more than a certain per cent of one's possessions. Josephus tells us that at the time of Pompey and Crassus, the temple treasury, after having lavishly defrayed every possible expenditure, contained in money nearly half a million and precious vessels to the value of nearly two million sterling.

**The Cost of Giving.** We need not suppose from this narrative that all of the gifts of the rich counted as nought in the sight of Jesus. Doubtless there were some among them who gave sincerely and cheerfully; however, for the most part, their gifts seem to have been given with ostentation and in formality. Then, too, their gifts were simply given out of their “superfluity” and had cost them no sacrifice. When the widow came with the two mites, the very smallest Jewish coin, an amount so small that we can scarcely estimate it in our money, for it would be but a fraction of a cent, the offering represented much, for it was all she had even all her living. It was because of the sacrifice she made, of the faith and trust evidenced by this act of devotion that Jesus called the attention of His disciples to her act and spoke words that have been an inspiration to His followers through all of the ages. It is the giving that costs us something that Jesus commends. Not that which

we can easily spare out of that which we do not need but that which we could and would use for our needs makes the acceptable gift.

**Collection or Offering.** The story is told of a boy who had a dog and one day he cut out a fine piece of the tenderloin steak upon his plate and put it to one side for his dog. When he told his mother the purpose for which he was saving it, she remonstrated with him and insisted upon his eating it. When the meal was over, there was, as usual, nothing but scraps for the dog. The boy took them to his pet with this explanation: "Fido, I wanted to bring you an offering, but mother interfered and it is only a collection." The rich who cast their gifts into the treasury, although they gave handsome sums, were but giving a collection, for they were but giving out of their "superfluity" just what was left over, while the widow giving her mite was making an offering, for it was all that she had. How much of our giving is simply a "collection!"

**The Real Value.** Before we leave the thought of the comparative value of the gifts of the rich men and the poor widow, let us see just what it was that made the two mites of such value that Jesus should say she had given more than all the rest. The offerings of gold and silver must have fallen into the treasury with a resonant ring but it was doubtless very difficult to hear the sound made by the widow's mites, but as Jesus heard them they were heavy with her labor, her prayers and her self-denial and so as they fell into the treasury their ring echoed in Heaven and Jesus valued them. In the hands of any one else they would have remained but two mites, but in her hands their value was more than the great sums given by the rich.

**Over Against Life's Treasury.** With our minds still upon the scene in the temple, let us remember that life becomes a treasury and all that we are putting into it becomes our contribution and over against this treasury the Master of men is sitting and His watchful eye never fails to note the real value of that which we bring. Sometimes men are giving **themselves**. Their lives may be lived very obscurely; the world may never know of their sacrifices, but oh, of how much value are they to that which makes for the progress of mankind Godward!

**The Halo of Faith.** Before we leave this beautiful picture it might be well for us to form a more intimate acquaintance with this widow. How dark was that day when in sore bereavement she followed the lifeless form of her loved one to its final resting place! How dark when the grave's door was shut and she turned to face the world—**alone!** How hard it seemed when she took

up the battle of life and fought to ward off destitution! And it may be that almost as hard as all the rest was the resolution to take the two mites and carry them to the temple treasury. Not that she would keep the two mites for her own needs; not for one moment did she begrudge giving them, but she must stand side by side with the rich and the sumptuous and how would her mites look when cast in among their gold and silver! But then came the encouragement of her faith, the sublime conviction of duty, and as she appears among the rich and the great how grand her faded garments look and what a halo of brightness is around her forever. Her faith has become her reward.

**Christian Stewardship.** There is much in both the Old Testament and the New to guide the Christian in his giving. What we have is not **ours**, for we are not our own, we have been bought with a price, 1 Cor. 6:19, 20, and ourselves and all that we have belong to God. We are only stewards and must some day give an account of our stewardship. Luke 6:11, 12. The spirit of our giving is determined by 2 Cor. 9:7, for God loveth a cheerful giver. That our giving should be systematic and proportionate cannot be doubted when one remembers how Paul exhorted the members of the Apostolic churches to lay aside a portion of their income as God had prospered them and to do this upon the first day of each week.

But the question that bothers many Christians today is not settled by an express command in the New Testament, and that is, just what proportion of one's income is to be given. Under the Mosaic law the command was explicitly given and the Israelite could know just what tithes and offerings were expected. But as Christians we are not living under law but under grace and God wants the proportion of our giving to be measured by our love and devotion. Surely, as Christians enjoying all the blessings of the Christian dispensation, we cannot do less than the Jew and yet how few Christians even give a tenth of their income to the Lord! Not less, but a great deal more should be the proportion of our giving.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What great feast was about to be celebrated in Jerusalem at this time? 2. Would this likely have any effect upon the number of persons who would be bringing their gifts to the temple? 3. Were the gifts of the rich acceptable to God? 4. Is the amount that we give ever a test of our giving? 5. Wherein was the widow's offering so much more to be commended than the offerings of the rich?

**Practical Truths.** 1. We are only stewards of what God has given us. 2. Sometimes the real test of our giving is not the amount given but the amount withheld. 3. No matter how humble, we can do something. 4. We never really give unto the Lord until we feel it. 5. Small means and humble efforts are exalted by the motive.

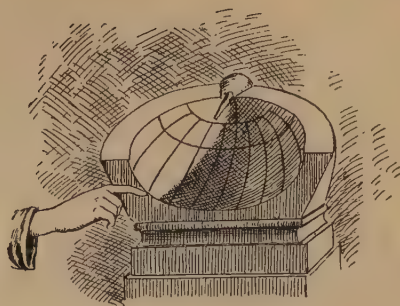
REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



And



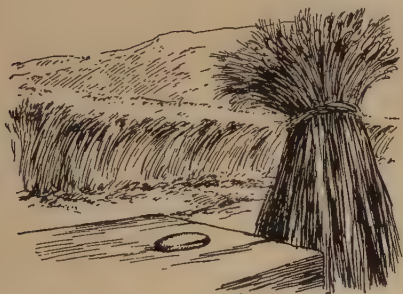
answered them,  
saying, The



is come, that the Son of man should be



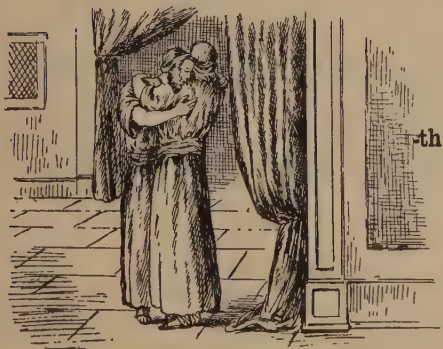
Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of



fall into the  
ground and  
die, it abideth  
alone: but  
if it die, it  
bringeth  
forth much



He that



his life  
shall lose  
it; and  
he that



his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 12:20-36.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We, too, would see Jesus. We would see His humanity, that we may know how to live the true and manly life. We would see His Divinity, that we may ever have before us that high ideal toward which it is our privilege to grow in grace. We would see Jesus because He alone can meet the needs of our lives. We would see Jesus because the heart is weary and burdened

with sin and we know He is an all-sufficient Savior. Help us to see Jesus. Amen.

“‘We would see Jesus’—the great rock foundation, Whereon our feet were set by sovereign grace; Nor life nor death, with all their agitation, Can thence remove us, if we see His face.”

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time. Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30. **Place.** The temple in Jerusalem. **Persons.** Jesus, the disciples and certain Greeks who came to keep the passover.

**Scripture Setting.** Christ's Sacrifice. Foreshadowed by the sacrifices of the old covenant. Ex. 20:24. Foretold by prophets. Isa. 53. Fulfilled on Calvary. John 19:30, Heb. 9:14, 26. Supersedes all others. Eph. 2:13-16. Attracts all men. John 12:32.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** This lesson teaches

us that: 1. The coming of the Greeks was prophetic of the reception of Jesus by the Gentile world. 2. The hour of suffering and trial was the hour of glorification and triumph. 3. The law of fruitfulness is death before life. 4. Selfishness indulged causes irreparable loss. 5. The agony of Gethsemane was overshadowing the Master's heart. 6. An unselfish prayer reaches the heart of God. 7. The cross is the great attractive power in the world. 8. Jesus could always harmonize His life and teaching with the Scriptures.

## THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SON OF MAN.

**The Inquiring Greeks.** In our last lesson we were interested in those who were casting their gifts into the treasury, and especially the poor widow who brought her mites as an offering. Jesus, watching those who gave, was probably in that part of the temple known as the court of the women, where both men and women could come, but beyond which no woman could go. In the outer court, known as the court of the Gentiles, there were some men of the Greek nation, who were exceedingly anxious to see Jesus. These men had renounced their idolatrous worship and accepted the one true God and had come to Jerusalem to worship at the time of the great feast, the passover. There was a penalty of death awaiting any Gentile who should pass beyond the court bearing that name, so these men “came to Philip, who was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asking him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.” Philip tells Andrew, and together they go and tell Jesus. Philip and Andrew are the only two disciples who have Greek names, and coming from Bethsaida they doubtless belonged to families who could speak the Greek language. Various reasons have been assigned for the coming of the Greeks to Jesus. The reply of Jesus is sufficient assurance that it was more than an idle curiosity that prompted them. Doubtless they came because they were attracted by His teaching and miracle working and wanted to know more of the message of salvation that He brought to man.

**See Jesus.** How much more beautiful and holy our lives would be if our morning prayer each day should be “We would see Jesus.” See Him in His

tenderness toward all humankind that we too might become more tender; see Him in the beauty of His holiness that like Him we may be holy; see Him so that the world seeing us may know that we have been with Jesus and learned of Him.

**God's Hour.** The coming of the Greeks strangely stirred the heart of Jesus. Prophetic of the day when the great Gentile world should seek Him, it brought a keen sense of all that He must suffer to make possible man's redemption. Truly, the hour had come when the Son of man should be glorified, the hour that had been prophesied when after Adam's fall it was promised that some day the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent; the hour of which the prophets of many centuries had foretold; the hour when God should make it possible for man to again have fellowship with his Creator; the hour when the lost, sin-sick soul should be redeemed. Truly it was God's hour and the Son of man should be glorified. Was not this the hour for which the disciples had been longing? True enough, but how mistaken was their conception of His glory, and lest His statement should mislead them, He illustrates His glorification by the grain of wheat that must die before it can enter into the glory of fruition.

**Life Through Death.** “Let us take a little journey up the Mississippi valley. As we ascend the valley we come to the largest corn states, representing one-half the corn supply of the world. Let us heap the year's corn harvest into one heap and start a corn wagon across the state. Let us follow that with another wagon, and let these wagons follow one another in steady succession. Let these wagons go across Illinois, then Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New Jersey; now freeze the Atlantic ocean and send these wagons across Bel-



gium and the low countries, south Germany, lower Austria, the Danube principalities, the Black sea, ascend the heights of Asia, and on across the Pacific by Manila and Hawaii, on through California and Nevada and back to the banks of the Mississippi. Twenty-five thousand miles around the world this continuous stream of corn wagons has been extending, and now as you look on your pile of corn you will scarcely see a hole in it. You send around a second train, a third, and not until after the sixth have you exhausted your pile of corn. And all of this tremendous, mighty heap of corn came from a few kernels. The one kernel will multiply itself a hundredfold and each of these a hundredfold." The farmers might have said of the few kernels: "This is all the corn we have. We shall keep it for we will need it by and by for food." They were wiser than that. They buried the few kernels away in the dark, moist earth and through this death there came a larger life and in the golden autumn there was a wonderful harvest. Verily, he that loveth his life and tries to save it for selfish purposes shall lose it, but he who lives so unselfishly that he seems even to hate his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

**Service and Its Reward.** Jesus answers the Greeks in the words: "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be; if any man serve Me him will the Father honor." Service according to the principles as just taught by Jesus,—a self-sacrificing service such as He has given,—is to be the program for those who follow Him, and the reward for such a service is the promised presence of Christ and the honor that will be bestowed by the Father upon him who serves, giving the servant the royal welcome, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

**A Foretaste of Gethsemane.** The dark shadow of the cross comes over the soul of the Master as He realizes that He must carry that cross to Calvary and there be crucified upon it before the Gentile world shall really see and know Him, and with that thought there comes something of the struggle through which He passed in the garden. As though unaware of the presence of the crowd about Him, He gave expression to His inmost thoughts. "Now is my soul troubled," as in Gethsemane He said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." Here, it is, "Father, save Me from this hour"; in the garden, "O my Father, if be possible, let this cup pass from Me." "For this cause came I unto this hour." Much the same sentiment is expressed in the words, "If this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, Thy will be done." The words of surrender, "Father, glorify Thy name," remind us of the words spoken later in the garden, "The cup which the Father hath given Me, shall I not drink

it?" We cannot think it was from physical suffering that Jesus shrank; sin was about to do its worst for the human soul, and the Lord was about to lay upon Him the iniquity of us all.

**Voice from Heaven.** God sent an angel from Heaven to strengthen the Saviour in the garden; here there is a voice from Heaven as God assures His Son that His name has been glorified and will be glorified again. At the baptism of Jesus, in the beginning of His public ministry, when He was fulfilling all righteousness, a voice out of Heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Again at the Transfiguration was the voice heard repeating the words and adding, "Hear ye Him." The perfect obedience manifested in the Saviour's life brought forth the approval of God. It will do the same for us.

**The Great Magnet.** Jesus assures the multitudes that it is not for His sake but for theirs that the voice has spoken. In the hour to which Jesus had come the world was being judged and the decision was against it and the Kingdom of God began its victorious course, for it is the lifting up of Jesus upon the cross that shall be the great magnet to draw the souls of men from the "prince of this world" unto God. Oh, glorious cross! There only can we find the burden of sin lifted and the peace of God that passeth understanding.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What is the significance of the coming of the Greeks to Jesus at this time? 2. How may we see Jesus? What will binder us from seeing Him? 3. How was the Son of man to be glorified in the hour of His humiliation? 4. How can you reconcile the statement of Jesus, "He that loveth his life shall lose it," to the experience of so many who seem to gain so much by loving their life that now is? 5. Why could not Jesus have been the true Messiah and accepted an outward kingdom? 6. What constitutes true service? 7. How had Jesus glorified God's name? 8. Does the cross of Christ draw all men?

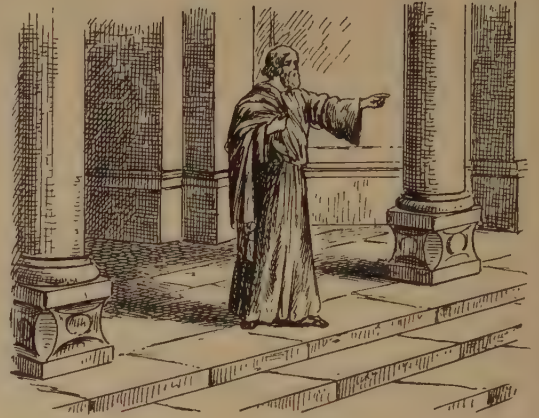
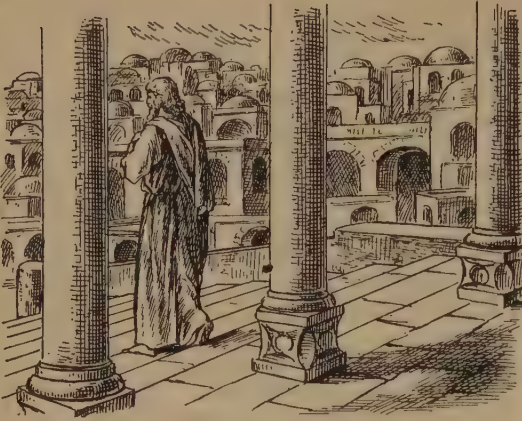
**Practical Truths.** 1. The more clearly we see Jesus, the better Christians we become. 2. The Kingdom and its glory could only come by way of the cross. 3. The men of Jesus' day did not know how to use their lives; Jesus suggests a way: invest them for the sake of others. 4. What a failure Jesus' life and ministry was from a purely human standpoint; what a marvelous success from the Divine. 5. Man's choice often lies between temporary gain and eternal loss. 6. No man can serve Christ without following Him to the sick and needy and sin burdened of earth. 7. There is an hour in the life of everyone for which all previous hours were but the preparation. 8. Human glory seems so weak and uninviting to those who live for God's glory. 9. Every conceivable power that can draw men to a life of righteousness is found in the crucified Christ.

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.

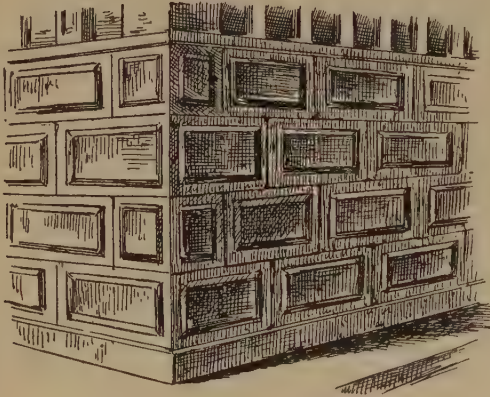


# THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE FORETOLD.

And as he went



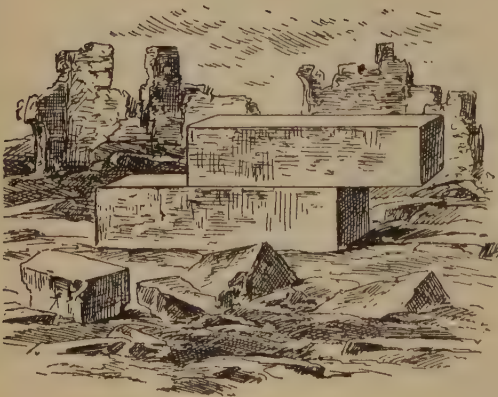
saith unto him, Master, see what manner of



and  
what



are here! And Jesus answering said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left



that  
shall  
not be





# DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE FORETOLD.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 13:1-20.

**Prayer:** Our Father, As we study the words of doom pronounced upon Jerusalem and the temple, help us to realize that the debt of retribution must be paid by those who disobey Thee. Keep us from misconstruing the manifestations of Thy love into license for our own selfish desires. May we know that the way we live each day determines the judgment that must come upon us. Help us so to live that at last we may have an abundant entrance into Thy presence. In Jesus' name. Amen.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of truth and falsehood, for the good or evil side;  
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,  
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,  
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Late Tuesday afternoon, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, Verses one and two were spoken just without the temple. The rest of the lesson from the Mount of Olives overlooking Jerusalem and the temple. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting: Prophecy and Fulfillment.** Birth of Christ, Mic. 5:2; Matt. 2:1. Christ as Son of God, Psa. 2:7; Matt. 3:17. Miracle working, Isa. 35:5, 6; Matt. 11:4-6. Betrayal, Psa. 41:9; John 13:18, 21. Death, Isa. 53:12; Matt. 27:50. Burial, Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60. Resurrection, Isa. 26:19; Luke 24:6, 31, 34. Chief Corner-stone, Isa. 28:16; 1 Peter 2:6, 7. Conversion of Gentiles, Isa. 11:10; Acts 10:45, 47.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this lesson are: 1. The foretold destruction of the temple, a great surprise to the simple-hearted disciples. 2. The warning against the false Christs. 3. The prediction of great international wars and terrible suffering that should come upon the people. 4. Perils of Christ's followers predicted. 5. All of this will not hinder the progress of the Gospel that must be preached to all nations. 6. The promised power of the Holy Spirit to aid the disciples in witnessing for Christ. 7. Though bitterly persecuted, the promise of salvation is to those who endure.

## THE PASSING AWAY OF THE JEWISH NATIONAL LIFE.

**Leaving the Temple.** The past several lessons have impressed upon us the fact that the last day spent in the temple was a wonderful day of continued intellectual labor and conflict, of grand revelations and overwhelming denunciation, of which the evangelists have given us fuller accounts than of any other day of His life, unless it be that of the crucifixion. There is no record that Jesus ever again entered the temple after the departure mentioned in our lesson. He had been rejected by those in authority and as He took His farewell of the temple late that afternoon His departure was prophetic of the rejection of the temple that must soon become but a desolate and forsaken ruin.

Just as they were leaving one of the disciples called Jesus' attention to the magnificent temple building. "Well might he thus exclaim in regard to the building which Tacitus declared one of the wonders of the world. Fifty years before, Herod had begun the great work of its construction, and for forty-six years the work of rebuilding the temple of Zerubbabel, on plans of surpassing grandeur, went on. Colonnades and courts enclosing the central sacred building covered over nineteen acres, rising to a climax of splendor in the sacred 'noos,' the temple proper, in which gold and silver and brass and cedar, and rich carvings and gorgeous embroideries, and precious marbles, vied with each other to attract the eye and delight the heart." To these simple Galileans it never occurred that the world could contain anything to compare with it, or that it could ever be destroyed. What a thunderbolt to such hearts must have been the answer of Jesus, as He told them there should

not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down!

**The Inner Circle.** After leaving the temple, the Master and His disciples descended into the valley of the Kedron, crossed the brook and ascended the Mt. of Olives. Coming to one of the many knolls, from which the whole splendid extent of the temple enclosure, two hundred feet below, could be seen, they sat down to rest. The view today with the magnificent Mosque of Omar upon the temple site, is most fascinating. What must it have been in Jesus' day! While resting, the three disciples of the inner circle, together with Andrew came to Jesus that they might ask Him privately when there should occur that great drama of destruction of which He had spoken and what should be the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished.

**False Christs.** In the account given by Mark the two questions here asked seem to refer to the same "things," although the addition of the word "all" in the second seems to be a widening of the thought. Matthew makes the matter clear by giving the second question more definitely, "and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" While this is more definite it makes the explanation more difficult for it has reference to two distinct events; the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the world. Whatever may be

our application of these words of prophecy it is enough for our present purpose that the primary fulfillment was in the downfall of the Jewish state, with the previous or accompanying change from the Jewish to the Christian dispensation.

Jesus' first reply to the questions of the disciples is a warning against those who falsely impersonate Him as the Messiah and thereby deceive many. To know that this was literally fulfilled we have need only to turn to Acts 5:36, 37 and 1 John 2:18 and read of those who came making the false claims.

Josephus says that in the reign of Claudius (who died A. D. 54), "the land was overrun with magicians and imposters, who drew multitudes of the people into the deserts to see the signs and miracles which they promised. And now, as His coming draws near, there are arising many men with their new religions and doctrines, pretending to be better than Christianity, and to be the real Messiahs of humanity; and they still deceive many."

**Troublous Times.** How terrible were the words of Jesus! And yet how literally these words of prophecy were fulfilled. During the life of Christ peace prevailed over the entire world, but after His death "the war fiend ran riot" in Palestine.

"At Caesarea, the Jews and Syrians engaged in deadly conflict, 20,000 of the former were slain and the rest expelled from the city. This resulted in a series of conflicts in other cities, compassing the death of 20,000 Jews at Scythopolis, 2,500 at Ascalon, 2,000 at Ptolemais. At Alexandria, Damascus and other points there were similar scenes." There were earthquakes at Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Rome, Laodicea, Hierapolis and Colossae. Three Roman writers mention a famine in Judea "in the days of Claudius Caesar." How fitting was this description given by our Lord to His confidential disciples at a time when all was peace and quiet and prosperous throughout the land!

**From Nation to Individual.** All that Jesus has mentioned pertained to the general experiences of the nations and no doubt the question has already arisen in the minds of the disciples as to their future as His followers during these terrible times. Here is their answer. They shall be delivered up to councils, beaten in synagogues, stand before governors and kings for His sake.

Again how literally were the words of Jesus fulfilled. Peter and John before the chief priests, scribes and elders; a subsequent occasion when the Apostles are summoned before the same tribunal; Stephen before the council. Herod, Felix, Festus, Agrippa, Gallio and Nero are some of the governors and kings before whom the Apostles bore witness for Jesus the Christ.

Paul tells how in the days of his unbelief he punished the Christians in the synagogues and strove to make them blaspheme. Just here is a heartening word for the disciples, for although they must endure bitter persecutions they are assured that the Gospel must be preached to all the nations. This too was fulfilled, for the Gospel had been preached throughout the Roman world as then known and every nation had received its testimony before the destruction of Jerusalem.

**A Comforting Promise.** Though compelled to paint a dark picture of the things He knew must befall His followers, how like Him to flood that picture with the light of a comforting promise! The Apostles were illiterate men and knew little or nothing of the laws of the different countries where they must witness for Christ and what could these men do in the presence of such men of rank as governors and kings! They were not to think of this. The Holy Spirit would be with them and He would give them the needed message.

**Who Shall Be Saved?** There was more of the dark picture, yes, and more of the comfort for these disciples who were just beginning to learn what it means to take up the cross and follow Jesus. The feeling against Christianity was to be so intense as to destroy natural affection until brother shall deliver up brother to death, and the father his child, and children shall rise up against their parents and cause them to be put to death. The Apostles would be hated for Christ's sake. And now for the comfort: "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." Strange as it may seem, historians tell us that not a Christian perished in the siege of Jerusalem, "though there were many there when Cestus Gallus invested the city; but when he unexpectedly and unaccountably raised the siege, the Christians took that opportunity to escape." Christ's followers may be exposed to every peril, but, enduring in faithfulness, no final disaster can come to them, for beyond all is the eternal salvation at the right hand of God in Heaven.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. When the disciple called Jesus' attention to the magnificence of the temple what more did Jesus see than he? 2. Why was the Mount of Olives a good place for the utterance of this prophecy? 3. Mention the terrible things that were to befall the nations and tell how these were fulfilled. 4. What things were to happen to the disciples and what was their comfort? 5. Has the fact that today the Gospel is being preached to all nations any significance? What is it? 6. Who shall be saved?

**Practical Truths.** 1. Sad the day for us when Jesus leaves our temple and His voice is heard no longer pleading in our souls. 2. Too often, like the disciples, we give our thought only to the physical surroundings of the church. 3. We yearn to know of the end of the world, even as they of old, but we must not be wise beyond what is written. 4. All who bring us a mutilated or changed Gospel are false Christs. 5. Better a thousand wars than a war between the soul and God. 6. There is no shame in being abandoned by the world for Christ's sake, but, oh, the shame of abandoning Him for the world's sake.

REV. JUSTIN N. GREEN.



# THE COMMAND TO WATCH.

Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house



at



or at midnight, or at the



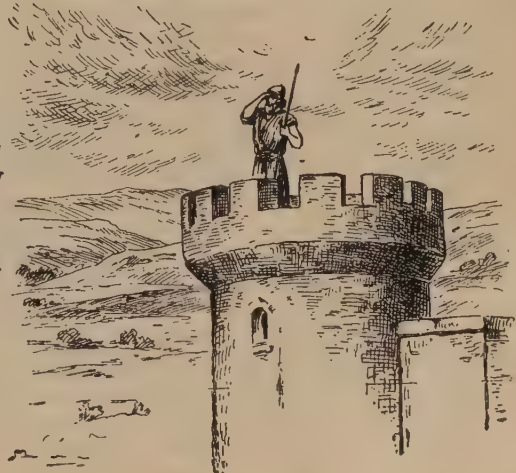
or in  
the



Lest coming suddenly he



And  
what  
I say  
unto  
you  
I say  
unto  
all,





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 13:33-37. ALSO MATT. 24:42-48, AND LUKE 21:36-38.

**Prayer.** Dear Lord, We rejoice that having triumphed over death and the grave, Thou dost reign in Heaven and that Thou wilt return to Thy people in glory and power. May we lovingly watch and earnestly pray for Thy coming and so live each day, that Thou shalt find us ready at Thine appearing. Amen.

Watch, as if on that alone  
Hung the issues of the day;  
Pray that help may be sent down;  
Watch and pray.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tuesday of Passion week, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, Mount of Olives. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Watchfulness Enjoined. Necessity of watchfulness, Matt. 25:13. A safeguard against temptation, Matt. 26:41. Watchfulness commended, Luke 12:37. A Christian duty, I Thess. 5:5-6. Reason for watchfulness, I Pet. 4:7. The reward of watchfulness, Rev. 16:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jesus closes a re-

markable prophetic discourse with, 1. The declaration of His second coming. 2. Warns His disciples that the time is known to no man. 3. He commands them to watch and pray for the time when He shall reappear in power and glory. 4. Exhorts them not to sleep but to make ready for His coming through the completion of the work He has left to them. 5. Closes with a final admonition to watch.

### WHEN HE COMETH.

**On the Mount of Olives.** Jesus' reply to the question, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" was of a practical and yet prophetic character. He had not satisfied their curiosity by mapping out the future as time is marked on the dial plate, nor had He openly rebuked the four eager questioners, but in a wonderful discourse He foretold the end of the Jewish dispensation and the calamitous woe attending that end; the approach of the new dispensation built upon His words and life and death; its close and His own final coming in power and glory. It was not only a message for those about Him but for the remotest future, and nearly two thousand years after its deliverance His followers are only beginning to conceive of all the mighty truths and warnings contained in this "Discourse of the last things." Jesus and His disciples were on the Mount of Olives, sitting in the shade of a sheltering fig-tree, the holy city at their feet, and above them outlined against the afternoon sky they could see the two gigantic cedar trees which then held their stately position on the summit of the Mount. The entire discourse had been one of solemn warning and as under His touch a twig of the budding fig-tree had been transmuted into a parable to attest the certainty of His coming, He declared that "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not fail."

**No Man Knoweth the Time.** They had asked to know when these things should be, for despite all His teaching, they still believed that Jesus would be an earthly king. If in some mysterious way that they could not comprehend, Jesus was to die and re-

appear, surely in His second coming He would claim the authority which they had hoped He would assert even now. Therefore it seemed important that they should know when to expect His coming. But how could He reveal to them that which is not even known in Heaven? For, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of Heaven, but My Father only." Ever since this utterance of Jesus there have been people and sects who, while obeying Jesus' command to watch for His coming, have disregarded His statement, "Ye know not when the time is;" and oftentimes an exact date has been set for our Lord's appearance. Believing they knew the exact day and hour when the world would come to an end, Christians have deserted business and the routine of duty, and even prepared white robes in which to meet their Lord.

An old man who was warned by one such enthusiast to quit his work and be ready to meet his Master replied, "My Bible tells me 'Ye know not when the time is' ". The tick of God's clock is not heard on earth until it strikes the hour.

**Jesus Counsels His Followers.** The little band listened in mystified silence and sadness. Jesus' heart was filled with solicitude. To the Creator of time—the One who had existed before its beginning, and by the Divine measurement of a thousand years as one day, it would not be long ere He should return to His own. All that He had told them concerning the old and the new dispensation would occur ere this generation should pass away. Save one, all present with Jesus on Olivet should shortly see the sign of His reappearing in the parted clouds which should receive Him, and from Heaven



itself hear the announcement, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." But as we count years it would seem long, and in the interval they would meet persecution, tribulation, indifference and hatred. And the heart of our Lord yearned not only for the little group gathered about Him but for His followers through all the ages who should be discouraged and perhaps weary in their allegiance because the King in His glory came not.

**The Command to Watch.** "Take ye heed, watch and pray." Just as in the days of Noah, men refused to believe in the flood until it came and swept them away, so the uncertainty of Jesus' coming would make men careless and unprepared for His return. But He would surely and swiftly come, and His followers were to take heed that they should be ready to receive Him. They were to pray for endurance, patience and fidelity to their Master, absent or present. They were to watch lest they be given over to sinful pleasures and indulgences, or so engrossed with the things of this life as to forget the charge He had given them. One can almost see the tender solicitude of Jesus' face, and catch the earnestness of that Divine voice as our Lord charges His disciples to remember their Lord and to always prayerfully and lovingly watch for His return.

A sentry in the Prussian ranks was assigned to watch a certain pass. A change in the enemies' movements transferred the battle to another field. In the sudden change of realignment of troops, the sentry was forgotten. Day after day passed and no one came to relieve him from duty. His scant rations were exhausted; he was physically weary for lack of sleep. But it was his duty to watch the pass until relieved by his superior officer, and after five days he was found insane from lack of food and sleep, too weak to walk, but crawling on hands and knees, back and forth on his watch. For was he not to watch?

**To Every Man His Work.** To emphasize the lesson Jesus likened Himself to a man taking a far journey and His disciples were to be the trusted servants whom the master had set over his household to give food and care to its members until their lord should return. The master had given them special instructions before he started on his journey. Each man had his work to do; every one his task to perform in the absence of the master. During his journeying it was their duty to obey orders and follow the

instructions he had given them. He had given them no information as to his return nor any intimation as to when they should look for him. He was likely to return at any time. Perhaps as the silver trumpet sounded the evening hour, or it might please him to arrive in the darkest hour of the night—at the midnight watch; he might return at that early hour when only the cock is crowing and all the rest of the world is asleep, or his sudden coming might be deferred until morning. What did it matter to his servants, if they had been faithful to the task he had assigned them and if he found them watching? So with the Son of man. What did it matter to His followers whether He came in the evening of the Jewish dispensation or at its midnight; or if He should wait till the early dawn of the new; or tarry until the light of His glorious Gospel shone on every hilltop and covered the earth, if He found them not sleeping, but watching?

**A Message for All.** "And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Through the telescope of the ages Jesus saw the centuries rolling on, generations passing with the hope yet deferred; He knew every disheartened follower, and to them all He spoke that wonderful word so fraught with meaning and blessing, "Watch!" Never before was a message so broad and of such double meaning compressed into a single word. Are we careless and indifferent, engrossed with the things of this world and forgetful of our Lord? Then in letters of fire Jesus' warning appears to us, "Watch." Do we long to see the King in all His glory? and are we disheartened because our Lord tarries? Then the blessed word of hope shines like a rainbow in the sky, *Watch*. It is Jesus' message not alone to the disciples or those on Olivet, but to *all*.

**Quiz.** 1. What king went up on Mount Olivet weeping? 2. What four Apostles questioned Jesus concerning the time of His reappearing? 3. Did Jesus satisfy their curiosity? 4. Why is the exact time of our Lord's return withheld from His people? 5. What counsel did Jesus bestow? 6. What great command did He give?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The Word of our Lord endures through eternity. 2. Those who ask God "When?" are always unanswered. 3. Jesus commands all His followers to "Beware!" "Watch!" "Endure!" "Pray!" 4. Each one has a work to do during His Lord's absence. 5. He who sleeps will miss the splendour of His Lord's coming. 6. The command to watch was three times repeated.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE TEN VIRGINS.

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto



and  
went  
forth  
to  
meet  
the



And



of  
them  
were  
wise,  
and



were foolish. They that  
were foolish took their



and took  
no oil  
with them:  
But the  
wise took  
oil in their



While the  
bridegroom  
tarried, they all  
slumbered and



And at midnight  
there was a cry  
made, Behold,  
the bridegroom  
cometh; go ye  
out to meet him.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 25:1-13

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we not be among the foolish virgins who were unprepared for the midnight call. May our lamps be trimmed and burning and filled with oil. Fill our hearts with the Holy Spirit so that we shall be ready when the Bridegroom cometh. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"The Bridegroom is advancing,  
Each hour He draws more nigh;  
Up! Watch and pray nor slumber,  
At midnight comes the cry."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tuesday of Passion week, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, Mount of Olives. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Bridegroom. John proclaims the Bridegroom, John 3:29. His loving provision, Isa. 61:10. Rejoices over us, Isa. 62:5. Seeking the Bridegroom, Song of Sol. 3:1-3. His coming, Rev. 22:11-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this beautiful and simple parable, 1. Jesus speaks of the church as

a body. 2. He seeks to impress more indelibly the lesson of watchfulness and faithfulness. 3. Emphasizes the need of special preparation for His coming. 4. Teaches that profession is not enough. 5. The necessity for a vital, personal preparation. 6. That the righteousness of others will not avail. 7. Those who watch and wait doing the duty assigned them will have a part in the joys of the Kingdom. 8. Those who are not faithful to the end will be shut out.

### THE MIDNIGHT CALL.

**Meeting the Bridegroom.** To impress the warning to watch and pray still more indelibly upon the minds of His followers, Jesus again taught them by parable and pictured a wedding scene. It is the bridal eve. The bridegroom is not present for he has been away on a long journey, but his arrival is momentarily expected. Though he has been so far away that there is no means of knowing the exact hour of his arrival, it is enough that he has said that he would surely return, and that this was the evening he set for the marriage. Who could doubt the bridegroom's promise? There could be happiness only and expectation at the home of the bride. According to Jewish custom all had been made ready and was in waiting for the bridegroom to come and take his bride to his father's house. His hearers hardly needed to be told that Jesus was the Bridegroom who should some day come to take His bride, which is His church, to His Father's house above. The disciples listened attentively while Jesus pictured the bridal attendants who waited only the summons which should proclaim the bridegroom's approach, that they might go forth to meet and welcome him.

**The Marriage Procession.** It might almost be called a torchlight procession for the lamps used on such occasions and which were carried by the bridal attendants were not unlike the torches of today. The round receptacle which held the oil for the wick was placed in a cup or deep saucer with a pointed end which fastened into the long wooden pole on which it was borne aloft. Ten such lamps were always carried on such an occasion just as ten attendants or witnesses were required to be present at the benedictions which accompanied a Jewish marriage ceremony, therefore in the para-

ble there were ten virgins—young women friends of the bride—in the bridal company. A modest little procession which might have passed almost unnoticed through any village of Palestine, and yet it has attracted the attention of the ages, for do not these ten virgins represent His professed followers who should be ever in readiness to welcome their Lord's return? It is therefore of moment to study those fitting girlish figures as they are presented to us in this bridal scene.

**Their Equipment.** Their wedding garments were provided for them, just as church membership furnishes a cloak of righteousness, but each virgin carried her own lamp. This much was expected of them, even as there must be personal preparation on the part of all, who would welcome and receive the Heavenly Bridegroom. Five came without oil. They could not have forgotten the need of oil, but wilfully neglected to do what would have involved labor and trouble. The lamps would have been much harder to carry if the hollow vessels were filled with oil than without. They knew it was necessary to carry their own oil, but by specious reasoning convinced themselves that there would be a supply of oil in the house or that there would be abundant time to supply their need after the call to meet the bridegroom.

**The Five Foolish Virgins.** It is not strange that Jesus called these five attendants foolish virgins. Was it not foolish to come expecting to serve as bridal attendants; to don wedding garments and to provide themselves lamps and be in waiting to meet the bridegroom at any hour of the night, and to come without oil in their lamps? Yet mere church profession is like the empty lamp hung on the top of a pole that men may see it, but giving no light. There are professed followers of Jesus, who are like these

five foolish virgins, ready to go forth to meet the Bridegroom with no oil in their lamps. They neglect the spiritual preparation prayer affords; think they can do without a personal religious experience; rely upon the righteousness of the church to which they belong or trust that there will be time for preparation ere their Lord cometh.

**The Five Wise Virgins.** There were five of the bridal attendants who not only brought their lamps but "took oil in their vessels with their lamps;" they were the five wise virgins of the parable. Together the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins waited for the summons which should tell of the bridegroom's coming. Time sped on and still he tarried. Evening wore into night. Tired nature asserted itself and both the wise and foolish virgins "slumbered and slept." We notice that Jesus does not rebuke them for this natural weariness. Quiet still broods over the house. It is midnight, when all the world sleeps. Suddenly upon the still air breaks a cry so tremendous with joy that it penetrates the ears of the sleeping maidens. "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." We fancy there was exultation in the voice of the Divine Teacher at this announcement, for He would teach His disciples that when the Bridegroom appears, whether it is when the hour has struck twelve and a darkened world awaits the end; or though it were only the midnight vigil of a sick room, there should be joy and each loyal soul, with lamp trimmed and burning, ready to go forth and meet Him.

**The Awakening.** "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps." They hastily drew up the wick and lighted it. Since there was no oil in the vessels, of course the flame in the lamps of the five foolish virgins immediately died out. They had never contemplated such an emergency, nor that the bridegroom should arrive so unexpectedly. How they regretted that they had not brought oil with them, but surely they can borrow from their more fortunate companions. "And the foolish said unto the wise, 'Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.'"

It was impossible to comply with their request. The receptacle for each lamp held just enough for one lamp and it could not be made to fill two. If they divided with their sisters, there would not be enough oil in the lamps of either the wise or the foolish virgins to last their journey through, and the entire procession would be in darkness when the bridegroom came upon them. The oil must be their own. They must seek a merchant and buy for themselves; but the plan was not so easily car-

ried out as they imagined; they were unlikely to find any place open where they might buy at that time of the night.

**The Bridegroom Comes.** Leaving the foolish virgins in quest of a shop where they might buy oil, Jesus portrayed the coming of the bridegroom when "they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut." No one can picture that marriage.

There have been royal alliances where, with gorgeous and dazzling display, amid the sonorous tones of a deep throated organ, the kingly bridegroom is united to the royal bride. But when the Heavenly Bridegroom comes to His own, there is joy and happiness unknown to the heart of man. It was useless for even the Divine Teacher to try to convey to His hearers the joy and beauty attending the final marriage of a faithful, loyal soul to its Lord. The door was shut, and though there has been much imagining and conjecture, human vision has not penetrated beyond, nor has a messenger emerged from that closed door to tell of the joy of the Marriage Feast.

**The Closed Door.** "The door was shut." Nevertheless the foolish virgins came, knocking and calling on the bridegroom to open to them. Even if they had been so fortunate as to have obtained oil for their lamps, it could have been of no possible use to them for the procession was past and their lamps were needed no longer. Though professing to have been bridal attendants, chosen to meet the bridegroom, they had not been in the procession which met him. He had not seen them when he came, so he could only answer from within, "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not."

Thus Jesus illustrated His coming. It will be when least expected. He will come suddenly, swiftly and surely. It is not enough to be in waiting. Mere outward profession and church membership will not answer. One may not borrow religion, nor light one's lamp with the prayers of a father or mother. There will not be time for preparation after His coming, and those who are not ready to meet Him will find the door closed, "Watch therefore, for you know not the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

**Quiz.** 1. What wedding scene was the occasion of Jesus' first miracle? 2. What three great truths did Jesus desire to emphasize in this parable? 3. By what term is the church designated in Revelation? 4. Were the five wise virgins selfish in refusing to share their oil with the others? 5. Would it have been possible for them to do so? 6. What does this parable teach you? 7. What command of Jesus did the foolish virgins disobey? 8. Is your light shining?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Our Lord is never so far away that He may not come swiftly. 2. The Bridegroom will not fail to keep His promise. 3. Like a lamp without oil is the profession of godliness without the reality. 4. He who lives on borrowed religion ends in bankruptcy. 5. The end always comes unexpectedly to the unprepared.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## THE JUDGMENT.

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye



I was thirsty,  
and ye



I was a stranger, and ye



Naked, and



I was sick, and ye



I was in prison, and



Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? And the



shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 25:31-46.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We rejoice that though it was not our privilege to minister to Thee, when Thou wast upon earth, we can serve Thee through our ministry to the sinful, suffering, needy and afflicted. May we be ever ready to help and succor others doing all as unto Thee. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Wondrous honor has Thou given  
To our humblest charity,  
In Thine own mysterious sentence,—  
Ye have done it unto Me!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Tuesday of Passion week, April 4, A. D. 30. Place, Mount of Olives. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Duty to Others. To the poor, Lev. 19:9-10; Rom. 12:13. To the stranger, Lev. 25:35. To the hungry and naked, Isa. 58:7. To the thirsty, Mark 9:41. To the prisoner, Heb. 13:3. To the sick, Job 6:14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This parable declares,  
1. The certainty of the last great judgment day.  
2. That all nations shall appear before the throne of God for judgment. 3. The separation of the righteous from the unrighteous. 4. That the test of righteousness is the performance of duty toward others. 5. Defines our obligation to others. 6. Enunciates the great principle that we serve Christ when we serve our fellow man.

### INASMUCH.

**The Judgment Day.** In poetic ecstasy David had pictured nature's joy in the presence of her Creator, the very trees singing because the Lord had come to judge the earth with truth and equity. Solomon taught that God's judgment was to be so thorough that every secret thing would be revealed. To Isaiah He was a "God of judgment"; Jehemiah declared the "Whirlwind of the Lord"; Ezekiel had visions of that great day and Daniel saw the thrones of all earthly kings cast down, the books opened, and One came with the clouds to receive everlasting dominion and glory. Joel prophesied of a day of the Lord so great and terrible that no man could abide it, and Micah saw the nations in fear. Zephaniah issued warning that neither their silver nor gold would be able to deliver those who had sinned against the Lord. Zachariah exhorted to repentance before that day when thrones and kingdoms should be overthrown, while Malachi foresaw the blessedness of those whose names were written in the book of remembrance.

**The Son of Man.** All had spoken as seers and prophets who had been given fleeting visions of the majesty, power and glory of their God. They were mouth-pieces only, of the living God. But in the waning afternoon sun of that memorable Tuesday, Jesus sat on the mountain slope with His disciples and spoke with knowledge. There was more than human majesty in His mein and a light never seen on mortal face radiated His countenance as He talked of the Son of man and His angel host, while the pageant of the nations passed before His entranced hearers, as He marshaled the nations and separated them as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. In the peasant garbed figure of the Great Teacher, they must have recognized the Son of man.

**An Old Command.** Yet Jesus did not seek to lay down any new law or promulgate any new doctrine. Moses commanded the Jewish husbandmen to share his abundance with his needy brother by leaving the gleanings of the harvest field and vineyard for the poor and the stranger. As early as the days of Job it was a prescribed duty to visit the sick and afflicted. In psalms and hymns David taught the people the beauty of beneficence, and Isaiah declared that the only acceptable fast is to deal bread to the hungry, entertain the stranger, cover the naked and to recognize the sinful and sorrowing as of the same flesh as oneself. But just as fair cities have been buried out of sight under the accumulation and dust of the ages, so these commands of God had been buried under rabbinic tradition and priestly formalism; as the archeologist digs down under the rubbish of centuries to regain the beautiful marble statuary and treasures of the past, Jesus in the parable of the judgment, sought to resurrect and revivify these beautiful commandments of love and charity which so long ago God had given His people.

**On His Right Hand.** It is beyond the imagination of man to picture that gathering of all the nations and the final separation of the righteous from the unrighteous, the one on the right hand and the other on the left. The Father has committed all judgment to the Son—no longer the lowly Nazarene but the King, clothed in majesty and power—who says to the innumerable host on His right hand, "Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." We may imagine the amazement of the disciples at that welcome. All their lives they had been taught that at that last great day their



God would separate His chosen people of the seed of Abraham, from the Gentiles; that they would enter a Paradise prepared for the Jews, while the heathen would be burned as stubble. But not one word did Jesus say concerning such a separation of Jew from Gentile, and plainly the welcome is not restricted to those of Jewish blood. Have their ears deceived them, or what great and wonderful deeds have these on His right hand done, that they should enter into the Paradise of the chosen race?

**A Startling Declaration.** "For I was hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me." Ah, they had personally ministered to the King and were receiving the reward for service rendered to royalty. It may be that the disciples began to apply the parable to themselves. Perhaps Peter complacently thought of the number of times he had entertained Jesus in his home; the fishermen disciples may have recalled with satisfaction those trips when Jesus had been an occupant of their boat, and their strong arms had rowed Him to shore. John may even have reviewed with modest pleasure Jesus' visits to his home in Jerusalem.

Eager expectancy was on every face, for at last they were to be rewarded; they were to hear the announcement for which they had waited so long, and now they were to be accorded their places in the Kingdom of their Lord; Then Jesus pictured the astonished query of the righteous ones whom He has honored, "Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered and fed *Thee*? or thirsty, and gave *Thee* drink? When saw we Thee a stranger and took *Thee* in? or naked, and clothed *Thee*? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto *Thee*? The reward was not for service rendered the person of the King!

**Ye Have Done It Unto Me.** Clear as a bell must have been the voice of Jesus as He uttered those words that ring down through the ages, "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, Ye have done it unto Me." The old command has been unearthed and rehabilitated. It has been given new life, for now we know that Jesus clasps the hand that is reached out to the fallen; that the Saviour Himself feeds upon the bread we give to the hungry; even

a cup of cold water given in His name is blessed to the giver. That when we shelter a stranger we receive the Christ under our roof; that the protecting coat of which we deprive ourselves to give to our shivering, naked brother or sister is shared by the Elder Brother. The one who ministers to the sick serves the Great Physician, and above the poor, condemned being in prison there is a "form like the Son of God."

A sermon with these words of Jesus as a text sent the eighteen-year-old daughter of an English banker out to visit the poor, then to the prisons of Great Britain and the continent, until Elizabeth Fry became "The Prison Angel." Those words and a prison experience in France made John Howard devote his life and fortune to those that were in bonds, and when he died from fever contracted during a Russian prison tour, who shall doubt that he received the welcome of the King? "I was in prison and ye came unto me." Every orphanage, every sheltering home, every insane asylum and hospital; all the free dispensaries, refuges and missions owe their inception to this same declaration of Christ, for only in Christian lands do we find such institutions.

**Ye Did It Not.** It would be pleasant to close the picture with those beautiful words of the King, but alas for those on the left hand; they too had seen the hungry, but gave no meat; the cup of cold water was withheld from the thirsty. No stranger found shelter under their roof; the naked were not clothed and those sick and in prison were not visited. Perhaps they were busy with some great task for the Master. They may have been engrossed in their own pleasure, or they may have intended to render assistance later on. In those days on earth they thought they had good and sufficient reason for this neglect, but their excuses were futile when they stood before the King. Sternly and sadly He declared, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these ye did it not to Me." And they also received their reward.

**Quiz.** 1. What had the Jews been taught regarding the judgment? 2. How did Jesus' teaching differ from this? 3. Who were to be at the King's right hand? 4. What service had they rendered? 5. Are you acquainted with any beautiful poem on this subject? 6. How should every kind act be performed?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. All thrones sink into insignificance before the throne of God. 2. All nations shall acknowledge and honor the Son at the final day. 3. He who bore the sins of the world is its best Judge. 4. It requires the discerning eye of the Great Shepherd to separate the sheep from the goats. 5. God prepared a Heaven before He created a world. 6. "Who bestows himself with his gift feeds three, himself, his hungering neighbor and Me." 7. Our Lord transmutes every kind act into service to the King.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE PASSOVER.

And the first



of unleavened



when  
they



the passover, his



said unto him,  
Where wilt  
thou that we  
go and prepare  
that thou  
mayest eat the



And he  
sendeth forth



and saith unto  
them, Go ye



and  
there  
shall  
meet  
you



of water: follow him.



# THE PASSOVER.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 14:12-16. ALSO MATT. 26:17-19, AND LUKE 22:7-13.

**Prayer:** We come to Thee Thou Lamb of God, who hath given Thyself a sacrifice for our redemption, trusting in the blood of the everlasting covenant to shield us from the destroying angel of death. Keep us; help us. We would obey Thy command and make ready a place for Thee in heart and home, giving Thee the place of honor. Make each day of our lives a sacred passover of worship and service. Amen.

Not all the blood of beasts  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.

But Christ the Heavenly Lamb  
Takes all our sins away,  
A Sacrifice of nobler name  
And richer blood than they.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of Passion week, April 6, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus, Peter and John; an unknown disciple of Jesus and his servant.

**Scripture Setting:** The Passover. Passover ordained, Ex. 12:3-14. Time appointed, Num. 28:16. The first passover, Ex. 12:27-30. Christ's first passover, Luke 2:41-42. The passover a type of Christ's sacrifice, 1 Cor. 5:7-8. Christ the paschal Lamb, Isa. 53:5-7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In the preparation for the passover we note, 1. Jesus' observance of this religious rite. 2. The disciples' unquestioning obedience to their Master. 3. The foreknowledge and omniscience of Jesus. 4. The honor which the unknown disciple accorded his Lord, in giving the best room to Jesus. 5. But of supreme importance is the presentation of Jesus as the true paschal Lamb, a sacrifice for sin. 6. Our preservation through the Lamb of God.

### PREPARING FOR THE SACRIFICE.

**The Jewish Passover.** Throughout Israel, all labor ceased on the fourteenth day of the month Nisan, and every male Jew not ceremonially unclean was hastening to Jerusalem. It was the passover in commemoration of the mercy of God on that mysterious and awful night when the death angel destroyed the first born of all the Egyptians and passed by the households of Israel on whose doorposts was blood sprinkled with hyssop. For two previous Sabbaths its observance was the subject of discourse in all the synagogues; the thoughts of all Israel converged toward that day, for did it not celebrate their deliverance from bondage and the beginning of the journey which led to their entrance into the promised land?

A few of the old forms and regulations had slipped into disuse, but the substance of the festival was the same as that of the first passover. As the Jewish day began at sunset, the commencement of the passover was at sunset, the evening of the thirteenth, and it was sometimes called the feast of unleavened bread, since as soon as the sound of the silver trumpets ushered in the sacred day, in all the houses of the orthodox, a solemn search was made with lighted candles for any leaven which might have been hidden away or overlooked, for every vestige of leaven must be removed from every house before noon in preparation for the passover in the evening.

**The Paschal Lamb.** The Israelites and the Egyptians were alike exposed to the death angel. In His great mercy God provided that in lieu of his first born, every Hebrew householder might offer a lamb as a sin

offering, whose blood sprinkled on the doorpost would be accepted as a substitute for the son. The destroying angel, seeing the blood, passed over the household. The lamb, thus sacrificed, was to be roasted and eaten as a token of preservation and thanksgiving. As the sun was setting, the paschal lamb was slain at the temple and the blood and fat given to the priests. The lamb was then roasted whole, and eaten with bitter herbs and unleavened bread. On this passover 260,000 lambs must have been slain as a type of the Lamb of God who was to take away the sin of the world.

**A Day of Rest.** Jesus descended from the Mount of Olives to the hospitable home in Bethany and was welcomed by the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and their brother Lazarus. That night, in the spotless guest-chamber which Martha had prepared with extra loving care—for the last time on earth, Jesus lay down and slept. On Thursday morning, "Green Thursday" it was called in the Middle Ages, "He awoke never to sleep again." The meal was hardly over when His disciples came to receive instructions and to learn whether He would keep the passover in Bethany, as was permissible, or in Jerusalem.

**The Last Passover.** Though it had become a mere form to the great body of Jews, the real significance of the feast was ever present with Jesus. Year after year He had eaten the paschal lamb with His disciples and friends, knowing full well that He was celebrating His own death and that the paschal lamb was only a type of Himself as the Lamb of God who should be offered as a sacrifice for the whole world, that through the appli-

cation of His shed blood all under judgment of eternal death might be preserved to everlasting life. Now His last passover had come, for on the morrow the true Paschal Lamb was to be sacrificed once and forever. Then the feast would lose all its significance, and be superseded by a Divine ordinance that through all the ages should serve as a memorial of the great Sacrifice of which the passover was a prophetic type. Therefore He must keep the feast in the holy city, where all Israel might witness the Sacrifice.

**Preparing for the Feast.** In response to the query of the disciples, Jesus called Peter and John and sent them to Jerusalem, where they should meet a man bearing a pitcher of water. They were to follow him to the house and send this message to the owner: "The Master saith unto thee, where is the guest chamber where I shall eat the passover with My disciples?" And His disciples went forth; for Jesus was ever the Master and they His obedient followers. His plans were never unfolded to them until He needed their services, and their confidence in their Lord was so great that they were content to obey. And as at all times, "they found it as He had said unto them." Not until later did they know that Jesus exercised His foreknowledge so that that last meal and the institution of the holy supper might not be interrupted as it might have been had the house or its owner been named in the hearing of Judas.

**The Upper Chamber.** It may have been the house of Joseph of Arimathæa, or Nicodemus, or it may have been the home of John Mark's father. Certainly the owner was one who loved the Lord, for though His disciples were not bidden to ask for the best room, this man accorded Jesus the upper chamber, or the best his house afforded. What a satisfaction it must have been to a follower of the Lord that the room was all in readiness when Jesus needed it.

**Securing the Paschal Lamb.** The room was ready. Since Jesus ever complied with the law (and it was a legal requirement that the paschal lamb should be purchased earlier), it is quite likely that Judas, who still served as treasurer, had purchased the lamb and other things necessary to the observance of the feast the previous afternoon—perhaps within the very hour in which he bargained to betray his Master. So there was little to be done, save to see that the lamb was slain.

It was half past one by our time when Peter and John ascended the temple Mount. There were worshippers from all countries and all parts of Palestine. The priests' court was filled with white-robed priests and Levites. Slowly the Levites chanted the eighty-first Psalm in three sections following the three-fold blast of the silver trumpets of the priests. The two disciples heard the wierd chant, "My people would not hearken unto my voice; and Israel would have none of me." How sad a meaning it held for them! Then, "Oh, that my people had hearkened unto me!" "He should have fed them with the finest of the wheat." They seemed to see again the Master, full of compassion, blessing the bread and breaking it for the famishing desert multitude.

**The Lamb is Slain.** Another moment, and ere the incense was burned for the evening sacrifice, the court of the priests was filled with the vast throngs of worshippers who were admitted in three divisions. Then another three-fold blast from the trumpets announced that the lambs were being slain. This, each Israelite did for himself. First among those in the first division are the two disciples. Peter and John had slain the lamb, whose blood was caught in a golden bowl by the officiating priests. The Levites chanting all the time, and now the people join them and as the two disciples heard the words, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," they were reminded of the triumphal entry into the city only a few days before.

They shouldered the slain lamb, when it had been duly prepared according to law, and hastened back to the upper chamber. And the burden grew heavy on John's shoulders, for he was carried back to that day at the ford of Jordan, three years ago, when he saw Jesus approaching; and again he heard the mighty voice of the great desert preacher, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

**Quiz.** 1. By whom was the passover instituted? 2. State what occurred at Jesus' first passover in Jerusalem. 3. What home in Bethany sheltered the Master during this last week of His life? 4. Why did Jesus keep the passover in Jerusalem instead of Bethany? 5. What deep significance was attached to this feast? 6. What did the slain lamb typify?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The predictions of our Lord always come true. 2. The passover was a reminder of fearful doom and deliverance. 3. "Christ, our Passover is sacrificed for us." 4. He became our sacrifice to avert the fearful doom of eternal death which rested on all. 5. His blood saves to everlasting life.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

After that he



and began to



and to



wherewith he was girded.

So after he had washed their feet, and had



and was



again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well;

for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 13:2-16.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, May we ever acknowledge Thee as our Master and follow Thy example of humility. Give us grace to enable us to perform the humblest service for Thee and for our fellow men. Wilt Thou wash us and make us every whit clean. For Thy glory. Amen.

Thy home is with the humble, Lord!  
The simple are the best:  
Thy lodging is in child-like hearts,  
Thou makest there Thy rest.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of Passion week, April 6, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Humility. Honor accrues to the humble, Prov. 15:33. True greatness, Matt. 18:4. The greatness of service, Mark 10:43-45. Humility exalteth, Luke 14:11. Christ's example of service, Luke 22:25-27. The humility of Christ, Phil. 2:5-8. God raiseth the humble, James 4:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In our lesson we are

shown: 1. The weakness of human nature as exhibited by the strife of the Apostles for the place of honor at a moment so sad and sacred. 2. The lowly spirit of His Kingdom in contrast with the world. 3. He rebukes the disciples by His own great humility. 4. After washing the disciples' feet, Jesus enjoins a like humility upon His disciples. 5. All who call themselves His disciples must follow His example.

### TRUE GREATNESS.

**The Last Entry.** Again Jesus walked with His disciples along the old familiar road that led to Jerusalem. How gay the scene! Before them lay the holy city all in holiday attire. At every step they encountered hastening pilgrims too bent upon arriving in the holy city before the first three stars became visible in the sky and ere the threefold blast of the silver trumpets of the priests announced the commencement of the passover, to notice the One whose appearance had heretofore drawn the multitude to Him. Therefore they entered Jerusalem unnoticed. How the compassionate Jesus must have yearned over the careless worshippers who thronged the streets, crowded the flat roofs and filled the temple courts. They did not know that so near to them was the real Sacrifice for their sins. Strong men, each bearing a sacrificial lamb on his shoulder, passed them, and not one recognized in the humble figure of Jesus the fulfillment of type and prophecy, who was to offer Himself up on the morrow as the true paschal Lamb. Busy thoughts filled the minds of those who followed Him. Judas lagged behind, lest he might meet the searching gaze of the Master. To the others, the air was pregnant with foreboding. There was absolutely no public acclaim, only ominous glances that boded evil to the gentle Figure at their side. Would Jesus at last use His supernatural power for His own glory and aggrandizement? Unless He did they were lost.

**The Upper Room.** The world has many sacred and historic shrines, but no place fraught with such sacred interest as that upper room. Imagine a room about fifteen feet square, with white walls unadorned, and bare of all save the most necessary furniture; a low Eastern table not higher than a bench, covered with a simple cloth, and two rows

of single divans or cushions arranged around the table somewhat in the form of a horse-shoe. Yet here was instituted the Lord's Supper. We may even conjecture that three days later their resurrected Lord appeared to His disciples in this very room, and it may have been in this self-same upper room that the Holy Spirit descended in pentecostal flame on the waiting disciples who were bidden to tarry for the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

All the way from Bethany the Master had walked beside His disciples in sad loneliness. Not one of the Twelve could sympathize with Him. And as He entered the room furnished and ready for His use, with the weight of the woe and sin of a world bearing down upon Him, He could not even be sure that all His chosen Twelve would be true to Him in that hour when their dreams of an earthly kingdom and their own aggrandizement should be ruthlessly dispelled by the suffering, humiliation, abasement and death of their Lord.

Here in this upper room, ere one of the Twelve should betray Him, He must forever fix in their minds the eternal truths of His Kingdom, and plant in their hearts the lowly spirit and humility that become the followers of the meek and lowly One. Yet mild and gentle and grief stricken though He was, it was a kingly Figure that walked the heights of Olivet that eventide and as His expectant disciples looked at their Master seated at the table, they saw One who bore Himself as more than a conqueror.

**The Place of Honor.** According to Mosaic law, the passover was to be eaten standing, but the rabbis had changed this to the Gentile custom of reclining, since only slaves ate standing, and in their pride the Jews shrank from this reminder of their bondage in



Egypt. Almost does it seem impossible that at such an hour and under such circumstances a dispute should have arisen among the close followers of the meek and lowly Jesus; and it is inconceivably sad that it should have been concerning who should have the chief seat or place of honor beside the Master. John sat at the right hand, but the chief place was the seat above him, at Jesus' left hand. They fancied it was a grave matter who should have that seat, since it might even determine who should be greatest in the Kingdom which they dreamed would soon be set up. Perhaps it was Judas who contended for that honor and won it, for the devil had entered into his heart and Satan is ever ambitious.

Then there may have been another cause for strife. It was, as we have seen, customary to remove the sandals worn at the door in order not to defile the clean, white mats which covered the center of the floor, with the dust and dirt of the street, while a waiting attendant bathed the traveler's feet. But owing to the privacy which Jesus had prescribed, there was no servant present to perform the ablution and none of the disciples were sufficiently lowly and loving of heart to perform an act which had always been the work of slaves, though it would have refreshed their Master.

Grieved by their selfish pride Jesus took occasion to set forth the lowly spirit of His Kingdom. "He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve." "I am among you as he that serveth." Then to their amazement He who had made Himself one with God arose from the supper, laid aside His garments and took a towel and girded Himself. It was the attire of the lowliest slave. What a striking lesson of humanity and self-abnegation to the warring, self-seeking disciples! They, the Galilean fishermen and peasants, might not abase themselves by performing a menial service for the comfort of their Master and their brethren, but He who was Lord of Heaven and King of kings, considered it no abasement to humble Himself and take upon Himself the form of a servant that He might serve the weakest and the smallest, and even the meanest of His brethren, for was not the traitor Judas one of their number when, pouring water into a large copper bowl used for such purposes, without a word He began to wash His disciples' feet and wipe them with the towel?

**Peter's Lesson.** Shame held them silent until our Lord came to Peter. That impetuous disciple cried out in indignant protest, "Lord, dost **Thou wash my feet?**" Not till later would the full significance of his Master's reply dawn upon Peter. "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt

know hereafter." Peter, carried away by reverent humility, declared vehemently, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." But it was a false humility which would have opposed the will of God, and Jesus, knowing the real love in Peter's heart, answered him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." With characteristic impetuosity Peter rushes to the other extreme, and he pleads, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

Peter has several lessons to learn this night, and one is that he must accept what the Master chooses, not in his own way, but as the Master wills. Tenderly, as to a wilful child, Jesus again replies to His impetuous disciple, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." And then with sad reluctance, Jesus was forced to make the reservation, "But not all." For the Master had knelt at the feet of the traitor, and with kind and gentle hands had cleansed Judas' feet from the stains of that secret walk whose object had been his Master's betrayal.

**The Exhortation.** Having completed His lowly service, Jesus resumed His garments and again reclined at the table. "Know ye," He said, "what I have done to you?" "You call me Lord and Master, and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet." He had washed their feet to teach them humility, self-denial and love. Henceforth there were to be no struggles for precedence among those who bore His name, but self-effacement; dignity must give place to humility; self-seeking to service; authority to ministry. He who would be chief among them must fashion his life after the life of the One who "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant," and "humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Thus shall His followers attain true greatness.

**Quiz.** 1. Name an instance when Jesus' feet were washed. 2. On what other occasions was Jesus forced to rebuke His disciples for self-seeking? 3. Why would Peter refuse to permit Jesus to wash his feet? 4. What would you say regarding Peter's course? 5. What lesson did Jesus seek to inculcate?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The spirits of pride and selfishness are the hardest to exorcise from the soul. 2. A mere question of place at table seemed of greater importance to the disciples than their Master's death. 3. Service instead of rule is the true title to greatness. He who is equal with God did not hesitate to stoop to the office of servant. 5. Jesus was never more God-like than when at Judas' feet. 6. True love is willing to serve to the uttermost.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# THE LORD'S SUPPER.

And as they were eating, Jesus



and



and



and



and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he



and



and



saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.





## THE LAST SUPPER

BY LEONARDO DA VINCI

The artist was an Italian and a very wonderful man; not alone a painter but a scientist and engineer. He was skilled in a hundred ways, and exercised a powerful influence over his century.

"The Last Supper" was painted on the wall of a large dining room of a religious institution in Milan. The picture occupies one entire side of this dining room and seems to be a continuation of the room, with its timbered ceiling and three windows. The entire arrangement is artistic but artificial. Everybody is sitting on one side of the table, which is for convenience sake and to save confusion. The recently ironed tablecloth with all its folds and knotted corners is distinctly characteristic. As it is a long table it is sustained by four skids. The three windows, one large and the other two smaller, are exactly in the middle of the picture and Christ is drawn against the light, with His two hands spread out, as He talks. This gives Him the form of a pyramid, which is always impressive. The twelve disciples are divided into four groups of three each, and all the lines and movements in these groups lead toward the figure of Christ.

The moment represented is that in which Jesus announces that one of the disciples should betray Him. The excitement caused by this declaration is well expressed in each of the groups. On the immediate right of Christ one holds up the finger toward the beloved disciple John to learn from him who the unfaithful one might be. In the right-hand group one points toward Judas, and eagerly talks with his two fellows, who are holding their hands as if protesting innocence. One grasps his bosom, as if to say, "It is not I." On our left near the center sits John, with his sweet face and pure expression, which contrasts with the dark face of him who holds the money bag of the company, Judas; the only one with a dark face in the entire company.

This was at the time of the passover, when all the Jews ate unleavened bread, and Christ had come up with His disciples to observe the feast. Here the Saviour instituted the communion service, or Sacrament, which has been observed by all Christian churches from then until now. He took bread and broke it, giving to each one a portion, and distributed in the same manner the wine, saying, "This do in remembrance of me." Although all these figures are dressed in Jewish costumes the objects on the table are rolls such as would be found on any Italian table today. All of which makes the picture real and appeals to everyone who sees it.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE LAST SUPPER.

LEONARDO DA VINCI. 1452-1519.

No record of Leonardo da Vinci's birth exists. It is known, however, that Caterina, his mother, was married one year after his birth, in 1453, which thus curiously fixes the date of Leonardo's birth in 1452. His mother's marriage to an honest yeoman, Vacca Accattabriga, was hastened by his father's noble kinsmen, while the child found a warm welcome in his father's family. From his babyhood he won hearts. When his father married the second time, the stepmother lavished her love upon him even on her wedding morn.

Of the life of Leonardo's mother, after her marriage, nothing is known. Many writers have sought to show that the face whose mysterious beauty appears so often in his pictures is that of his remembered mother.

Leonardo never married, and was always proud of the mystery that surrounded his birth. In one of his manuscripts is found "A prayer of thankfulness for the divinity of my birth, and the angels that have guarded my life and guided my feet." In Leonardo's time lived also these: Shakespeare, Cervantes, Columbus, Martin Luther, Savonarola, Loyola, Erasmus, Michael Angelo, Titian and Raphael. It was a golden age of intellectual and artistic activity, of great accomplishment and splendid promise—the seedtime and growing time probably of all that is being harvested today. Among all these great men, none touched life at so many points or lived so fully rounded a life as Leonardo.

At twenty, he was a fellow student with Perugino under Verrochio, and being entrusted by his master with the painting of a single angel in one of his compositions, painted an angel of such exquisite grace that his master wept with joy and thankfulness that his pupil had so bettered his teaching, and never again attempted to paint. While in strength surpassing all his comrades—he was a consummate athlete—Leonardo even from boyhood, possessed the graces of the courtier and diplomat. As painter, sculptor, architect, engineer, naturalist and physicist, he was great in all, and to crown a life that for all round efficiency of performance probably has no parallel, made for himself a place secure in the field of literature by his writings upon the many subjects in which he was an original observer and an authority.

Commissioned by the Duke of Milan to execute an equestrian statue of the duke's father, he, in the intervals of carrying out this work, painted the famous portrait of the duke's favorite, Lucrezia Crivelli, now in the Louvre. Shortly after, by the favor of the Duchess of Milan, he commenced the famous "Last Supper," in the refectory of the monastery which was under her special patronage. Continuously, Leonardo had pupils in painting and sculpture. At this time he founded the Milan Academy of Art, and between times made designs for the duke's workers in silver and gold, drew patterns for the nuns to embroider, and gave them and the great ladies of the court lessons in literature and the art of poetry.

The painting of "The Last Supper" was slow. The prior was impatient. Five husky house painters could have done the job in a week. The prior could do it himself. The duke sent for the painter, whose gracious speech convinced the duke that men of genius do not work like hired hands. A masterpiece such as this, a monument to a wise and virtuous ruler could not be hastened; besides there was no one to pose for either the head of Christ or of Judas. The Christ must be ideal, and as for Judas, "Why, if nothing better can be found, and I doubt it, I believe I will take for model our friend the prior." The prior fled, and came not again till the picture was finished.

Probably more famous than "The Last Supper" is the portrait of \*Mona Lisa del Gioconda, which hangs in the Louvre. This famous picture, painted when the artist had passed fifty, and four years in the painting, has been for four hundred years the despair and inspiration of portrait painters. In his student work, done for Verrochio, in the "Virgin of the Rocks," in the "St. Anne," the "Mary Magdalen"—even in the faces of the Jesus and St. John of "The Last Supper," are shown increasing glimpses of this same face, fully idealised in the Mona Lisa, who, inscrutable, all-wise, tender, loving, yet sphinxlike, smiles from her canvas at the questioning, admiring world.

Leonardo died in France in 1519.

JAMES BEALINGS.

\*The "Mona Lisa" was stolen from the Louvre during the summer of 1911.



# THE LORD'S SUPPER.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 26 :21-30. MARK 14:18-26. LUKE 22:14-30.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We reverence Thee for Thy great salvation and for Thy blood that was shed for us. May we find refreshment for our souls at Thy table and in all things grow like Thee, so that our lives shall bear Thine image and we shall be living witnesses of the power of Thy broken body and shed blood. We ask it for Thy name's sake. Amen.

Jesus spreads His banner o'er us,  
Cheers our famished souls with food;  
He the banquet spreads before us,  
Of His mystic flesh and blood.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of Passion week. Place, the guest chamber of an unknown house in Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and His twelve disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Holy Communion. One through the communion of Christ, 1 Cor. 10:16-17. Commemorates death of Christ, 1 Cor. 11:26. Kept by the disciples, Acts 2:42, 20:7. Demands self-examination, 1 Cor. 11:28. His body and blood, John 6:53-59.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Our lesson is con-

cerning the institution of the Lord's Supper. 1. Which is an abiding memorial of our Lord. 2. Commemorates His death and sacrifice. 3. Proclaims the faith of His followers in the virtue of His atonement. 4. As the blood of the passover lamb redeemed Israel from destruction, so His blood is a ransom for all God's people. 5. A symbol of the covenant which pledges His followers to faith and duty. 6. A spiritual communion with our Lord as the Bread of Life. 7. The bond of the brotherhood established by Jesus.

### THE NEW PASSOVER.

**The Order of the Feast.** In Jesus' time this was the order of the passover: the lamb, having been slain at the temple, was roasted whole; the unleavened bread and bitter herbs, such as endives, lettuce and radishes, were placed on the table, around which the company reclined; the master of the household taking the place of honor. All being in readiness, some member of the family filled a cup with wine, which was given to the head of the household. By him it was taken in the right hand, he maintaining a reclining position and supporting himself on his left side and arm. In this position he thanked God in the words, "Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, Thou King of the world who createst the fruit of the vine." He then tasted the cup and passed it around.

Since even the ferment of leaven in bread was forbidden during the passover, it is generally admitted that the paschal wine was a new wine, and as even this unfermented wine was mixed with one-fourth water, we may be sure the wine used by Jesus on this occasion was a pleasant and temperate drink. The bitter herbs dipped in a mixture of salt and vinegar were then eaten as a token of the hard life in Egypt. Thanks were given for them also, and the unleavened bread—the bread of affliction—was passed around. Then the bowl of cheroseth and the paschal lamb; the head of the company again gave thanks; a second single cup of wine mingled with water was filled; the youngest of the company propounded a prescribed question and the leader explained the meaning of the feast; recounted the sufferings of the Israelites in Egypt and their deliverance. A part of the hundred and thirteenth and hundred

and fourteenth Psalms—a part of the Hallel—were sung. The close of the religious feast was marked by the passing round of the third cup, known as the cup of blessing, after which the supper proper may be said to have only begun.

**The New Covenant.** According to the above described order, the passover feast was now well advanced. Jesus and His disciples had partaken of the first and second cup of wine; the unleavened bread and bitter herbs had been eaten; the farewell morsel of the lamb had been received; the passing of the old order had been marked by the handing around of the third cup. Never again would the disciples observe another passover, for suddenly, with a few words and by a single act, Jesus changed the old covenant passover to the sacrament of the new covenant. It was the most solemn hour of that eventful night. Jesus had foretold His voluntary sacrifice in no uncertain terms, and He had declared it a triumph. "Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in Him."

The traitor was gone, for Judas had stolen away on his evil errand immediately after receiving Jesus' intimation that his intended betrayal was known to Him; Peter had been shaken from his self-complacency by the warning of his approaching denial of the Master; and the desertion of the remaining disciples was foretold. Yet, despite their weakness and cowardice, their boastfulness and unreliability, He had chosen them and they were infinitely near and dear to Him. Not for their own sakes alone, but for all who should follow after, there should be some rite, some memorial, which should

strengthen their faith and render indissoluble their union with Himself and the Father.

**His Body and Blood.** During the passover the disciples had spoken freely among themselves and to Jesus, but now a reverent hush fell upon the assemblage, and the eyes of the Eleven were turned toward Jesus, who took the unleavened bread into His hands and, after giving thanks, broke it and gave it to the disciples, with the words, "Take, eat, this is My body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of Me." Then taking the cup, which had been filled for the fourth time, in the same manner He gave thanks, and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Drink ye all of it; for this is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."

How simple the sacred ordinance Jesus instituted for those of the new Kingdom which the shedding of His blood was to establish. Picture the room unadorned and in its furnishings as simple as the Galilean disciples who reclined around the table. It needed naught save the presence of the Master, so close under the shadow of the cross that, already, in all save the outward manifestation, His body is broken and His blood is shed for the remission of sins.

**Its Significance.** Accustomed as they were to commemorative and symbolical rites and ordinances, the disciples easily understood the symbolic reference to the bread and wine as signifying His body about to be offered and His blood about to be shed for their redemption, for had they not heard the Master say, "The bread of God is He which cometh down from Heaven and giveth life unto the world"? and were they not present when He declared, "I am the living Bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"?

Now, they were beginning to understand that wondrous declaration, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me, and I in Him." "The bread which we break," Paul declares, "is the communion of the body of Christ; the cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ." It required no miracle; for in the deepest spiritual sense Jesus gave Himself to His people when He said, "Take,

eat, this is My body; this is My blood; drink ye all of it."

**In Remembrance.** The command, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me," uttered that night, reaches down through the ages, and now in every clime and in every country Christ's followers reverently observe the sacrament instituted during that last supper with His disciples. The early Christians partook of it joyfully, and in those dark and perilous days of bitter persecution foretold by Christ, His followers met in caverns and caves; in the deep forests, where by the flickering torch or the light of the stars, they gathered with one accord to partake of the Lord's Supper, and arose from the table refreshed and strengthened to endure "Till He come," for had they not spiritually partaken of His body and blood, receiving of His strength and endurance, His Divine patience and fortitude?

In the Middle Ages, with the soldiers drawn up in line, ere the battle began, each man dropped his weapon to his side and with bowed head and bended knee, received the sacrament from the priests who went down the serried columns of kneeling soldiers bearing the sacred emblems; and with an enthusiasm born from this reminder of their slain Lord, they sallied forth to battle with unbelievers, with glistening sword and the cry, "In His name, we conquer!" To dying souls, languishing on beds of affliction, the sacred tokens have brought the Master so very near that, seeing the sword-thrust and the prints of the nails, they, too, have welcomed the coming of the crucified One, by whose shed blood and broken body death has been shorn of its victory. And at His table, all His followers, of every race and color, of every condition and sect, are partakers of that one Bread and one Body and become one in Christ Jesus, dwelling in Him and He in them.

**Quiz.** 1. What new sacrament marked the end of the passover? 2. What is the significance of this ordinance? 3. How widely prevalent is its observance? 4. How do we receive the body and blood of Christ? 5. Why did Christ command its observance?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Jesus is a perpetual sin-offering—the one eternal paschal Lamb. 2. At His spread table Jesus is with us as truly as He was with His disciples in the upper room; we need only the eyes of faith to see Him. 3. As we feed upon the bread and wine, our souls feed upon His body and blood. 4. The observance of our Lord's Supper is a token of His love for us and our love for Him. 5. There is neither rank nor social status at His table. 6. All may be partakers of His body and blood.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



# MANY MANSIONS.

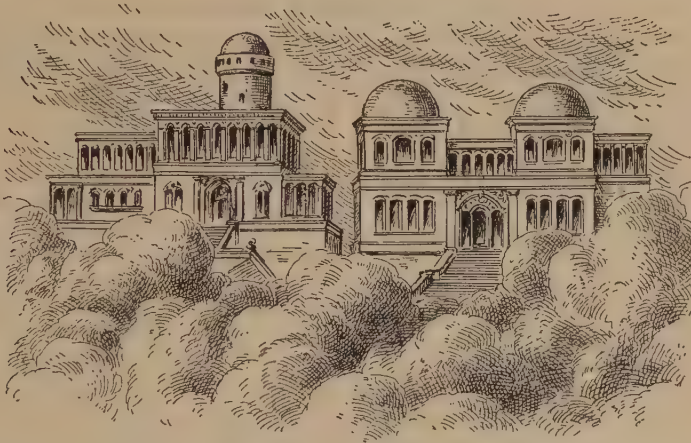
Let not your heart be



ye  
believe  
in  
God,



also in me.  
In my Father's  
house are many

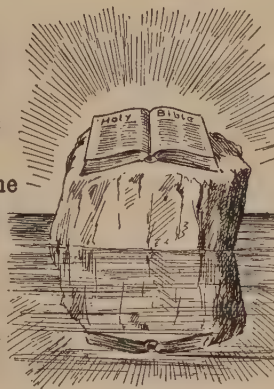


if it were not  
so, I would have  
told you. I go  
to prepare a  
place for you.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the



the



and  
the



no man cometh unto the Father but by me,

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 14:1-6.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We thank Thee for the knowledge that there is a Home prepared for us and that Thou wilt come again and receive us to Thyself. Help us to find in Thee, the Way, the Truth and the Life, and be led by Thee to our place in the Father's Home above. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Upward where the sky is brightest,  
Upward where the blue is lightest,—  
Lift I now my longing soul,  
Far beyond the arch of gladness,  
Far beyond these clouds of sadness,  
Are the many mansions fair;  
In that place of the holy—  
I would find my mansion there."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of passion week. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and the twelve disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Our Home in Heaven. The dwelling place of God, 1 Kings 8:30. Prepared by God, Isa. 64:4, 1 Cor. 2:9. An enduring home, 2 Cor. 5:1-2. An everlasting habitation, Luke 16:9. A happy home, Isa. 35:9-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** These words of the Master have carried comfort to each successive

generation of His followers. 1. He comforts His disciples. 2. Would inspire the same confidence in Himself as in God. 3. Assures them of a place in the "Father's House." 4. Shows that His departure from earth is necessary to prepare an eternal habitation for His followers. 5. Declares no one can come to the Father save through the Son. 6. That to know Christ is to know God. 7. Asserts more strongly His equality and union with God.

## IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE.

**Troubled Hearts.** There was universal rejoicing in Jerusalem, save in the upper room in which Jesus and the disciples were assembled. If we could only roll back the centuries and look in upon the little band, we would see them with adoring gaze fixed upon the Master so soon to leave them, and we would not think them one whit less manly because of their tearful eyes and sorrowing countenances, for they are to lose the One whom they had learned to love as Guide, Teacher, Exemplar, and Master. The prescience of His death made the new rite He had so solemnly instituted very tender, while the unspeakably beautiful spirit of the Master in these last moments had softened the hearts that but so short a time before had been selfish and contentious. As they reclined around the table, so sad and silent, Jesus read their thoughts.

**Words of Comfort.** The night was wearing on; the feast was over. They sang the second division of the Hallel, and their voices choked over "The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner." It was harder still to chant, "This is the Lord's doings," while the words, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," were a veritable prayer. But to sing "For His mercy endureth forever," was greater than their faith. Why prolong the scene that was wrenching their hearts? They were about to depart when they were detained by His voice. They needed His consolation and strength for the tragedy of the morrow. There was much He would say to them, and in a short hour or so He would

be separated from them, and they like sheep without a shepherd. What wonder that for the first and only time these great stalwart men seemed and were addressed by Him as "little children"?

It is a question among Bible students whether the words of farewell were spoken in the "upper" room or in the outer darkness of that night of sorrow, conflict, and suffering. But we know the message of comfort was spoken at the table. Jesus turned toward them with loving compassion. "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God; believe also in Me." The words came as oil upon troubled waters; to souls that were cowering and trembling under the foreboding clouds of an approaching storm. Already the terror-stricken and broken-hearted disciples were more quiet.

**The Home Over There.** It was a common Jewish idea that those in glory occupied different abodes or stations according to their rank. Even though their dreams of earthly power and position were to be dissipated, why such sorrow, since "In My Father's House are many mansions"? When we think of it, how foolish is self-seeking and strife over precedence and rank even in this world; and how much more foolish is strife and emulation after spiritual place, when all enter that one House of the Father in which there is a place for all!

They had often been led astray by their own false hopes and vain ambitions, but Jesus had never deceived them. When He said, "If it were not so I would have told you," they believed Him, for was He not the Way, the Truth, and the Life to them?



Under the marvellous power of the Master's presence and the spell of His words of comfort, their souls were uplifted, for His calmness was as that of the spring night with its promise of summer fruitage and autumnal harvest; and as the myriad stars irradiated the black pall of the night, so flashes of joy and triumph illumined His sadness. He was their Friend and Guide going Home before them to make a place for their coming. More than that, He would return to fetch them to the Heavenly Home. "That where I am, there ye may be also." He evermore comes in Spirit at the death of His followers, to convey them to that abode in the Heavenly Home He has prepared for them. Jesus had walked with His disciples so long, He had held such close converse with them concerning the Father and the Kingdom that surely they should have understood Him when He said: "Whither I go ye know and the way ye know."

**Their Blindness.** But alas, though they realized the nearness of their Lord's departure, they still clung so closely to their ideas of an earthly and material kingdom, that they knew not where that far-away country was of which so often He spoke to them. Thomas, perhaps the most obtuse of all, and certainly the slowest to accept and discern spiritual truths, put forth the perplexed query, "Lord, we know not whither Thou goest and how can we know the way?" Surely with the mightiest Teacher ever on earth, and with such patient, persistent instruction as Jesus had given them, Thomas should have known that when Jesus said, "I go to the Father," He meant His return to the Heavenly Father whence He came. But alas for human blindness and the dullness of an unawakened intellect—he must ask the question which so grieved Jesus.

Only a sentence betrayed the Master's disappointment at the dullness of these pupils of His as He declared, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me. If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also." He would introduce them to the Father, and, turning His gaze full upon them, He added, "From henceforth ye know Him and have seen Him."

No greater truth was ever uttered; for in all the discoveries of the twenty centuries since, no one has ever found a way to reach the Father save through faith in His Son as the Saviour. Every earnest seeker has found that in Jesus only is the truth. The darkness of heathenism, the stagnation of those ages that would have shut out Christ, and of the blindness of the individual soul that gropes its way upward without Christ; and the illumination which all nations and people receive through Him, witness that Jesus is the Light of the world.

**The Father Is Shown.** Again came an interruption. This time Philip could not understand. Did Jesus mean to intimate that through Himself it might be possible to obtain a literal vision of Jehovah, perchance such as was accorded Moses? Surely, man could ask no more than such a revelation, and impulsively he turned to Jesus, "Lord, show us the Father and all our wishes will be satisfied." Who has not felt with Philip that if one could hear the audible voice of God, or have a vision of His glory, all doubts and fears would vanish; longing would be satisfied, and the soul would ask no more? But the soul needs something greater than a momentary vision of God on His throne, even could the invisible be seen by mortal eyes. The answer of Jesus is pathetic. Had Philip walked with the Master three years; had he answered the Divine call; seen the dead raised to life, and sight restored to the blind; had he listened to the words of life and failed to discover that through all those blessed three years, he walked with God? Had he not seen the Father in the Son?

Though He uttered no rebuke, Jesus could not refrain from manifesting pained surprise at the obtuseness of His chosen disciples, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father, and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" Could it be that they did not really believe His oft repeated declaration that He and the Father were One? Because He came in peasant garb instead of royal robes, and because He was humble and lowly, had they failed to discern that the Father was manifest in Him? Did they not know that the words He spoke were not His own but the words of the Father? Then so intense was His solicitude that they should both perceive and receive this truth, that He who was God manifest in the flesh, actually pleaded with His disciples, "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the very works sake," for their efficiency and usefulness as His chosen Apostles depended on the acceptance of this great truth.

**Quiz:** 1. How did Jesus seek to comfort His disciples? 2. How would He console them for their disappointment concerning earthly place and position? 3. What promise did He make concerning His return? 4. What is the meaning of that promise? 5. What important statement did Jesus make? 6. What is the central truth of this lesson?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. A belief in God and in Christ is the surest consolation in trouble. 2. He who has great faith carries an untroubled heart. 3. Our Father's House is a House of many rooms. 4. Jesus prepares our mansions with the material we send Him. 5. No true follower of Jesus need fear final separation from his Lord. 6. There is only one road leading to the many mansions. 7. Jesus is the Way; the Father the goal. 8. He who has walked with Jesus, walks with God.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

# THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

I am the



ye  
are  
the



He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much



for  
without  
me ye  
can do  
nothing  
If a



abide  
not in  
me,  
he is



and is withered; and



and



and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you



# THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 15:1-8.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, Thou art the true Vine and we desire to be so firmly grafted in Thee that we may bear the fruits of Thy Spirit. Help us to abide in Thee and may Thy word so abide in our hearts and minds that we may glorify the Father as fruitful servants and be true disciples of Thine. We ask it for Thy name's sake and glory. Amen.

"Not for Thine own,  
But others' weal thou bearest fruit;  
Thy gain is in thy deeper root,  
In twining branches stronger grown,  
And richer store of sap to thrill  
Into new fruitage year by year,  
And though the wintry days be drear  
Does not My strength support thee still?"

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of Passion week. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and the twelve disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Fruit Bearing. The fruit of the righteous, Prov. 11:30. Recompense of the righteous, Isa. 3:10. Fruit of repentance, Matt. 3:8. The increase, Matt. 13:23. Filled with fruit, Phil. 1:11. Fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22-23. The Word bringeth forth fruit, Col. 1:6. Peaceable fruit, Heb. 12:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In this allegory, 1. Jesus made the vine with its branches and fruit the

earthly type of a Divine truth. 2. He declared Himself the Vine, supporting and giving life and fruitage to all His disciples. 3. Under the figure of the Father as the Husbandman, Jesus showed how God watches and overrules the surroundings of His children that they may bear much fruit. 4. By abiding in Jesus, all disciples become fruit-bearing branches. 5. He impresses upon His disciples the futility of expecting fruit from their efforts without an abiding love and faith in God the Father, and Jesus Christ, His Son.

## HIS LAST TEACHING.

**Some Famous Vines.** Palestine has ever been famous for its vineyards. Nowhere else does the vine grow to such luxuriance or bear such immense clusters of grapes. As early as when Moses sent a representative from each of the twelve tribes of Israel to spy the promised land, he sent them at the time of the first ripe grapes; and by one of its brooks they found grape vines of such luxuriance that the branch they cut bearing just one cluster of grapes was so heavy that it could only be carried by fastening it upon a great pole, which two of their number carried between them, and the trophy made such an impression upon the Israelites that the grapes of Eschol have been famous ever since. Even in our own day, one cluster of grapes will often weigh from ten to fifteen pounds, each individual grape being the size of a plum.

A noted traveler tells of arriving at a village of Palestine where, in the garden of an inn, he found a vine whose stem was one and a half feet in diameter and thirty feet high, the branches forming a bower thirty feet broad and long. In ancient times when the cultivation of the vine was one of Israel's most important industries, the grape gathering was a joyous season; the grapes were gathered with shouts of joy, thrown into baskets which were borne on the head, or on a yoke thrown over the shoulders, to the press. The vine became an emblem of domestic happiness and peace, and it was much used in the imagery of the prophets.

**The True Vine.** Jesus and the disciples lingered long at the table; it was hard to break up and tear away from the loved circle. More than once did they rise to go and each time they were held by His words of promise, or warning, or comfort. Now the Master looks out through the latticed win-

dow and sees the leaves of a vine which the moonlight has silvered, and following His custom of using the common, every-day things of life to illustrate great truths, He again became the Teacher, and pointing to the moonlit vine He gave utterance to one of the most beautiful allegories that have ever taught a blessed, beneficent truth.

"I am the true Vine," Jesus declared. Now the vine was the symbol of the Jewish church and therefore this declaration is the announcement that Christ is the true Vine, the reality of all types, the fulfilment of all promises. He is the Head, Root, and Life of the church. Just as the sap necessary to the life of the branches and their fruitfulness, passes from the roots and body of the vine to the outermost leaf, the tiniest twig and farthest tendril, so the life-giving Spirit of Jesus reaches out to and dwells in the remotest disciple in whose heart the Lord can find an abiding place. He is the source of all Christian life.

**Illustration.** There is a fable that once on a time a vine grew on a beautiful terrace. It threw all its life sap into the branches that they might bear fruit, until they grew so long and strong that they reached up toward the sky and threw out great clusters of berries. The sky looked down on the clusters, until they reflected its hue. With the strength they received from the vine, the branches had climbed toward the sun, which kissed the round berries of the grape a deeper purple, and soft breezes fanned them until these grapes seemed destined to become the most beautiful in all the vineyard. As they ripened the branches became so proud of their beautiful fruit that they despised the brown, twisted vine and wanted to cut loose from it. They coaxed the breeze until one day it became a tornado and tore the branches with all their fast ripening fruit from the strong vine that fed and sustained them. After that no pulsing life

## THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES.

sap came to them from the vine, and when the gardener came he found only dead branches and black, withered fruit.

**The Husbandman.** "The Father is the Husbandman." The disciples had seen the husbandman in his vineyard. They knew how careful he was to see that each bunch might produce the largest possible amount of fruit, watching every leaf and every branch, cleansing those that were infested by any of the many enemies of the vine; enriching the feeble branches; pruning the useless ones, and helping all to put forth their best powers. The thought of this continual care of God, the great and good Husbandman, must have comforted them. Though He might call His Son home to glory, they would still be under the Father's providential care. Already the pruning had begun in the falling away of countless followers because of the growing unpopularity and persecution of their Master. The word of Jesus had exercised its cleansing power and in the tragedy of the morrow every whit of the dross of worldly ambition and self seeking should be purged from them.

**The Branches.** "Ye are the branches." Thus indissolubly Jesus bound His disciples to Himself. Jesus the Vine; they the branches, while their good works were the fruit of this marvelous union; just as the clusters of grapes have their origin and derive their luscious, refreshing properties, not from the branches, but from the vine itself, so goodness and spiritual power are not inherent in us, but flourish in us through the life-giving and spiritual quickening which we receive from Christ, the Vine. Not only the little circle in that upper room, but His church and its members are branches of Christ. What high, high honor and powerful privilege He thus bestows upon those who bear His name.

It is the custom of great business firms and banking houses to establish branches in various cities and countries. Every contract made by one of these branch establishments is as incontestable as though made by the head; every draft issued by the branch is honored by the main house, for the branch and the main establishment are one, the same power abides in them, and whatever the branch house desires is supplied by the head. The simile of the vine and the branches is the same, for Jesus at once declares some of the privileges comprehended in this union.

**Abiding.** The proper function of a branch

is to bear fruit in proportion to its size and vigor, but just as the branch could not bear fruit if it was separated from the vine, so His disciples can only hope to bear fruit by abiding in Him. "He that abideth in Me and in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing." Greater still should be the privileges of His disciples. "If ye abide in Me and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you."

Their call to discipleship had thrust them out from the lowly, but quiet shelter of those homes on the shores of Galilee, and would send them forth as wanderers, without resting place for weary head or bleeding feet, but the Master had given them an abiding place. Though they might never again return to their peaceful haunts and former occupations, they should bear fruit that would glorify the Father throughout the ages. "Ye shall abide in My love." Love! His abiding love would keep His disciples secure from harm, and give them ever a refuge from the storm, a covert in the tempest. Even while compelled to spend their lives in a transient and changing world, His followers may abide in Him and He in them.

**Withered Branches.** It seems strange that there could be branches of the true Vine that should not bear fruit. It must be those who profess discipleship, but in whom no vital union has been established in the true Vine; whose thoughts still abide in the world; whose heart is so occupied with other things that it contains no abiding place for the Master. So the Husbandman, finding a withered branch bearing no fruit, casts it outside to be gathered and burned.

**Quiz.** 1. What prophet called Israel an "empty vine"? 2. What great truth did Jesus seek to illustrate with this allegory of the vine and its branches? 3. Of what was the vine symbolic to the Jews? 4. What did Jesus teach as the purpose of the vine? 5. How may a Christian hope to bear fruit?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. Jesus, the Father and His disciples stand in exactly the same relationship as the vine, the husbandman and the branches. 2. Apart from Christ, His followers can do nothing. 3. All the Master's vineyard is under the watchful care of the Great Husbandman. 4. Only those who have abiding communion with their Lord are fruitful. 5. God's pruning knife cuts away all that hinders Christian progress. 6. The abiding disciple rests in His Lord's will.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you,



hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you;

but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the



of



and of



and of



Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more: Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.



# THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 16:5-14.

**Prayer:** Blessed Holy Spirit, We come to Thee for enlightenment and knowledge. Wilt Thou cleanse our hearts and sanctify our souls; convince us of sin; remove our doubts and fears and lead us to Jesus. Dwell in us and teach us so that we may ever be obedient to Thy will and glorify the Father. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Our blest Redeemer, ere He breathed  
His tender, last farewell,  
A Guide, a Comforter bequeathed,  
With us to dwell.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of Passion week. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and the twelve disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Office of the Holy Spirit. Strives with sinners, Gen. 6:3. Guides, Ezek. 36:27. Dwells with Christ's followers, John 14:17. Teaches, John 14:26. Testifies of Christ, John 15:26. Imparts the love of God, Rom. 5:5. Helps our infirmities and intercedes for us, Rom. 8:26. Imparts joy, peace and hope, Rom. 15:13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Jesus promised His

disciples that shortly after His departure the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, shall come into the world; 1. To carry home to the hearts of all a consciousness of sin. 2. To awaken a longing for righteousness in the hearts of men. 3. To bring them to a realization of the judgment passed upon the world. 4. And reprove them for their unbelief. 5. The Spirit of Truth will also be a Guide to His disciples. 6. Teach them concerning their Master. 7. Unfold the mysteries of His salvation which hitherto they have been unable to comprehend.

### THE COMFORTER.

**The Tri-une God.** It is said of the great Napoleon that so different was the regal and august emperor of France from the Little Corporal loved by the Old Guards, and from the father who romped on all fours with his little son, the king of Rome, that only those intimates who had seen him in all three capacities knew the real Napoleon. It is still more true that he is unacquainted with the true God who has not bowed low before the King of kings; rendered adoration at the feet of the conquering Jesus, and opened his heart to the dove-like Spirit of the Holy Ghost. To really know God one must know the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit—the three manifestations of God known as the Trinity, for the Scriptures declare the threefold nature of God very plainly. The book of Genesis introduces us to the great and mighty Force who built the universe; and throughout the Old Testament He is a God of power and authority; the King of kings and Lord of lords; Jehovah, the mighty Ruler, who causes the rise and downfall of nations and against whom the mightiest cannot prevail. In Jesus the Christ, we have a revelation of the God of infinite compassion and love, the Teacher and Saviour of man. But there were other properties of God of which little was known by the world or even His chosen people—the convicting, convincing and propelling power of God in the spiritual realm as revealed in the Holy Spirit.

**Too Sad for Words.** Jesus had given the disciples comfort and teaching in view of His departure; He had declared their relationship to Himself and the Father; to each other and to the world. He had assured them of His love—a love stronger than

death, and the Master had called them not servants, but friends. They were to meet persecutions and the enmity of the world, but they should rejoice that they were to suffer for His name's sake and even as their Master had suffered.

In a general way Jesus had tried to prepare them for this before, but never so definitely lest they should desert the Master. Now, that He was going away it was necessary that they should know just what confronted them. It was all so different from the ambitious dreams they had cherished, that it is no wonder they were cast down and unable to speak. The silence grew oppressive. Usually the announcement of one's departure arouses a volley of questions from one's friends, but these men who are the closest friends of Jesus, are too sad, too disheartened and dumfounded to ask a single question as to where He is going. Very gently Jesus reproves them for this selfish engrossment in their own sorrow. "None of you asketh me, Whither goest Thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts." Will they never learn to put Jesus first?

**The Comforter.** In their selfish foreboding and sadness, the disciples had overlooked a marvelous and glorious promise, thrice repeated during the few brief hours they were at the table. They were not to be left alone, and they would not have to bear their sorrow without consolation. It was actually better for them that Jesus should go, "For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send Him unto you." It is good to know that the first office of the Holy Spirit



is that of a Comforter. The world is so crowded with losses and bereavements that not only the Eleven had need of a Comforter but every disciple of Jesus needs the comforting power of the Holy Spirit. Looking at them as they sat sad and dispirited, they seemed ill-prepared for the great mission unto which they were called, a mission which would daunt the stoutest heart.

**The Great Helper.** These simple Galilean fishermen were given a Herculean task. It was nothing less than to bring the whole world to Christ. Well they may have wondered how they were to accomplish so great a work. How were they to combat the logic of the rabbis; overcome the prejudice of the scribes; convince the proud Pharisees of their need of a Saviour; convert the Sadducees into a belief in a resurrected Christ; and to draw a world at enmity with God to His only begotten Son? Truly it was impossible, if they were to rely upon their own efforts, notwithstanding those three years of daily walk with the Lord Jesus. Human eloquence was too weak for the task, human logic would fail. No human power might hope to convince man of sin or to win him to righteousness. The work could only be accomplished by God Himself, in the form of the Holy Spirit. Jesus promised them this great Helper, who would convict the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment.

A pastor noted for his eloquence was once assigned to a college town with the hope that his talents might win the college students to Christ, and his efforts seemed to be rewarded by weekly accessions to the church from the ranks of the students. When he questioned them concerning the particular message that had brought the truth home to them, none of the converts could tell. They had, each and all, simply been overwhelmed with a sense of sin and guilt; their eyes were suddenly opened to the beauty of Christ, and as never before they felt their lost condition unless saved through His righteousness. One morning he noticed that an old washerwoman, who sat in the gallery, kept her lips moving throughout the entire service, as in prayer. The following Sunday, the minister's wife occupied a seat beside the old woman and, listening, she caught the words, "Reprove John Bent with Thy Holy Spirit, Lord." Over and over the old saint prayed these words, until looking across at the students' gallery, the minister's wife saw an athletic young man bowed with grief, and at the close of the sermon the young fellow walked to the altar in response to the pastor's invitation. And then they discovered that the old washerwoman had made each student for whom she laundered the subject of similar prayer. They had been won for Christ, not by the minister's eloquent and profound sermons, but through the office of the Holy Spirit.

**The Truthful Guide.** Jesus had touched upon great and wonderful truths, at which they had marvelled with dull understanding. They needed to have even greater things declared to them, but not yet were they prepared to hear them. When Christ should withdraw His presence and send His Representative to take His place as Comforter, Teacher and Guide, then the Spirit of Truth would unfold these things by giving to them a spiritual illumination which should enable them to discern the truth.

In the new order of things and the new Kingdom which they were to set up, the Spirit of Truth was to be their Guide and lead the way. As the Son glorified the Father, so the Holy Spirit would glorify the Son. As Jesus had not spoken of Himself, but of the things He had heard from the Father, so He the Holy Spirit, will not speak of Himself, but of the things He has heard from God. He would purify and enlighten them; bring to their remembrance Jesus's own words, and reveal the things of Christ and of God; He would dwell with them and teach them and guide them in the way of truth; sanctify the disciples and enable them to preach the things of the Kingdom.

Greater than the creation of the world is the creation of a soul. The Eleven were devoid of great intellect; destitute of talent and without learning; braggarts, cowards and self-seekers, they were worse than nothing. But in the power of His Holy Spirit the God who created the world out of nothing made them into men whose words and deeds have influenced the world beyond the power of the mightiest genius, and whose works shall last through all the ages. Unknown and unheard of beyond their native village, they have become patron saints of nations, to whose honor the world's greatest poets and painters, architects and sculptors have devoted their what titles is the Holy Spirit known? 5. What is best energies.

**Quiz.** 1. In what form and on what occasion in the life of Jesus was the Holy Ghost manifest? 2. What three manifestations of God have been given to the world? 3. How many times during His last discourse did Jesus promise the Holy Spirit? 4. By His work? 6. Was that work restricted to the disciples or does it extend to all?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The world has never been left without a Comforter. 2. If Jesus had not met and conquered death, this would still be a world of mourning. 3. Only through the Holy Spirit can there be conviction of sin and conversion to righteousness. 4. The Spirit of Truth is the only true Guide. 5. The Spirit never proclaims self. 6. The Holy Spirit is the Divine Alchemist, transforming dross into gold. 7. God is not a respecter of persons; what His Spirit did for the Eleven, He will do for all His disciples.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.

I pray not that  
thou shouldest  
take them out of  
the world, but  
that thou  
shouldest



They are not of the  
world, even as I am  
not of the world.  
Sanctify them  
through thy truth:  
thy word is



As thou  
hast  
sent me  
into the  
world,  
even so  
have  
I also



into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither



I for these  
alone,  
but for  
them also  
which shall



on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 17:11-26.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, We thank Thee that in Thy last moments on earth Thou didst pray for Thy disciples and that Thou dost still intercede for us. May we remember that Thou wouldst have us so live and love and work, that we may show forth Thy glory, and that Thy prayer may be fulfilled in us. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

He ever lives above,  
For me to intercede,  
His all redeeming love,  
His precious blood to plead.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Thursday of Passion week. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Jesus and His disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Our Intercessor. He is foretold, Isa. 53:12. He intercedes for His enemies, Luke 23:34. He still intercedes, Rom. 8:34. Saved through His intercession, Heb. 7:25. Our advocate, 1 John 2:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** In an intercessory prayer of wonderful power and tenderness, Jesus prayed not for the Eleven alone, but all His followers throughout all the ages, and these things He

asked: 1. That His disciples everywhere and for all time to come, might be kept in the perfect love and unity of the Father and the Son. 2. That the joy of Christ might be fulfilled in them. 3. That though remaining in the world as His witnesses, they might be kept from evil. 4. For their sanctification through the Word of truth. 5. That they might be made perfect in love. 6. That the lives of His disciples might manifest Christ to the world. 7. That when their mission on earth was accomplished, His followers should be with Him and behold His glory.

## OUR LORD'S PRAYER.

**The Man of Prayer.** If ever one might have considered Himself superior to the need of prayer, it would surely have been Jesus, the sinless, stainless One, who never needed to ask forgiveness; He whose own power was so great that all nature's forces were obedient to His word, and legions of angels awaited His command—the God-man, equal with God and Himself one of the Trinity. But Jesus might be called the Man of Prayer, resorting to God in physical weariness and spiritual depression; withdrawing from His disciples and seeking the solitudes of mountain and desert to pray; and often talking all night through with the Father. And so, before He went out into that last night, Jesus gathered His disciples round Him in parting prayer. He had taught them how to pray in that model petition commonly known as the Lord's Prayer, but now they were to learn how their Lord prayed.

**A Sacred Moment.** Ever since the days of Moses, once each year, upon the day of atonement the high priest had entered the holy of holies to offer sacrifice for the sins of the people. But he entered the holy place alone; no one save he might penetrate the veil. When Jesus was about to offer Himself as the eternal Sacrifice for the sins of the world, it was as though He tore aside the veil, and permitted His disciples to enter with Him into the holy of holies; for even the innermost sanctuary of the temple was not more holy than that upper room, where Jesus lifted up His eyes to Heaven and uttered that marvellous high-priestly prayer. Like His sacrifice, it covered not only the needs of a chosen few, but of all His follow-

ers throughout all generations and every age to the end of the world.

We may not have the high privileges accorded the Eleven, as according to Jewish custom they stood reverently round their Lord as He carried their needs and His desires for them to the Father. But though we may not actually hear the Divine voice of our Lord, nor visually see the tender face of the Master as He pleads our cause at the throne of God, we, too, may enter with Jesus into the innermost sanctuary when on our knees in solitude and silence we study His marvellous prayer for us, and thus learn what our dying Lord most desired for His followers.

**The Prayer of Consecration.** In the very beginning we learn the secret of prevailing prayer. Ere He prefers a single request for the great work He has begun or for those workers to whom He must intrust its completion, Jesus consecrates Himself. The hour had come for Him to offer Himself as the living Sacrifice for sin. Many times had the glory of God shone forth upon the altar, that the people might know that the sacrifice was acceptable. Thus Jesus besought the Father to glorify the Son, only that He might glorify the Father. After laying the gift of His own consecration on the altar, the Great High Priest presents His completed work to the Father. What a wonderful record of obedience it is! "I have glorified Thee on the earth; I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do; I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world; I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me." And

may not all who have been obedient to the Father's will approach God with a like confidence?

**A Solemn Presentation.** All has been laid on the altar of sacrifice—an altar made glorious by the costly gifts of our Lord, who placed thereon the royal diadem of the Prince of Glory in exchange for a crown of thorns; the dignity of the Son of God for the shame of a malefactor; the absolute authority of Divine right for the helplessness of One nailed to the cross.

The utter unselfishness of that prayer is manifest in every line. His first thought after His own consecration is made, is of them for whose sake He has consecrated Himself, and whom, as the Great High Priest, He now presents to the Father. Jesus presented His disciples as having belonged to God, even before they sought and followed the Master. "Thine they were and Thou gavest them Me." While they were yet simple Galilean peasants, mending their own nets, sailing their own fish boats and tending their own business, they belonged to God and owed allegiance to the Almighty Ruler as much as after they became professed followers of the Master. Their greatness and the claim which Jesus preferred in their behalf was that they had received His words and Himself as coming from the Father and they believed that the Father had sent Him. Surely our Lord is glorified in all followers of His who so truly accept Him.

**His Greatest Desire.** The soul of the Master is consumed with one great desire. He has seen them at strife with each other for the chief place; He has noted the absence of real love for each other and the lack of fellowship among the disciples. Unless they cast aside all dissension, division and strife and self-seeking, they would utterly fail in the building of a united Kingdom of God, therefore He prays, "Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one as We are."

Throughout the prayer for His disciples, this oneness is the ever recurrent thought. It is the golden link by which our Lord would bind His followers. "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that they may be one, even as We are One."

**The Joy of Discipleship.** Jesus wanted His followers to know the joy of Christian living. They were to be not only the salt but sunshine of the world. Jesus did not like long faces. Just as there was one

source of unity, so there is only one real fountain of joy in the world, a fountain which bubbles with refreshing joy when every stream of pleasure and river of happiness has dried up in the world; a fountain of joy whose waters are as inspiring in helpless old age as in youth; a fountain that will bubble in the dungeon as well as in the pleasant plains of life; and Jesus prays that in the heart of every follower of His there may be this fountain. He would have His own joy fulfilled in His disciples.

**Safe Keeping.** It used to be thought that to fall a prey to contagious disease was a visitation of God, but now we know it is an evidence of previous ill health and of impure blood on the part of the victim. Science even declares that the man who has a sufficiency of healthy white cells in his blood may dwell in the yellow fever district with impunity and meet the dreaded cholera without fear; Jesus desired spiritual health for His followers. He might have taken His disciples with Him to glory, but the world had need of them, just as the world of today has need of healthy, wholesome, Christian character. Therefore He does not pray the Father to take them out of the world, or even for their retirement to the cloister, but He asks that the Father shall give them such spiritual health that they may live in the world and minister to sin-sick souls without infection, and that they be kept from evil.

**He Prays for Us.** With one bold sweep Jesus pushed aside the curtain of the centuries. The circle widened until it included every follower of His, through all the ages to come. Into that upper room He summoned you and me, and we may well bow the head and strain the ear to catch the burden of that prayer for us. He prays for the sanctification and perfection of His disciples. We are everywhere confronted by work half finished, but the great Architect of souls, leaves no work half done. Jesus would have every follower of His stand forth a completed work. He has shared with them the glory given Him by the Father, and His marvelous love would reach even beyond this earth. He asks that we who are His may be with Him in His Heavenly Home and behold and share His glory. And He ever liveth to make intercession for us!

**Quiz.** 1. For whom did Jesus pray? 2. What is His first desire? 3. What special requests did He make? 4. What great blessing does He desire for us?

**Seed Thoughts.** 1. The Christian world may well listen when Jesus prays. 2. All true prayer is grounded on concentration. 3. When all Christ's followers are one, the devil may well tremble. 4. Jesus wants our lives to witness for Him. 5. His love extends beyond Calvary to Heaven. 6. A heart bursting with love is the fruit of union with the true Vine.

MARGARET WINTRINGER.



## JESUS IN GETHSEMANE.

And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them



and  
saith  
unto  
Peter,  
What,  
could  
ye not  
watch  
with  
me  
one  
hour?



and



that  
ye  
enter  
not  
into



the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them



for  
their  
eyes  
were  
heavy.  
And  
he left  
them,  
and



again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 2 6:36-45; MARK 14:26-41; LUKE 22:39-45;  
JOHN 18:1.**

**Prayer:** O Saviour, Who in agony too great for us to fathom, didst face the awful sufferings and death which alone could pay the price of sin, be with us when our souls are wrung with anguish and when we are called upon to face overwhelming trials. Thou, who hast so suffered, canst enter with deepest sympathy into our griefs and sorrows. Help us to pray, as Thou didst, "Not my will, but Thine, be done." Amen.

" 'Tis midnight; and on Olive's brow  
The star is dimmed that lately shone:  
'Tis midnight; in the garden now,  
The suffering Saviour prays alone.

" 'Tis midnight; and for others' guilt  
The Man of Sorrows weeps in blood;  
Yet He that hath in anguish knelt  
Is not forsaken by His God."  
—William B. Tappan.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, between twelve and one o'clock. Place, the Garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of Olivet. Persons, Jesus, His eleven disciples, and an angel.

**Scripture Setting:** Jesus in Gethsemane. His foreknowledge of His loneliness and the desertion of His disciples, Mark 14:27, 50; Isa. 53:3, 6. The culmination of His sorrow, John 12:27; Matt. 26:37; Luke 22:44; Heb. 5:7. His desire to do His Father's will, Matt. 26:39, 42, 44; John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38. Heavenly comfort was His, as it had been in the past, Luke 22:43; 3:22; Matt. 4:11; 17:5; John 12:28. We may learn from Him how to pray in trouble, Matt. 6:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "In prayer and retirement Christ had prepared Himself for the be-

ginning of His public ministry, and in prayer and retirement He prepared Himself for the terrible closing scenes of His earthly life." 2. This scene in Gethsemane shows us that in trial Christ turned to His Father and not from Him, that through prayer He sought to learn His Father's will, and that strength and comfort came to Him from this communion. 3. Christ acknowledged the omnipotence of God in His prayer, "All things are possible to Thee," and He yielded His will to that of His Father. 4. We learn from Christ's agony how heavy was the burden of our sins which was laid upon Him, and at how fearful a price was our salvation bought. 5. The presence of the angel not only brought physical and spiritual strength to our Saviour but also convinced Him that the cup could not pass from Him.

## JESUS' MIDNIGHT HOUR.

**The Walk to Gethsemane.** After the hours spent together in that upper room, when Jesus had striven to prepare His disciples for His approaching death, and when He had partaken with them of the Last Supper, which should in the future recall to their minds His dying love, He led them out into the night. Here and there lights burned in the houses where the paschal lamb was being eaten, while He, the Lamb of God, was moving on to His sacrificial death. Through the eastern gate and down the hill went Jesus and His eleven disciples—the men who loved Him, and yet who had so failed to grasp the meaning of the work He had come to do, and the Kingdom He was sent to establish. Above their heads shone a full moon and its light silvered the waters of the little brook Kidron, over which they passed.

**The Beginning of the Conflict.** Near the base of Olivet, Christ turned aside into a garden, or orchard, where the thick branches of great olive trees cast heavy shadows. 'Twas a spot beloved of the Master, where He had often come for prayer and retirement. The calm and peace which had been His throughout the long hours of the evening now forsook Him. For His disciples alone had He thought, as He strove to strengthen them for the ordeal before them.

But now at last His thoughts turned upon Himself, and upon His awful fate which was so fast approaching. But He would not have His disciples witness His agony. Near the entrance of the garden, He turned to them and said, "Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder."

He felt the need of human companionship, however, and so He took with Him His nearest and dearest, Peter, James and John, who alone had witnessed His hours of power and glory, when He raised to life the daughter of Jairus, and when He was transfigured before them, and with them He went on into the darker recesses of the garden. But soon He could not bear the presence of even these loved disciples. He must face His supreme hour of trial alone. But it would comfort and sustain Him to know that they were near, so He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with Me."

**Not My Will.** He went forward a short distance to a spot where the interlaced branches shut out the glinting moonbeams and there He knelt in prayer. Soon the awful weight of His woe overcame Him and He fell on His face and prayed in agony, "O My Father, all things are possible unto Thee: if Thou be willing, let this cup pass from Me." There was a moment's pause and then from the white lips came the words, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

"Abba Father, my Father," He said, and





## CHRIST IN GETHSEMANE

BY HOFMANN

After the passover feast and institution of the Sacrament, Christ and His disciples wandered forth into the Mount of Olives to a place called Gethsemane. It was in the night, and Christ selected three disciples, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, to go a few steps aside, where He prostrated Himself in prayer, and looked toward Heaven, saying: "If it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt." Going back to his disciples He found them asleep and said to Peter, "Could ye not watch with Me one hour?" "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

The picture by Hofmann is simple but effective. Christ lifts His noble face toward the darkened heavens, while a ray of light breaks through the clouds flooding His figure with light. The attitude is one of grace, but all the same impressive. A little way in the background sleeping men are vaguely visible, and the city looms up on the far-away height.

Here is a revelation of human nature mingled with Divine nature. Christ as God had no occasion to feel distress, or ask to be helped in His hour of trouble. Neither had He need of human sympathy. But He came to earth as a man subject to the laws of human life. This pleading prayer proves the actuality of His human side. He felt the pains of His coming torture as a man. He felt the seeming neglect of His disciples, who could sleep while He suffered.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST IN GETHSEMANE





it is the first time we know of His using this personal term. Even in this hour of supreme struggle, He was conscious that His Father was near Him and He desired to do His will.

**The Burden of Our Sins.** But the burden seemed almost greater than He could bear, the cup too bitter for Him to drink. It was not only death from which he shrank, though He was a young Man, only thirty-three, in the prime and vigor of His beautiful manhood, and He would fain live longer; it was not alone the thought that the work He came to do seemed unaccomplished, for how few believed in Him, how limited His sphere of action had been—He would like to see the fruit of His labors; it was not alone the foreknowledge of His terrible sufferings which were so fast approaching, though the thought of the betrayal of Judas, the denial of Peter, the desertion of all His followers, the unjust trials, the terrible cruelties and insults, and the awful and ignominious death upon the cross must have overwhelmed Him; but it was sin which bowed Him to the ground. Those whom He had come to tell of His Father's love had spurned the message of salvation and would put the Messenger, God's own Son, to death. In Jerusalem, the city of His people, the city He so loved, would He be condemned to the shameful death of the cross. And not the sins of His countrymen alone did He bear, in that black hour, but the sins of the whole world were laid upon Him, and it was these that overwhelmed Him and made His sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

**Human Help Fails Him.** At last He could bear the agony no longer. He staggered to His feet and sought His friends, thinking He would gain help and comfort from their companionship. But, alas! they had failed Him in His hour of need, though it was the first personal request He is known to have made of them. Instead of watching with Him in His agony, they had yielded to their fatigue and He found them asleep.

Was it a presage of the awful loneliness which was soon to be His, when, deserted by His followers. He must face His foes alone! Reproachfully He spoke to Peter, who had so loudly and vehemently proclaimed his willingness to die with Him, "Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch with Me one hour?"

Then, seeing how they all started up from their sleep, and how pained they looked because they had failed to do as He requested, His heart was filled with tenderness for them. He excused their fault, but He desired to warn them of the danger of disloyalty to Him. "Watch and pray," He said, "that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is

willing, but the flesh is weak." He returned a second time and found them sleeping.

**The Victory Won.** Again He went away and again He repeated the prayer of perfect submission to His Father's will. And as in the hours of temptation and trial in the wilderness, at the beginning of His career, He had met and conquered the powers of darkness in a threefold battle, so now, at the close of His life, He was thrice victorious when assailed by fiercest temptation and peril—temptation to assert His own desires against the will of His Father, and peril of failing to pay the full penalty of sin.

**Angelic Ministrations.** But the victory won after such a terrible struggle left Him exhausted almost to the point of death, and now, as in the wilderness, the tender Heavenly Father saw the human need of His well-beloved Son and sent an angel from Heaven to strengthen Him. Peter and the others had failed Him, but with this Heavenly succor, Christ could meet the awful trials which lay before Him. He returned to His sleeping disciples, but He no longer needed their help. During all the long hours of suffering which followed this lonely vigil, the Saviour never again showed a trace of weakness. With perfect calmness and majestic self-control, did He meet His enemies because, in Gethsemane, He had conquered outward foes and inward fears and had come into complete submission to His Father's will.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What is the meaning of Gethsemane and why was it so called? 2. What is its present significance? 3. What was symbolized by the cup which Christ prayed might pass from Him? 4. Give passages of Scripture where cup is used as a symbol? 5. What is Christ's first recorded prayer? 6. When does the Bible tell us that He spent the whole night in prayer? 7. When did He pray for us? 8. When did He pray for His enemies? 9. When did angels appear to tell of Christ or to be with Him? 10. In what verse of the Psalms is the help of angels promised to us?

**Practical Truths.** 1. We shall be given strength to endure suffering and trial if, like Christ, we meet them with faith in our Father and perfect submission to Him. 2. "The Christian's conflict is illustrated in Christ's experience in Gethsemane; the battle between the willing spirit and the weak flesh; the armament, prayer; the victory, calm acquiescence in the Divine will." 3. From the agony which Christ endured, we may more vividly realize the awfulness of sin, and should feel a deeper gratitude because our Saviour paid its penalty for us. 4. "The cup of sorrow, which Christ drank, becomes the cup of our salvation. To Him it was wrath, to us it is mercy." 5. The calmness and serenity which Christ displayed throughout His trial and execution were only won through the hours of agony in the solitude of the garden; so periods of seclusion and prayer will yield strength to us.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



## JESUS BETRAYED.

And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh



one  
of the  
twelve,  
and  
with  
him a  
great



from the chief



and  
the



And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely. And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, master; and



And  
they



and took him.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 26:47-56; 27:3-5; MARK 14:43-50; LUKE 22:47-53; JOHN 18:2-12.

**Prayer:** Our hearts are torn with grief, O loving Saviour, as we read that all Thy disciples forsook Thee and fled. We know they loved Thee. We have read how boldly they announced that they would die for Thee. Keep us from a similar sin,—a cowardly desertion of Thee. Help us to search our hearts and, realizing our weakness, may we rely on Thee alone for strength in our hour of trial.

Keep us close to Thee, and may it be our highest joy and greatest pride to be known as Thy followers. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"By the thorn-road and none other,  
Is the Mount of Vision won;  
Tread it without shrinking, brother:  
Jesus trod it,—press thou on."

—S. Johnson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, between one and two o'clock a. m. Place, the Garden of Gethsemane. Persons, Christ and His twelve disciples, the temple-guard and their captain, and the Roman soldiers.

**Scripture Setting:** A study in conspiracy and betrayal. Christ, Matt. 12:14; Mark 3:6; John 5:16, 18; 10:39; 11:53; Matt. 26:14-16, 47-49. Esau, Gen. 27. Joseph, Gen. 37. Uriah, 2 Sam. 11. David, 2 Sam. 15. Amassa, 2 Sam. 20:9, 10; 1 Kings 2:5. Mordecai and the Jews, Esther 3. Daniel, Dan. 6. Paul, Acts 23:12-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Judas' treachery and baseness reaches its height when he betrays

his Master with a kiss. 2. His remorse leads not to repentance but to self-destruction. 3. Christ's power is shown over both Jews and Romans, when the soldiers fall to the ground before Him; a proof that He voluntarily surrendered Himself to His enemies. 4. Peter's impulsiveness is shown in his one rash blow given in Christ's defense, but this blow, unauthorized by his Master, does more harm than good. 5. Jesus is deserted, in His hour of trial, by all His disciples, though, relying upon their own strength, they had so confidently asserted that they were ready to die with Him. 6. Christ's last act before His hands are bound is an act of mercy to one of His enemies.

### THE TREACHERY OF A FRIEND.

**The Armed Band.** After leaving his Master and the disciples in that upper room, Judas had hastened to the high priest and had told him that Jesus could be taken safely that night. The priests had feared a revolt of the people, if they attempted to seize Jesus openly, as there were in the city many Galileans who were devoted to Him. But they agreed with Judas that in the darkness He might quietly be made a prisoner. Therefore the temple-guard and also soldiers from the Roman garrison were quickly dispatched with Judas to arrest Jesus. The Jews carried staves or clubs, while the Romans were armed with swords. All bore torches or lamps, fastened to long poles, for though the moon shone brightly, they were prepared to search for Jesus, if He were in hiding. This armed band was quite a large one, for it was not known how great a force Jesus could summon to His aid.

**Judas' Treachery.** Shortly after Jesus had returned from His third communion with His Father, He heard the tramp of feet. But instead of attempting to conceal Himself from His foes, He said to Peter, James and John, "Arise, let us be going: behold he is at hand that doth betray Me."

The four then walked towards the entrance to the Garden where the other disciples had been left. These, also, were found sleeping but Jesus awoke them and then awaited Judas who came a little in advance of his band. As he approached, Jesus addressed him, "Friend," (did not the loving

word awaken shame in his heart?) "do that for which thou art come."

But Judas had arranged to give a dastardly signal. "Whomsoever I shall kiss," he had said, "that is He; take Him and lead Him away safely." Now stepping forward he threw his arms about Jesus and with the words, "Hail, Master," he kissed him several times. "Judas," cried Jesus, "betrayest thou the Son of Man with a kiss!" Ah, how the words must have stung the traitor!

**Christ's Overpowering Majesty.** Jesus would not be thus pointed out to the soldiers. He would give Himself to them. He, therefore, stepped forward and said, "Whom seek ye?" "Jesus of Nazareth," was the reply. "I am He," calmly answered Jesus.

But at the words the soldiers fell back and many of them prostrated themselves upon the ground. So majestic was Christ's form—such a wonderful light shone from His face that in awe they fell before Him. Surely this was some great King, instead of the criminal whom they had been sent to apprehend. Again He questioned, "Whom seek ye?" And once more came the reply, "Jesus of Nazareth."

Then said Jesus, "I have told you that I am He: if, therefore, ye seek Me, let these go their way." Even in His hour of peril, His thoughts turned lovingly to His disciples and He strove to secure their safety.

**His Voluntary Surrender.** The Roman captain now stepped forward and laid his hand upon Jesus. "Lord," cried the disciples, "shall we smite with the sword?"

Without waiting the reply, impetuous Peter, longing to defend the Master he so loved, struck heavily at the servant of the high priest. The man attempted to evade the blow but the sword descending cut off his right ear. "Put up thy sword, Peter," said Jesus, "for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." Then He added: "Thinkest thou that I cannot pray to My Father and He shall even now give Me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?"

No, He would not ask Divine help in His need. He would drink His cup to its bitter dregs for thus only could He accomplish His work and save mankind.

**His Act of Mercy.** The soldiers now came forward to bind Him, but He said, "Suffer ye thus far," and reaching out His hand, He touched the one whose ear had been severed and healed him. The last act of those loving hands before they were bound and the last miracle which Christ performed was one of mercy to His enemies.

**His Protest Against His Arrest.** As He was being roughly bound like a criminal, He said: "Are you come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves to take Me? I sat daily with you in the temple, teaching, and ye stretched not forth your hands against Me," that is, "I have done no wrong, nor have I tried to escape; why am I treated like a base criminal?" "But," He added, "this is your hour and the power of darkness."

**He is Forsaken by His Disciples.** The disciples who had been suddenly aroused from sleep had appeared dazed and panic stricken, and now they all forsook Jesus and fled. Is it not the saddest part of the story? How short a time before had they declared that they would die with Him, and now, at the first moment of danger, they all left Him. How saddened and pained Jesus must have been by their desertion. It had been a terrible experience to have Judas, who had been constantly with Him for three years, turn against Him and betray Him in a dastardly way. But to have all the others, even Peter, James and John, His three nearest and dearest, leave Him! Ah, what crushing loneliness and grief must have been His! Bound and surrounded by soldiers, He was led away to the house of Annas.

**Judas' Remorse.** And Judas, the traitor—shall we follow him and see the result of his treachery? When he saw his Lord not only in the hands of His foes but condemned by them to death, then awful

remorse seized him. Had he even then sought his Master, where He stood bound in the midst of His enemies, and thrown himself at His feet, begged for forgiveness, can we doubt that he, too, would have heard the loving words, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee?"

But no such thoughts came to Judas. His remorse drove him headlong to destruction. He determined to put an end to his miserable existence. First, however, he must get rid of the silver which scorched his hands and his soul. O the awful irony of each piece! On one side it bore an olive branch and on the other a censor, symbols of peace and prayer, and on it was the superscription, "Jerusalem the Holy," and this money he had been given to sell his Lord!

**The Silver Returned.** Rushing to the temple he cried out, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood!"

Did he hope for help and sympathy? Did he think he might be shown a way in which he could expiate his crime? He had come to the wrong persons. Coldly the priests turned from him, the traitor whom they despised, though they had made use of him. "What is that to us?" they said. "See thou to that."

Crazed by their indifference and scorn, Judas stood for a moment irresolute. Then he felt the silver in his hand. That at least they should have again. Flinging it upon the marble pavement, he rushed from the temple.

**Judas' Awful Death.** Out of the city gate he fled, down into the Valley of Hinnom. Across the valley he went and up the steep sides of the mountain. Here jagged rocks rose perpendicularly and perhaps a stunted tree might here and there be seen. At last he was alone and now he would put an end to his torture. He unwound his girdle and tying it about his neck, he fastened the end to a branch of a tree. Then he threw himself from the rock upon which he had been standing. But the girdle gave way and he was precipitated upon the jagged rocks far below. Thus perished the man who through all time bears the awful stigma of having betrayed his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Describe the government of Jerusalem at this time. 2. What garrison was there? 3. Give a Scripture prophecy concerning Christ's sufferings. 4. Give a Scripture prophecy of the desertion of His followers. 5. Of what has Judas' name become a synonym? 6. What man stabbed his friend and caused him to say, "This was the most unkindest cut of all"?

**Practical Truths.** 1. Judas' plans succeeded, but the success of bad plans is the worst of failures. 2. Treachery to friendship injures most deeply the traitor himself. 3. Those who profess to be Christians but who act in an unchristlike way are really traitors to Him. 4. It is the bad men in the church who do most harm to Christianity. 5. Though seemingly defeated, Christ showed Himself a King, so in life the apparent failure of a good man is often the highest victory. President McKinley's helpful and inspiring influence was even greater and more far-reaching through his death than during his life. 6. Even in His hour of trial, Jesus thought only of others, seeking to provide safety for His friends and healing the wound of His enemy. We, too, should seek

"A heart at leisure from itself

To soothe and sympathize."

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.





## CHRIST TAKEN CAPTIVE

BY HOFMANN

Again the artist Hofmann shows his finished and elegant art, although the subject is quite different. After the three times repeated prayer, the disciples still sleeping, Jesus cried out to them: "Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray me." Then Judas and his band of men, with swords and staves, coming with the Jewish priests and elders, laid hands on him. Judas, who had betrayed his Master with a kiss, is standing on one side, the bag in his hand, cringing within himself, already conscience-stricken.

In the picture Christ marches with great dignity, although bound and led with a cord by a villainous-looking man, who carries a lantern. Behind, a soldier rudely pushes the Lord along, and two officials lead the group, looking back to see what is going on. Just in the background is an individual (John, perhaps) with distressed face and clasped hands, as if in great grief. Christ casts a reproachful glance toward the unfortunate Judas, and yet His expression is full of kindness. The soldiers bear arms, one has a torch, and they are all in helmets and armor. In the rear are Peter and another disciple with halos about their heads, and Peter still carries the sword with which he had attacked the servant of the high priest. The landscape is a fanciful picture of the Mount of Olives, serving as a good background and to balance the composition.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON



CHRIST TAKEN CAPTIVE







# JESUS BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

And they



away  
to the



and with him were assembled all the



and the



And the chief priests and all the



sought  
for  
witness  
against  
Jesus to  
put him  
to death;  
and  
found  
none. For  
many  
bare false



against him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands But neither so did their witness agree together.

MARK 14: 53, 55-59.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 26:57, 59-68; MARK 14:53, 55-65; LUKE 22:54, 63-71; JOHN 18:12-14, 19-24.**

**Prayer:** O Christ, Thou who didst suffer for our sake, such terrible indignities and insults, fill our hearts with deepest gratitude and love to Thee. Help us like Thee to be patient under trial and calm in the midst of foes. May our love be shown in tender pity for all who are called to bear trial and suffering. Amen.

O Jesus, Man of Sorrows,  
Sole Son of God, the King!  
What language shall I borrow  
Thy boundless love to sing?  
No mortal words can measure  
The burdens Thou didst take,  
Accepting pain as pleasure,  
All for my sinful sake.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30, between one and five o'clock. Place, The palaces of Annas and Caiaphas, at Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, Annas, Caiaphas, members of the Sanhedrin, officers and soldiers.

**Scripture Setting: Prophecies Concerning Christ.** The false witness, Psa. 27:12; 35:11. His silence against accusation, Psa. 38:13; Isa. 53:7. The mocking, Psa. 109:25. The insults, Psa. 35:15, 21; Isa. 50:6; 53:3; Lam. 3:30. His patience under suffering, Isa. 53:7. The plotting together of His enemies, Psa. 2:2; 31:13; 94:21. His vicarious suffering, Isa. 53:4-6, 12. Christ our example, 1 Pet. 2:21-23; Matt. 5:39.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The examinations of Christ by Annas, and by Caiaphas before the Sanhedrin were marked by haste, injustice and illegality. 2. Christ's innocence was proclaimed by the impossibility of finding those who could testify against Him. 3. Only by perverting His words could any accusation be brought. 4. Throughout these hours of trial, Christ preserved an almost unbroken silence, a silence which proclaimed His innocence better than any words could have done. 5. When questioned, He declared His Messiahship, so that His accusers should not be ignorant of the crime they were committing. 6. Later He bore the cruelty and insults of the soldiers without rebuke or resistance, thus fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy.

## THE MOCK TRIAL.

**Jesus a Prisoner.** After His arrest, Christ was led down the hill from Gethsemane, across the bridge below which flowed the little brook Kidron, its waters silvered by the moonlight, and up to the city gates. Entering these the band proceeded quietly on its way. Few people were in the streets, as those who were not still worshipping at the temple were asleep in their beds. In the city there were many Galileans who had seen Christ's wonderful acts of power and mercy, and it was feared that these and others who loved and honored Him would create a riot if it became known that He had been taken a prisoner. So in silence the band proceeded on its way.

**Jesus Before Annas.** Not to the temple was the prisoner taken—that might have occasioned trouble—but to the house of Annas, in the upper town. This Annas, a man seventy years of age, had been the former high priest, and he still wielded great authority. Indeed, the present high priest, Caiaphas, his son-in-law, was completely under his influence. Much of Annas' immense fortune had been amassed from his temple revenues, so he regarded Christ with peculiar hatred because of his action in driving out the money changers and traders from that holy place.

To him Jesus was now brought, and we can fancy how his wicked eye gleamed as he saw the pale face, bloodstained garments and bound hands of the One whose power he had feared and whose teaching he hated. At

last the Nazarene was in his hands. Quickly messengers were sent by him to summon the members of the Sanhedrin to the house of Caiaphas, that a trial might there be held. To be sure, such proceeding could not be legal, for, according to the Jewish laws, no trial could take place at night. But so fearful was Annas of a rising of the people in favor of the Prisoner that he decided there must be no delay.

**Jesus Taken to Caiaphas.** From Annas' house Jesus was led higher up the hill to the residence of Caiaphas. Here He waited until the counsellors and witnesses were summoned.

**The Illegal Trial.** In the brilliantly lighted council hall the members of the Sanhedrin were seated in a half circle upon red cushions, Caiaphas in the center and Annas beside him. Before them was brought the Prisoner, tall and fearless, His hands still bound in front of Him, although He had willingly surrendered to His captors and had offered no resistance since His arrest.

And the trial began. But what a trial! The Jewish criminal procedure was carefully planned to make conviction in a capital case difficult, and among the laws governing it were the following: Every prisoner must have witnesses to speak for him; he could not be compelled to speak against himself; he was to be considered innocent until proved guilty; no enemy could sit in the council to judge him; a testimony against



him must be confirmed by two witnesses; the sentence could not be given until the day after the trial, nor the execution take place until the day after the sentence had been given. But having broken the law that a trial could not be held at night, it was easy to disregard all these others. It was determined before He appeared that He was to be found guilty." Caiaphas, himself, had recommended some time before this that it was expedient that He should die and all who were to judge Him were His enemies. But they would have at least a mock trial.

**Jesus Before the Sanhedrin.** Caiaphas began by asking Jesus about His disciples and His doctrines. To the former question Jesus made no reply. He would not incriminate His friends. To the latter He answered: "I have spoken openly to the world. I ever taught in the synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together, and in secret have I said nothing." (How different His actions had been from theirs,—open speaking and nothing done in secret, in contrast to His arrest, made in the darkness and to this secret trial.) "Why askest thou Me?" He continued, "ask them which heard Me what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said."

What a reasonable reply this was, but the officer who stood near Jesus, accustomed to see prisoners cringe before the high priest, could not endure the calm, assured manner of an equal, with which He had spoken. He struck Him a cruel blow and asked, "Answerest Thou the high priest so?"

But even this insult did not arouse Jesus to anger. Calmly He replied, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou Me?"

But to this question He received no reply, nor was the officer reproved for the brutal blow he had given.

**The Witnesses.** And now the witnesses were summoned, but their testimony was worthless, farcical. One said one thing, the next another—but, two at length did make similar charges. The Prisoner had said He could destroy the temple and build it in three days. (Such was the garbled report of words He had once spoken.) Now at last the accusers had something, confirmed by two witnesses, which they could consider serious. Had He spoken against their temple? Did He threaten to destroy it?

To this charge, as to all others, Christ made no reply. He had seen from the first that the trial was a sham, a mockery; what good would denial of the accusations do? Caiaphas arose and approached Him. "Answerest Thou nothing?" he exclaimed. "What is it which these witness against Thee?"

But Jesus held His peace. His calm silence enraged the high priest. He would force Him to speak. **Jesus Declares Himself to be the Messiah.** "I adjure Thee," said Caiaphas, "by the living God

that Thou tell us whether Thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

Now indeed the silence must be broken, for these men must know whom they had before them. When Peter had declared Him to be the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus had commanded him to reveal the wonderful truth to no one, but now it should be told. "I am," He replied to Caiaphas' question in a clear, ringing voice. Then desiring that all should know of the glory that was soon to be His, he added, "And ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of Heaven."

But the words only aroused the high priest to fury. Rending his clothes to show his horror, he exclaimed, "What further need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy; what think ye?"

With one voice the Sanhedrin pronounced Jesus worthy of death. Now the council was broken up, its members returning to their homes to snatch a few hours of slumber, while Jesus was left in the hands of the temple guards.

**Jesus Insulted by the Soldiers.** Ah, if we might only blot out the ensuing scene. Taken to the court yard below, Christ was there most cruelly treated by those brutal men. He was spit upon, and blow after blow was given Him, but He spoke no word. His calm silence angered the rough men about Him as it had Caiaphas. They would make Him speak, so they blindfolded Him and giving Him a blow, mockingly asked, "Prophecy unto us, Thou Christ, who is he that struck Thee?"

But calm, unmoved, He bore their gross insults and offered no word of remonstrance. He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth. Ah, what wondrous patience and resignation did He display! And for us He suffered,—for us He bore this contumely and shame that we might receive pardon for our sins.

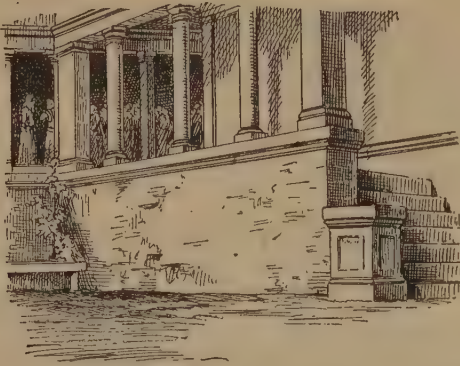
**Quiz and Study.** 1. Describe a Jewish trial. 2. In what particulars was that of Christ illegal? 3. What were the words Christ had spoken about the temple, which the false witnesses perverted? 4. What prophecy refers to Christ as the Son of man? 5. When, before this, does Christ refer to Himself thus? 6. Give other passages of Scripture which refer to the second coming of Christ. 7. Give the Levitical law which declared blasphemy deserving of death. 8. What prophecy foretold the silence of Christ under accusation? 9. What commandment that He had given His disciples did He, Himself, thus illustrate?

**Practical Truths.** Though Christ was arrested and tried in secret, the crime could not be hidden; secret faults shall be revealed. 2. Annas and Caiaphas were influenced by hatred in their judgment of Jesus but their anger fulfilled the prophecy that the wrath of man shall praise Him. 3. By their act Christ's enemies unwittingly assisted in making true His words, which the witnesses perverted, for even bad men carry out the plans of God. 4. "Silence is deep as eternity, speech shallow as time. In the midst of exasperating circumstances, Christ answered 'never a word.' He who keepeth his tongue, the same is a perfect man." Carlyle. 5. That Christ's silence was caused by no cowardly fear is evidenced by His courageous declaration of His Messiahship. 6. Cruel treatment of others betokens a base and depraved nature. 7. By His patient submission to pain and insult, Christ has left us an example that we should follow "in His steps."

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.

## PETER'S DENIAL.

But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into



and the  
cock  
crew.  
And a



saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he



it again.  
And a  
little  
after,  
they



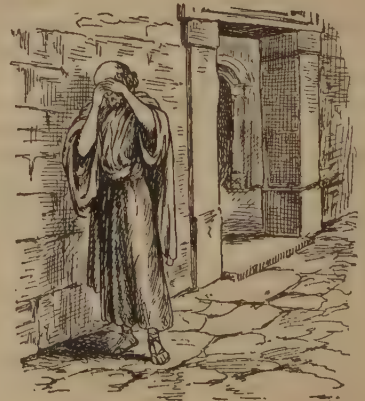
said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galileean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak. And the second time the



And  
Peter  
called  
to mind  
the word  
that



Before the  
cock crow  
twice, thou  
shalt deny  
me thrice.  
And when  
he thought  
thereon, he





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 26:58, 69-75; MARK 14:54, 66-72; LUKE 22:54-62; JOHN 18:15-18, 25-27.

**Prayer:** O loving Saviour, Make us true to Thee. Keep us from denying Thee by word or by silence. Thou, who hast so loved us that Thou didst suffer untold agony for our sakes, fill our hearts with such love for Thee that to all about us we may be known as Thy faithful disciples. Amen.

"In the hour of trial,  
Jesus, plead for me;  
Lest by base denial,  
I depart from Thee;  
When Thou see'st me waver,  
With a look recall,  
Nor for fear or favor  
Suffer me to fall."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30, 2 to 3 o'clock. Place, court of Caiaphas' palace. Persons, Christ, Peter, John, maid and men servants.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Friendship. Qualities of friendship, Prov. 17:17; 18:24; 27: 6, 9, 17; John 15:13. A friend who proved a traitor, Matt. 26:47-50. A friend who proved a coward, Matt. 26:70, 72, 74; but who repented, Matt. 26:75; and became true to the death, Acts 4:13, 18-20; 5:27-33. A disloyal friend, 2 Sam. 15:12, 31; 16:20-23; Psa. 41:9; 55:12-14. A self-sacrificing friend, Ex. 32:30-32. A faithful friend, Ruth 1:16, 17. A man of many friends, Acts 20:36-38; Rom. 16. Three friends of Jesus, Luke 10:38, 39; John 11:3, 11, 33-36; 12:1-8. A friend of God, James 2:23; Gen. 12:1-4; 18; 22:12. A wonderful friend, 1 Sam. 18:1, 3; 19:1-7; 20; 23:16, 17; 2 Sam. 1:26. The perfect Friend, John 15:13-15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The central thought in this story is Peter's cowardice which led him to deny his Lord. The steps which led to the denial were these: 1. He had over-confidence in his own strength. 2. He struck an unnecessary and unbidden blow. 3. He forsook Jesus and fled. 4. He followed afar off. 5. He sat among the enemies of Jesus. 6. Christ's arrest may have led him to fear he, too, would be taken prisoner. 7. Jesus' inhuman treatment at the hands of His persecutors added to Peter's terror. The denial was marked by its repetition and emphasis. Though perhaps at first a sudden yielding to fear, it became a deliberate giving up of His Lord and it was emphasized even with oaths. But the crowing of the cock recalled to Peter's mind his Master's words and a look from Jesus aroused him to a consciousness of his guilt. His repentance, shown in his bitter tears, was deep and lasting.

### DENYING ONE'S DEAREST FRIEND.

**Following "Afar Off."** We have seen that when Christ was taken bound from the Garden of Gethsemane, all the disciples forsook Him and fled, lest they, too, should be made prisoners. But two of them, Peter and John, seeing that they were not pursued, followed afar off. What thoughts must have surged through their minds! Their Master, bound as a prisoner, and taken to be tried for His life!

Keeping in the shadow of walls and houses, and out of sight of Christ's guards, the two disciples went to the house of Annas. After the short delay there, they followed their Master to the palace of the high-priest. This palace was built about an interior, quadrangular court, which was entered from the street by an arched passage. A heavy door, or gate, admitted beasts of burden to the court, and in this large gate was a smaller wicker one for the admission of people. A porter or portress attended to the opening of this gate.

As Christ and His guards passed through this entrance, John, who was known to the high priest, entered with them, but Peter, being unacquainted, was shut out. When, however, John reached the inner court, he perceived that Peter was no longer with him and he returned to the entrance, where he persuaded the portress to admit his friend. Jesus was taken to the judgment hall, which probably opened out from the court, and John followed Him thither, keeping as near his Master as possible, and glad to be known as His disciple.

**Peter With Christ's Enemies.** Not so Peter; instead of entering the judgment hall, he lingered in the court, fearing to be recognized as a follower of the Man who was now on trial for His life. Where was his boasted courage and loyalty? Alas, in the hour of danger, he proved himself a coward. But he would fain hear news of his Lord, even though he feared to stay near Him. In the center of the court a fire had been built, and about it were gathered the servants of the high-priest and the soldiers who had helped in capturing Jesus. Peter joined them and listened to the accounts of the arrest and examinations before Annas and Caiaphas, as these were given by those who had witnessed them. But the portress, seeing that Peter did not follow Jesus into the judgment hall, as John had done, pointed him out to a passing maid. "That is one of His disciples," she said; "he entered with the others."

The maid went up to Peter and said, "Thou, also, wast with Jesus the Galilean."

**The First Denial.** The sudden and unexpected remark threw Peter off his guard. There was a half question in the maid's statement which suggested a denial. Yielding to the temptation to save himself from danger, he replied, "I know not what thou sayest."

Thus a woman's question caused Peter to deny his Lord, and alas! this was not the only time he showed such cowardice.

**The Second Denial.** But now he longed to escape from the scrutiny of those about him. He could not leave the palace, as that would have been an acknowledgment of the charge, and, moreover, he desired to know the result of the trial. But he withdrew to the arched entrance, thinking that there he might be alone. 'Twas a vain hope, for immediately the portress turned to those about her and scornfully said, "This man, also, was with Jesus of Nazareth."

Angered at her words and still more at the tone in which they were uttered, but finding it impossible to change from his first position, Peter again denied his Lord. "I know not the Man," he asserted, and confirmed his statement with an oath.

**The Third Denial.** But he could not be as calm and indifferent as he desired to appear. His conflicting emotions—shame at his lack of loyalty and fear for himself—caused a restlessness which betrayed him. Once more he returned to the fire. Now, to divert suspicion, he joined in the conversation, asking questions and expressing opinions, but that which was done to allay suspicion, increased it, for his Galilean accent betrayed him.

The red glow of the fire threw its weird light on the bearded faces gathered about it. As Peter joined the others in discussing the trial, one and another leaned forward and studied his face and garb, which were quite unlike those of the Judeans about him and which showed him to be a stranger. Soon they began to question him, "Art thou not His disciple?" "Thou wert with Him." "Of a truth thou art one of them, for thy speech maketh thee known as a Galilean."

Then a kinsman of Malchus, the servant whose ear Peter had cut off, came up. "Yes, yes," he asserted, "I saw him in the garden." Turning to Peter, he asked, "Didst not thou give that blow to my kinsman?"

Now thoroughly frightened, Peter began to curse and to swear. "You are all mistaken, for I never saw this Man. I know nothing of Him."

**The Look of Jesus.** Peter's oaths did not convince his accusers, however; instead, they only made plain his fears. But their attention was now distracted from him by the people who thronged out of the judgment hall, for the hasty trial was over. The Prisoner, bound and conducted by guards, was led across the court to the guardhouse, there to be cruelly mocked and insulted. As He passed near Peter, the Lord turned and looked upon him. He did not indicate by any word or gesture how false His disciple had been, but hark!

**The Cock Crows.** And now, loud and distinct, could be heard the sound of a cock's crowing. Like a flash came to Peter's memory a scene which had taken place earlier that same evening. "All ye shall be offended in Me this night," Christ had said. But he had boldly replied, "If all shall be offended in Thee, I will never be offended."

How the Master's words now rang in his ears! "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice."

He had not believed it possible. He remembered how he had answered, "Even if I must die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." And now he had again and again asserted that he had never known his Lord. Once more his memory brought him that look of Jesus. How it had penetrated to his very soul! There was no anger in it; only grief at his disloyalty, and love and pity for him. As he remembered it, Christ's words came to him, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have thee, that he may sift thee as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not."

And this Master who so loved him, who had prayed that he might resist temptation, whose forgiveness he had read in that wondrous look,—this Master he had denied!

**Peter's Repentance.** He rushed from the court into the blackness of the night. He must be alone, where he could give way to his grief; no solitude was possible in the city, so he hastened from the eastern gate. Down the hill he went and across the Kidron, retracing the steps he had taken a little earlier in the evening. At the Garden of Gethsemane he paused; here he could be alone. Among the deep shadows, where his Master had wept in agony, he, too, gave way to bitter weeping. Good cause had he for grief and remorse. He had fallen asleep when Jesus, longing for human sympathy, had asked him to watch with Him during His hours of agony; and now he had basely denied all knowledge of Him, and thus inflicted another sorrow upon his Master at the time when He was undergoing such terrible trials. But, like his Lord, he, too, won a victory in Gethsemane; his were not fruitless tears. From henceforth he was no longer Simon, the coward, but Peter, the rock, whose loyalty to his Master, in hours of greatest trial and peril, none might question.

**Quiz.** 1. Trace the steps in Peter's downfall. 2. How often did he deny his Lord? 3. What did Christ's look do for him? 4. Tell of Christ's thrice repeated question to him after the resurrection. 5. Give instances in his later life which proved that his repentance was true and sincere and that he was a changed man. 6. Give some of the qualities of true friendship. 7. Give instances in history of those who have endangered their own lives to be true to their friends.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Those who trust in their own strength often find that it fails them at a critical hour. 2. There is great danger in following Christ "afar off." 3. Cowardice leads to lies, disloyalty and other despicable sins. 4. Christ's love never fails us and His look will recall us to a consciousness of sin and will lead us to repentance. 5. Judas' remorse led to death, but Peter's repentance restored him to a better life. 6. "Peter denied Christ once and wept forever after it; we often deny Him, and never weep at all."—St. Augustine.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.





## CHRIST REJECTED

BY BENJAMIN WEST

Benjamin West was American born, but he became court painter to George the III of England; also President of the British Royal Academy.

West's conception of this scene differs greatly from Munkacsy's, and the moment in the trial is not the same. Jesus was led into Pilate's judgment hall, but the Jews remained in the outer court for fear of defiling themselves at the moment of eating the passover. Pilate cross-questions the holy prisoner in the judgment hall, but finally takes him out to the multitude of the Jews, declaring that he found Him not guilty of any crime. But to please the people Pilate demanded whether he should release to them Christ or a famous criminal called Barabbas, as it was the custom to release some noted prisoner at the time of the passover, but the Jews said, not the Christ but Barabbas.

West has conceived a meek and lowly Jesus, not a proud, erect one. He stands wearing the crown of thorns they had plaited, and they are putting on Him, with mock humility, a royal robe and have thrust into His hands a reed in place of a scepter. They abuse Him and whip the crown of thorns into His head with the reedy scepter. Pilate comes out from the inner chamber, a fine, youngerly man with a characteristic Roman face, and he really pleads with the high priest in favor of Jesus. But the high priest stretches his arms in vehement expostulation, rejecting the suggestion that Christ should be the person released to them, while everybody pointed to Barabbas, some on the right hand calling for his release. There is a large gathering here, each one a character which may be studied. One among them seems to be John, the beloved disciple, who clasps his hands and looks earnestly on the scene. Behind him one weeps; another shakes his fists and looks ugly; again others cry out for the robber.

Many women, friends of Christ, look on sorrowfully. One prostrates herself pleadingly. On the left are workmen with spades, hammers and other tools getting ready the cross. All through the picture are touching incidents, as the little boy who rests his tender face on the soldier's strong arm; on the right a young person is weeping on an elderly woman's breast; two children in the balcony play together on the dangerous top of the wall. If examined carefully, each inch of the picture will present numerous interesting incidents.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





EDMUND WEST

# CHRIST REJECTED

By Permission of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

## BENJAMIN WEST. 1738-1820.

"Answer me! What is thee doing, Benjamin?"

"N-nothing," stammered the boy.

"Show me what is in thy hand." Fearful that punishment would follow, little Benjamin West, then six years old, handed his Quaker mother a sheet of paper on which he had drawn a picture of his baby niece in the cradle. Turning with it to her grown-up daughter, she exclaimed, "Look daughter, I declare, he has made a likeness of little Sally."

"Who taught thee to draw pictures?" she asked the boy. "Nobody, I just made it up," he replied.

Encouraged where he had expected to be punished, he continued to surprise his parents by his skill in producing pictures of objects about him. Other painters had models and lessons. This boy, at six years of age, in the backwoods of Pennsylvania, without help of any kind, produced original work.

He was born of Quaker parents in Springfield, Pa., October 10, 1738, the youngest of a large family. At seven years of age he started to school. One day a year later, an Indian gave him some bits of red and yellow pigment such as they used to decorate their bodies.

The boy was delighted and ran home, breathlessly exclaiming, "Here mother, see what I got." This gave her an idea and she gave him a piece of indigo from her wash-tub. Thus he had the three primary colors.

At a loss for a brush, he cut the hair off the point of the cat's tail. This worked but did not last long and soon poor puss looked as if he had the mange.

Mr. Pennington, a relative of the family, from Philadelphia, having seen his attempts sent West a painting outfit of colors, brushes and canvas, and a set of six engravings.

One day, after receiving them, his mother found him in the attic when she supposed he was in school. From two of the engravings he had painted a composite picture that astonished her.

Forgetting to punish him for truancy; forgetting her Quaker reserve, she gathered the boy in her arms and kissed him, exclaiming; "O thou wonderful child." The picture was left just as it was. His mother said another touch would spoil it. Sixty-seven years later it was shown in the same room with his famous picture "Christ Re-

jected," and his tribute to his mother was, "My mother's kiss made me a painter."

At Mr. Pennington's next visit he took young West back with him to Philadelphia, where he lived until he was twenty-one, studying and earning money painting portraits. He then moved to New York, where he doubled the prices for his work and saved his money to go abroad. By this time his work was being talked about.

In 1760 he landed at Rome. News of his coming preceded him. A young man fresh from the wilds of America, of a queer religious sect, who began painting as a child prodigy, was coming to Rome to study art!

He spent three years studying in Italy, after which he went to England. George the Third was on the throne, and Oliver Goldsmith, David Garrick, Dr. Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds were then living.

His first exhibit of work in London brought him such a rush of orders that he refused an offer of £700 per year.

A pretty romance surrounds his marriage to Elizabeth Shewell, whose acquaintance he made during his college days in Philadelphia. He sent for his father to visit him in London and wrote Miss Shewell to come with his father, telling her on what vessel he sailed. Her brother, with whom she lived, saw the letter and locked her in an upstairs room till after time for the vessel to sail. Three young men, learning of the situation, gave her a rope ladder, which she concealed in her skirts and by which Miss Shewell descended from her room after dark. They assisted her to the vessel, which waited down the river for her till the next morning. The young men were Benjamin Franklin, Hopkinson, later one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and the third was afterwards first bishop of the Episcopal church in America.

A valued patron, Archbishop Drummond, introduced him to King George, and when he completed his picture, "Agrippina landing in the ashes of Germanicus" for the archbishop, the king sent for him and commissioned him to paint "The Departure of Regulus."

King George also commissioned him to paint the royal chapel at Windsor, and appointed him court painter at a salary of £1,000 per year, besides buying numerous of his works.

He and Sir Joshua Reynolds were fast friends. Together they founded the Royal Academy of Arts.

Naturally the great events of the Bible attracted him, and the success of his picture, "Christ Healing the Sick," led to his painting "Descent of the Holy Spirit," "The Inspiration of St. Peter," "Christ Rejected," "Christ Crucified" and "The Ascension."

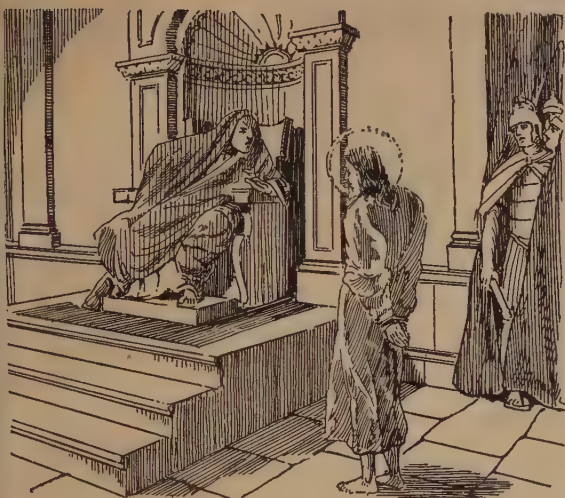
After over fifty years of happy married life his wife died in 1817, and he followed her in 1820, and his body lies in St. Paul's Cathedral, in London, beside that of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Christopher Wren.

JAMES BEALINGS.

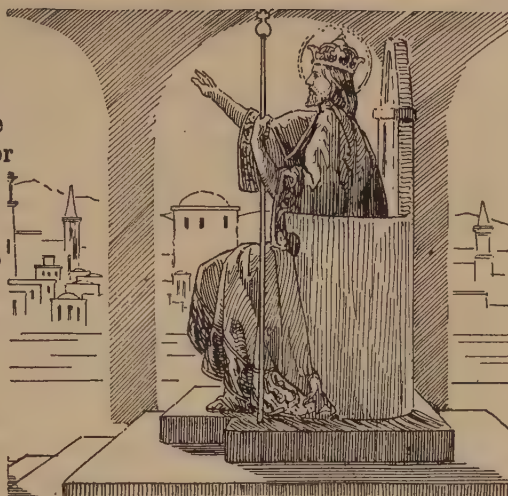


# JESUS BEFORE PILATE.

And Jesus



and the  
governor  
asked  
him,  
saying,  
Art  
thou  
the



of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest. And when he was accused of the chief



and  
elders, he  
answered  
nothing.  
Then  
said



unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly. And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests and the rulers and the



Said unto them,  
Ye have brought  
this man unto  
me, as one that  
perverteth the  
people: and,  
behold, I, having  
examined him  
before you, have  
found no fault  
in this man  
touching those  
things whereof  
ye accuse him:  
No, nor yet



for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 27:1, 2, 11-25; MARK 15:1-14; LUKE 23:1-24; JOHN 18:28-40.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, Help us to make the right choice. Keep us from the sin of choosing Barabbas, in whatever form the evil may be presented, instead of Thy dear Son. May we realize that we cannot shift the responsibility of our actions upon others and may we, therefore, always obey the dictates of our conscience. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Once to every man and nation  
Comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth and Falsehood,  
For the good or evil side;  
Some great cause, God's new Messiah,  
Offers each the bloom or blight,—  
And the choice goes on forever  
'Twixt that darkness and that light."  
J. R. Lowell.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, early in the morning. Place, The Sanhedrin hall, the judgment hall of Pilate and the balcony in front of his palace, and the palace of Herod. Persons, Christ, Pilate, Herod, the priests and Jewish people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Pilate's Question, Matt. 27:22. Shall Jesus be a stumbling block, 1 Cor. 1:23; and a rock of offense, 1 Pet. 2:8; Matt. 13:57. Shall He be forsaken, John 6:66; despised, Isa. 53:3; and rejected, John 19:15. Or shall He be our Saviour and Redeemer, Isa. 60:16; our High Priest, Heb. 4:14, 15; and Mediator, 1 Tim. 2:5; our Way, Truth and Life, John 14:6; our King, 1 Tim.

6:15; our Master, John 13:13; our Shepherd, John 10:14; our Friend, John 15:14, 15; our Elder Brother, Rom. 8:14-17; and our Resurrection and Life, John 11:25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Injustice and protracted suffering continued to be the marked features of Christ's trial. 2. Pilate and Herod both testified to His innocence. 3. Through a cowardly fear of the Jews, Pilate condemned Jesus and thus brought upon himself everlasting shame. 4. The blindness and fury of a mob was shown by the excited people who allowed themselves to be persuaded to choose Barabbas, a murderer, instead of Jesus, their best friend.

### THE REJECTED KING.

**Jesus on Trial.** In the early morning, following the trial of Jesus, the whole council was convened to ratify the action of the previous night and to determine how to win Pilate's consent to His death. Pilate was the Roman governor, and to him, in the early morning, the Jews conducted Christ.

Though their hearts were filled with hatred and murder, they would not enter the palace lest they should be defiled, and thus debarred from a participation in the sacrifices which were to be offered that day. They therefore sent a message to Pilate, asking that he listen to their charges upon the "Pavement." This pavement, which received its name from the beautiful and rare colored stones with which it was paved, was a raised balcony, where cases were sometimes heard. When Pilate appeared and seated himself in the chair of exquisitely carved white ivory, he looked down upon the sea of faces beneath him. There were the priests with their hard faces and the excited multitude which had been attracted by the arrest of this well-known Preacher and Healer.

In the midst of the throng, surrounded by guards, was the Prisoner, calm and unmoved by the turmoil about Him, and yet showing in His face the signs of the suffering through which He had passed. "What accusation do ye bring against this Man?" inquired Pilate.

"We found Him perverting our nation," replied the Jews, "and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that He, Himself, is Christ, a King."

While they spoke Jesus stood quietly and made no denial of their charges, so that Pilate wondered

at His silence. "Answerest Thou nothing?" he asked; "hearest Thou not how many things they witness against Thee?"

But still no word came from the Prisoner's lips. Then Pilate determined to examine Jesus privately, and commanding that He should be taken into the judgment hall, he went to Him there.

**Jesus Before Pilate.** "Thou! Art Thou the King of the Jews?" he asked incredulously, for this Man, in His peasant attire, did not look as if he were one to make arrogant claims.

"Sayest thou this of thyself," asked Jesus in reply, "or did others tell it thee concerning Me?" That is, "Do you personally wish to know about Me, or are you simply repeating the words of others?"

Jesus would make no reply to His unjust accusers, but He would not refuse to answer Pilate if he wished to know the truth. "Am I a Jew?" was Pilate's contemptuous reply; that is, "would I have any personal interest in the affairs of the Jews? Thine own nation and the chief priests delivered Thee unto me; what hast Thou done?"

Then Jesus, seeing Pilate's desire to give a just decision, said, "My Kingdom is not of this world; if my Kingdom were of this world then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My Kingdom not from hence."

How strange such words must have sounded to Pilate,—a Kingdom of another world! Why should he condemn a man for such a belief? "Art Thou a King, then?" he repeated.

"Thou sayest that I am a King" (or "I am indeed a King"), said Jesus. "To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the





## CHRIST BEFORE PILATE

BY MUNKACSY

Following His arrest, Jesus was taken to the high priest's palace and questioned by the officials. The multitude which followed always cried out against Him. They dragged Him before Pilate the governor, whose imperial commission came from Rome. As Pilate was not a Jew, and in no way understood the people's prejudice, his aim was to please the multitude, while still seeking to ease his conscience, because he was afraid of this wonderful Man and dared not be severe with Him. He could find no crime in the Saviour. But the insistence of the Jewish priests and elders, and clamor of the multitude convinced him that it would be easier to let them have their own way, so he finally delivered the Saviour to them to be crucified.

Munkacsy, the artist, has rendered this scene with greater actuality than any of those artists whose work we have been considering. In the governor's palace Pilate sits in the judgment seat. He is represented as an overfed animal, who seeks to avoid trouble for himself because lacking in energy. Surrounding the governor are the Jewish officials, one of them making an impassioned address condemning the holy prisoner; another sits on a bench with a very self-satisfied air, approving of the speaker's words and shutting his mouth with that determination which says the Christ must be crucified. Others to the right and left are listening attentively or attempting to get in a word for themselves. They are imposing men in the rich garments of their class. In the multitude are various manifestations of human nature: the soldier doing police duty, holding the crowd back with his spear; the bellowing, excited man, with his arms in the air to attract attention; next him a quiet youth, interested in the proceedings; and beyond these another points and shouts.

Immediately contrasting with the still figure of the Saviour a young man frantically lays hold of Christ's garments and insults Him boldly. The one bit of sweetness in all this hatred is the beautiful young mother, holding her babe, whose pity is excited. She knows nothing of the value of the evidence, but would love to spare the man Jesus all this unpleasant experience. Christ stands calm, erect and independent; saying nothing, but using His piercing eyes. The carpet on the floor suggests a palace; the massive walls have carvings and paintings suitable to the place.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





CHRIST BEFORE PILATE.

MIHALY DE MUNKACSY. 1844-1900.

At a village fair in Hungary a company of strolling artists from Vienna caught sight of some decorated wooden chests exposed for sale by the village carpenter. Plenty of such wedding chests and linen chests had they seen in their travel from one country fair to another, and all of them more or less decorated after the current fashion of the country side. But these were different—they had a style, a touch. Curiously they asked who the author was. They were presented to a young farmer lad: a tall, broad-shouldered son of the soil, with an ambition to become a successful tailor, a taste for gay society and Hungarian wine, and for dancing and trifling with the peasant maidens of the place.

"You should be a painter. You should go to Vienna and study," said the strolling artists. "Come with us and we will take you to Buda Pesth, and see you started." And so, a friendly uncle arranging for his release from his master, Mihaly Lieb left the village.

Here there came the round of small things: the drawing of pictures on wood for the block cutters who illustrated for the printers the small and cheap books of the country side; the occasional painting from life, in very oily oil, the coarse features of some well-to-do small merchant or back street money-lender; the painting of a tavern sign; the patching and repairing of a dilapidated altar piece for the church around the corner—all such occupations by which the budding painter keeps his head sheltered during his period of study and probation.

Presently, by dint of self-denial, he had saved enough money to go to Dusseldorf and put himself under the master Adolf Knaus. At last, though still poor, he determined to set up his own studio. Bold in color, unusual and strong in treatment, his work was attracting the notice, not all kindly, of the critics. It was now he conceived the idea of "The Condemned," a subject so large that he had not the money to buy the canvas to paint it on, and for

which, accordingly, he used the back of an old pew. Viewed by the Willstacks of Philadelphia before completion, it was forthwith purchased, and on its completion his patron insisted on its dispatch to the Paris Salon of 1870. Munkacsy did so with doubt, and fear of the fate of his picture at the hands of the critics. He knew them well enough to know their fear and hatred of anything unlike what they have been accustomed to praise. In a night he was famous. The picture had taken Paris by storm. From that day his fame was secure.

Finally purchased for \$6,000, "The Condemned" was brought to New York.

Munkacsy's work began to be sought for. He grew prosperous. He was distinguished with knighthood in the order of the Iron Cross of Austria, and was made a chevalier of the French Legion of Honor. Sketching on the Rhine, he met the Baroness de Marches. It was a case of a very sincere, deep and honorable attachment, the end of which was the painter's marriage to the baroness some time after the death of her husband.

Upon leaving his native village for the world outside, the artist had dropped his family name, and changing the Hungarian Mihaly to Michael, had adopted that of his native village as a *nom de guerre*. Now famous and wealthy, there was a reversion to the boyhood name, with the French "de," as signifying "of": Mihaly de Munkacsy.

Other famous paintings by Munkacsy owned in America are "Kittens," "The Village Wrestler," "Milton Dictating Paradise Lost," and perhaps more famous than any, "Christ Before Pilate," owned by Hon. John Wanamaker of Philadelphia.

His magnificent house in the Avenue de Villiers in Paris, where he lived in luxurious style, was known among the artistic coteries of Paris as a brilliantly furnished museum of rare objects of art and handicraft.

In 1900, on the first of May, the strange dramatic history of Munkacsy's life ended with his death at the age of 56.

JAMES BEALINGS.



world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth My voice.”

“The truth?” repeated Pilate. “What is truth?”

**Jesus Declared Innocent.** He left the only Man who could have answered his question without waiting for a reply, and going back to the balcony he spoke loudly, so that all might hear him. “I find no fault in this Man,” he said.

But the Jews were aroused to fiercer anger by his words. “He stirreth up the people,” they cried, “teaching throughout all Judea, and beginning from Galilee even unto this place.”

**Jesus Sent to Herod.** This answer suggested to Pilate a way by which he might escape condemning an innocent man to death. He therefore sent the Prisoner to Herod, the ruler of Galilee, but Jesus would neither answer his questions nor perform a miracle to gratify him. Enraged, Herod mocked and insulted Him, then sent Him back to Pilate.

**Christ or Barabbas.** Pilate now summoned the chief priests, rulers and people to appear once more before him and said unto them, “Ye brought unto me this Man, as One that perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined Him before you, found no fault in this Man touching those things whereof ye accuse Him; no, nor yet Herod; for he sent Him back unto us; and behold, nothing worthy of death hath been done by Him. I will therefore chastise Him and release Him.”

But loud cries of “Away with Him! He is worthy of death,” were the only responses he received. Another expedient now occurred to him by which he might avoid unjustly condemning Jesus to death. At the passover it was customary to release a prisoner, whomsoever the Jews might choose. A certain Barabbas, who had led an insurrection against the Romans and who was both a robber and a murderer, was at this time in prison. Knowing that the chief priests had delivered Jesus for envy, and thinking that their hatred might not be shared by the people, Pilate turned to them and asked, “Ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover, will ye, therefore, that I release unto you the King of the Jews?”

As Pilate asked the question, a servant appeared, bringing him a message from his wife. “Have thou nothing to do with that just Man,” she entreated him, “for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him.”

We do not know the cause of her interest in Jesus; perhaps she had heard of His acts of love and mercy; perhaps some dear friend of hers had been helped by Him, or possibly she, herself, had seen and heard Him. Her message affected Pilate deeply and he determined to save the life of the Prisoner.

But the momentary interruption had given the priests time to pass in and out among the people and to tell them to ask that Barabbas and not Jesus

be released. “Shall I release this Man unto you?” again asked Pilate.

“Not this Man,” cried the people, “but Barabbas.”

**Crucify Him.** “What shall I do then with Jesus, who is called the Christ?” asked Pilate.

Back came the awful answer, “Let Him be crucified.”

Then Pilate said unto them, “Why, what evil hath he done?”

But louder and more terrible became the cries, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!”

And he said unto them the third time, “Why, what evil hath this Man done? I have found no cause of death in Him; I will therefore chastise Him and release Him.”

But his plea for mercy was answered by shrieks and yells of rage, “Away with Him! Crucify Him!”

Fearing that a tumult would be the result of any further delay, Pilate reluctantly yielded to the demands of the people. But he determined to free himself from the guilt of this sentence, which he knew to be an unjust one. Summoning a servant, he had water brought and washing his hands in the sight of the multitude, he said, “I am innocent of the blood of this righteous Man; see ye to it.”

Then answered all the people and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

**Moments of Opportunity.** To Pilate came the opportunity to give a just decision. He might have been known to history as the one who saved Jesus from His enemies. Instead the words, “suffered under Pontius Pilate,” in the creed have made him known to all Christendom as the one who condemned Christ to death. He hoped to escape the guilt by washing his hands but as the power to judge and to give decisions was vested in him, he could not thus free himself from responsibility.

To Herod, also, came the opportunity of befriending Jesus, but instead of embracing it, he cruelly mocked Him.

The people were allowed to choose between Christ, who had spent His life in loving service for them, and Barabbas, a robber and murderer, and they chose the latter.

**Suggestive Words.** “What shall I do with Jesus?” This question each must answer for himself. Shall I take Him as my Saviour, or shall I grieve His loving heart by turning from Him with indifference, and refusing to be known as His follower. 2. “I am innocent of the blood of this righteous Man.” Not by words or symbolic act could Pilate escape guilt, nor can we free ourselves from responsibility by putting the blame upon others. We are given freedom of choice, and for our own acts, we, ourselves, and not others, will be held accountable. 3. “I find no fault in Him.” Even Christ’s judge testified to the purity of His life. 4. “His blood be on us and on our children.” The words were spoken in excitement and anger but how terribly have they been fulfilled! Forty years after this, the temple and city of these Jews were laid in ruins, amidst scenes of unparalleled horror, and more than a million of them perished. Since that time this nation has been without a country and its people have often been subjected to bitter hatred and cruel persecution.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# JESUS MOCKED.

And they



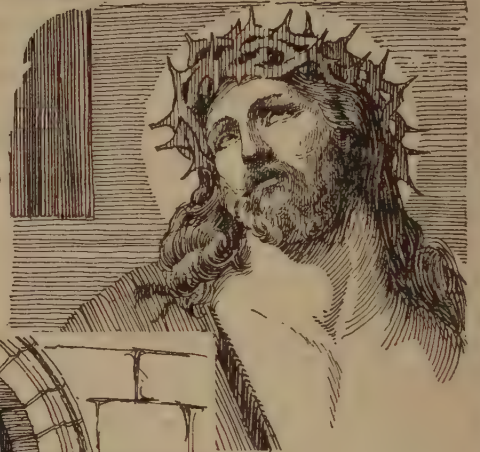
and



and



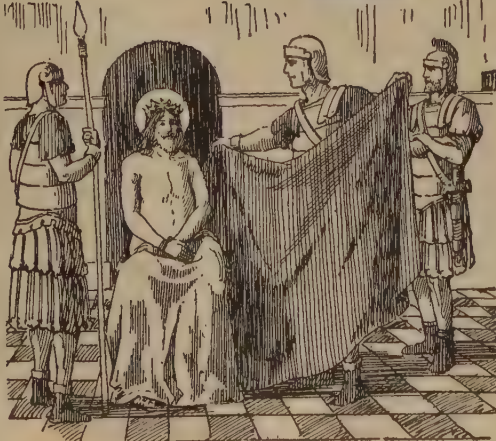
Then came  
Jesus forth,  
wearing



and the purple  
robe. And Pilate  
saith unto them,



And after that  
they had mocked  
him, they



from him, and  
put his own



and led him away to crucify him.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 27:26-31; MARK 15:15-20; LUKE 23:25; JOHN 19:1-16.

**Prayer:** We thank Thee, our Saviour, that the name of King, given Thee as a mockery and insult, is Thy true title. Be indeed King over our lives and may the knowledge of the suffering and indignities which Thou didst patiently endure for our sakes fill our hearts with such love and gratitude that we may ever be Thy loyal subjects. Amen.

"Oh Sacred Head, now wounded,  
With grief and shame bowed down,  
Now scornfully surrounded  
With thorns, Thine only crown.

What Thou, my Lord, hast suffered  
Was all for sinners' gain;  
Mine, mine was the transgression,  
But Thine the deadly pain."

J. W. Alexander, tr.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, from 7 till 8 a. m. Place, the judgment-hall and "pavement," or balcony, of Pilate's palace. Persons, Christ, Pilate, the chief priests and Jewish multitude, and the Roman soldiers.

**Scripture Setting:** Sharing Christ's Suffering. For His sake, Mark 13:9, 12, 13. The Apostles, Acts 5:18, 40, 41; Peter, Acts 12:3-6; James, Acts 12:2; Stephen, Acts 7:57-60. The early Christians. Acts 8:1, 3; Paul, Acts 13:50; 14:5, 19; 16:22-25; 21:13-31; 22:23; 2 Cor. 11:23-27. The saints, Rev. 7:14. Our privilege, Heb. 13:13; 1 Pet. 4:12-14; Rom. 8:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Christ patiently endured even the awful scourging that He might taste all human woes. Paul and others who endured this punishment could say

"No pain that we can share  
But He has felt its smart."

2. The mockery and insult grieved Christ more from the awful depravity of the Roman soldiers, which they revealed, than from the physical pain they caused Him. 3. Christ's sufferings touched Pilate with pity, but awoke no sympathy in the hearts of His countrymen. 4. "Ecce Homo," the Man stands forth an object of indifference, hatred or scorn, or One who awakens passionate love and adoration. 5. "The Son of God" He had called Himself and never was He more truly God's Son than when He suffered for others all these indignities and insults for man's redemption. 6. The Jews made a final rejection of Christ and took upon themselves the awful guilt of His death.

### THE THORN-CROWNED KING.

**The Scourging.** Failing in his different attempts to save his Prisoner, Pilate finally yielded to the demands of the Jews. He released Barabbas, who, as St. Luke tells us, for sedition and murder was cast into prison, and delivered Jesus to the will of His enemies. Before crucifixion, a prisoner was subjected to scourging. So terrible was this punishment that it was called "the intermediate death," and the Roman law forbade its being inflicted upon a Roman citizen. As Jesus endured this awful suffering, Pilate sat looking on, and the majesty of demeanor and patient submission of the victim must have impressed even his callous nature.

**The Crown of Thorns.** After the scourging, Jesus was taken into the Praetorium, or hall of judgment, where the whole band of Roman soldiers was gathered. Here, recalling Herod's treatment, they made mock of the title which had been given Him. "A King is He," they cried, "let us array Him as such."

The scarlet cloak of one of the officers was thrown about His bleeding shoulders and He was led to a raised place and made to sit upon this improvised throne. "Now He must have a crown," cried the brutal soldiers.

One of them cut some long twigs from a jagged thorn that grew in the palace garden and twined them into a wreath. This he put

upon Jesus' head, pressing the cruel thorns into His brow. Another brought a reed and placed it in His hands for a sceptre. Then, one by one, the soldiers knelt before Him in mock reverence, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews," and as each one rose from his knees, he took the reed and struck Jesus on the head, driving the thorns deeper into His brow, or he spat in His face, the others laughing and jeering to see the Prisoner thus mocked. And Jesus bore all this pain and insult in silence, nay, more than this, we feel sure that instead of being angry with those cruel, wicked men, He prayed His Father to forgive them, for in Jesus' heart there was always love and not hate.

"**Ecce Homo.**" After the soldiers had carried on their brutal play for some time, Pilate entered the room and seeing Jesus, pale, covered with blood and bowed from the scourging, he thought, "Surely even His enemies will think that He has borne enough suffering." Once more, therefore, he went out on the "Pavement," and said, "Behold, I bring Him out to you that ye may know that I find no fault in Him."

He motioned to the soldiers, and Jesus was led forth. About His shoulders was the scarlet cloak, while the cruel crown of thorns pressed His brow and the reed, the mock insignia of royalty, was in His hands. His form was bowed from the terrible scourging

but in His face no anger or resentment could be traced; only patient suffering, and pity for those who had so cruelly treated Him. "Ecce Homo" ("Behold, the Man"), said the governor, pointing to Jesus.

But the only response was the awful cry, "Crucify! crucify!"

"But I find no fault in Him," reiterated Pilate.

"We have a law, and by that law He ought to die," shouted the multitude, "because He made Himself the Son of God."

**The Son of God.** At these words Pilate trembled, for the Romans believed that the gods did sometimes come down in the likeness of men. Had he not hesitated to condemn this man as he had never hesitated before? Had not his wife been warned in a dream concerning Him? He returned to the palace and ordered Jesus brought before him. "Who art Thou?" he eagerly asked. "Whence didst Thou come?"

But no answer came from those pale lips. Irritated, Pilate exclaimed, "Wilt Thou not speak? Knowest Thou not that I have power to release Thee or to crucify Thee?"

Then answered Jesus, "Thou wouldst have no power against Me except it were given thee from above: therefore they that delivered Me unto thee have the greater sin."

**The Final Rejection.** This reply troubled Pilate greatly, and again he sought to free this remarkable Prisoner, but the raging mob would listen to no appeal for mercy. "If thou release this Man," they shouted, "thou art not Caesar's friend; everyone that maketh himself a King speaketh against Caesar."

When he heard that his own interests were at stake Pilate hesitated. The Jews had complained of him once before, and Tiberius Caesar had taken their part. Another complaint and he might lose his office. This Man's freedom surely was not worth such a risk. Taking his seat on the balcony, he ordered Jesus brought before him. Pointing to the pitiable figure he said, "Behold your King."

"Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" came the fiendish cries.

"Shall I crucify your King?" inquired the governor.

"We have no king but Caesar," was the reply of the chief priests.

Then the unjust judgment was pronounced and Jesus was delivered to the Jews to be crucified.

**Illustrations.** At the "World in Boston," I heard Miss Emily Wheeler, a missionary from Turkey, tell of an experience she had during the persecution of the Christians in that country. I give the incident in her own words as nearly as I can recall them. "As I was passing through the streets," she said, "a woman spit full in my face. The act was so unprovoked and so insulting that my hands clenched until the nails cut into my palms, drawing the blood. I could hardly wait to reach home to wash away the marks of this gross insult. Then the thought came to me, 'Thus was my Saviour treated,—so they spat upon Him.' And my hands unclenched and I rejoiced that I was found worthy to share His sufferings."

One of the features of Jesus' trial that impressed me most at the Passion Play, at Oberammergau, was its length. One realized from those terrible scenes how protracted was the agony; Gethsemane, the examination of Annas, the examination before the Sanhedrin, the mocking and insults of the Jewish guard, the examination by Pilate, the questioning and mocking by Herod, the second appearance before Pilate, the scourging by the Roman soldiers and their brutal insults and at last the pronouncing of the sentence. As I sat and saw all this portrayed, the words that rang ever in my ears were: "For my sake, for my sake; He suffered all this for me." And I longed, as never before, to show my gratitude by service to Him.

Anna Shipton tells of a suffering Christian woman who, shrinking from a prospect of prolonged anguish, had a vision in which there appeared to be a minute crown twined here and there with thorns, and by its side one composed wholly of large acanthus spines, such as probably composed the wreath of painful mockery pressed on the Saviour's brow. "I thought," said she, "some One seemed to say, 'I wore this for thee,' pointing to the large, heavy crown; 'wear this for Me.'" Ever after she meekly endured her sufferings.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Describe the Roman scourging. 2. What disciple endured it? 3. What leader in the Crusades refused to wear a crown in the city where his Master had been crowned with thorns? 4. Mention some great pictures which show Christ crowned with thorns and give the names of their artists. 5. What was Pilate's end? 6. Give a passage of Scripture which foretells Christ's sufferings. 7. For whom were they endured?

**Practical Truths.** 1. "A flower has been discovered in South America, which is only visible when the wind blows; it is of the species cactus and, when stirred by the wind, a number of beautiful flowers protrude from the little lumps on the stalk. So in these trials of Jesus are brought out His noble nature, His love, His patience, faith, and hope."—Peloubet. 2. In His suffering Christ fulfilled the prophecies given in Isa. 50:6 and 53:3-7, and thus proved Himself the promised Messiah. 3. In Handel's great oratorio, "The Messiah," the chorus, "All we like sheep," gives a light note in the midst of the awful tragedy, so does the indifference of those for whom He died add to the sorrows of our Saviour. 4. The Jews chose Caesar rather than Christ for their King, so do we choose wealth, power, influence, and give to these the allegiance due to Him.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.





## BEARING THE CROSS

BY LUDWIG THIERSCH

In many parts of the Orient where the punishment of crucifixion was common it was considered proper that the condemned should bear his own cross to the place of execution. Some of the sacred writers speak of Christ as the Cross Bearer.

The artist Thiersch pictures the Saviour as falling in the road, overcome with fatigue and the weight of this heavy structure. In the illustration we see the hill of Calvary in the distance, where previously used crosses were left standing.

Seen through a little gap in the principal group are the two thieves crucified with Christ, with their hands bound behind their backs. But Christ's hands are free, and His hand is extended toward His sympathetic followers. He still wears the cruel crown of thorns and about His waist is the cord which bound the cross to Him. An executioner holds the cord ready for the new fastening, while another raises the weighted frame from him. An officer also lends a helping hand. There is a hammer in the waistband of one of the executioners—a suggestive instrument. Two priests stand in the foreground, one of them pointing to Calvary and ordering that the journey proceed at once. There are soldiers in armor, one of them mounted. Another savagely pushes back a pretty woman who moves up too closely because of her sympathy. Women with children represent the sympathy and tenderness of their sex in contrast with the savagery of the men. They are doubtless Christ's followers, and play their parts in the events following the execution, as we may read in the Scriptures.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





BEARING THE CROSS.

## LUDWIG THIERSCH. 1825.

Born in Munich, during the full sway of the great classic tradition of painting, which in France was represented by David, and in Germany by Winterhalter, Ludwig Thiersch represents a survival of the "grand manner" in painting. The academic impressiveness of Thiersch's style has been amplified if anything, by the fact that the major part of his work, and the most important, has been in fresco painting for the decoration of great churches.

During his studentship, a group of great German artists were bringing to a successful conclusion a series of researches and experiments, designed to establish anew the principles and practice of true fresco painting. True fresco, contrary to the popular idea—which dignifies every application of paint to a wall surface with the name of fresco—is properly the title of but one mode of work. This consists in the preparation of the wall surface to the last coat of plaster. And then, as much of the last coat being spread at a time as the painter can cover in his day's work, the painter, with his colors mixed with water and the substance of the plaster in greater or less degree, paints directly on the wet plaster. The colors, sinking into the moist surface, become, with the setting of the plaster, locked

up in it, and the design in all its dignified splendor, becomes an integral part of the wall itself.

Studying at the Munich Academy, first in sculpture under Schwanthaler, and then in painting under Heinrich Hess, Schnorr, and Karl Schorn, Ludwig Thiersch found himself interested deeply in this revival of the most monumental mode of painting. To perfect his knowledge at the fountain head of true fresco painting, he went to Rome; and in 1852 to Athens, where, commissioned by the Russian government, he painted a series of frescos in the church of St. Nicodemus based upon his work and research in the Eternal City.

In 1855, Thiersch came to Vienna, where he executed a similar commission in the Greek Church. In 1860, he went to St. Petersburg, where he decorated the chapels of the Grand Dukes Nicholas and Michael, and the Protestant Church of Saint Catharine. His easel pictures include a "Sakuntala" (1848), "The Raising of Jairus' Daughter" (1864), "Christ at Gethsemane" (1865), "Christ at the Pool of Bethesda," "The Temptation," "Christ in the Desert" (1874), "St. Paul Preaching" (1865), "Alaric Victor in Athens" (1879), and "Bearing the Cross."

JAMES BEALINGS.





And he

went forth into  
a place called  
the place of



which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they



and



with him, on  
either side one,  
and Jesus



And



wrote  
a  
title,  
and



And the writing was, **JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.**



The Jews therefore,  
because it was the  
preparation, that  
the bodies should  
not remain upon

on the sabbath day,  
(for that sabbath  
day was an high day,



that their legs  
might be broken,  
and that they  
might be taken  
away. Then



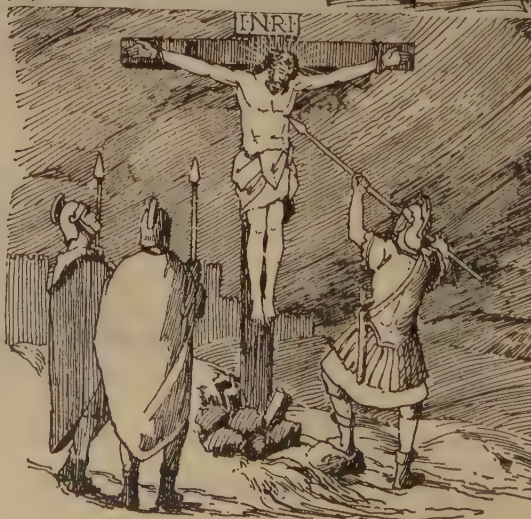
and



of  
the  
first,  
and  
of



which was crucified  
with him. But when  
they came to Jesus, and  
saw that he was dead  
already, they brake  
not his legs: But



and forthwith came  
there out blood and water.





## THE CRUCIFIXION

BY MUNKACSY

This picture follows Munkacsy's scene of Christ before Pilate, and a number of the characters are the same in this as in that picture. There is a group of disciples who had dared to gather about the dying Saviour at the moment of His agony. The two Marys are plainly indicated. A man with a ladder and a hatchet, who evidently has been busy with the execution, looks scornfully at the women, and he was in the other picture; also the excited boy who takes an attitude is here again. A group of priests turn homeward, still discussing the event. The soldiers look back at the work they have helped to do and manifest a cold-blooded interest in it. The centurion has mounted his horse to retire from the scene. The agony of Christ and the miserable thieves, sharing His fate, would move the stoutest heart. Some are railing at the holy sacrifice and some are weeping over their loss of a loving guide and teacher. There is darkness overspreading the sky, as the Scripture relates.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE CRUCIFIXION





# JESUS CRUCIFIED.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT.27:31-56; MARK 15:20-41; LUKE 23:26-49; JOHN 19:17-30.

**Prayer:** We thank Thee, Heavenly Father, that Thou didst so love the world that Thou gavest Thine only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but should have everlasting life. Help us to take Him for our Saviour and may our lives, purchased at so great a price, be used wholly in His service. In His name and for His sake we ask it. Amen.

"There is a green hill far away,  
Without a city wall,  
Where the dear Lord was crucified,  
Who died to save us all.  
We may not know, we cannot tell  
What pains He had to bear;  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, from 9 a. m. to 3 p. m. Place, Calvary (Golgotha), just outside the city of Jerusalem, probably on the north. Persons, Christ, the centurion and Roman soldiers, the priests and Jewish multitude, Mary and other women, John.

**Scripture Setting:** Prophecy concerning Christ's death fulfilled. Death foretold by prophets, Isa. 53:8; Dan. 9:26. Death foretold by Self, Matt. 20:19; John 3:14; 12:23, 24, 32, 33. Pierced hands and feet, Psa. 22:16. Numbered with transgressors, Isa. 53:12. Raiment divided by lot, Psa. 22:18. Bitter drink, Psa. 69:21. Stared at, scorned and mocked, Psa. 22:7, 8, 17; 109:25. Surrounded by enemies, Psa. 22:16. Darkness over earth, Amos 8:9. Cry of despair, Psa. 22:1. Last words, Psa. 31:5. True character made manifest through death, John 8:28. Universal salvation purchased by death, John 12:32.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Through the unspeakable suffering and base ignominy of a death on the cross Christ paid the price of sin and brought salvation to all the world. 2. Forgiving those who were inflicting upon Him the pains of death, He has given us a wonderful example of forgiveness. 3. From His promise to the thief we may know that no cry for pardon is ever unanswered by Him. 4. To Him came even the horror of separation from His Father that we may learn to trust even in darkness. 5. His work was "finished" and our pardon assured if we believe that He died for us. 6. His last words showed the confidence with which a Christian may approach death and give himself into his Father's keeping. 7. The temple veil was rent in twain because the way into the Holy Place was opened by Christ, and God can now be approached freely and at all times through Him.

### THE PRICE OF SALVATION.

**The Via Dolorosa.** After the sentence of death was pronounced upon Christ, the scarlet robe and crown of thorns were taken off and He was clothed in His own garments. The heavy cross was laid upon His shoulders because a cruel Roman law required a prisoner to bear his own cross. Preceded by a centurion, surrounded by a guard of four soldiers and accompanied by two thieves, similarly guarded, who, also, were to be crucified, Jesus was led forth to His terrible death. The place of crucifixion was outside the city gate, at no great distance, but the long hours of sleeplessness and torture had so worn upon Christ that the burden of the cross was greater than He could bear. He stumbled and fell, and even his brutal guards recognized the fact that He could not complete the journey thus burdened. They, therefore, compelled a stranger, Simon, of Cyrene, who was just entering the city, to carry the cross for the exhausted Prisoner.

As the party slowly proceeded on its way, crowds of people followed it. Many were attracted by an idle curiosity to see the end of so noted a Preacher; others, through hatred, desired to witness His cruel death, but some went along that road, which for His sake has ever since been called the Via Dolorosa (Way of Sorrow), with hearts filled with love and wrung by pity. There were women whom he had comforted, whose

sick He had healed and whose children He had blessed. These sobbed aloud in their grief and agony over His suffering. The sound of their weeping came to His ears, and turning to them, He said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me but weep for yourselves and your children." Then He foretold the doom which hung over the city and His prophecy was soon terribly fulfilled.

The place of crucifixion was a small knoll, shaped like a skull and hence called Golgotha\* (Hebrew for skull). To ease the sufferings of those condemned to die this awful death, the women of Jerusalem prepared a drink of wine mingled with a powerful narcotic drug which somewhat dulled the sense of pain. This was offered to Christ, but though He tasted it to show His recognition of the kindness, He heroically refused to drink it, for He wished to have clear faculties and alert powers in order to pay to the full the price of sin.

After the Prisoner was nailed to the cross, the heavy vertical beam was sunk into the hole prepared for it. In the midst of the indescribable suffering which this must have caused Him, Christ's lips parted and a prayer came from them—not for relief from suffering nor for strength to bear His pain. No, there was no thought of self in this first utterance. Instead it was of others He thought, even of those who were so cruelly treating Him. "Father, forgive them," He prayed, "for they know not what they do."

**The Superscription.** It was customary to place above the cross a white tablet, stating the crime for which the prisoner died. To

\*In Latin the word is "calvaria," from which comes our English Calvary.

revenge himself upon the Jewish leaders who had compelled him to condemn this Man to death, Pilate, in bitter irony, had ordered written upon His tablet, "The King of the Jews," in Latin, the language of the Romans, in Greek, that of the foreigners and visitors; and in Hebrew, that of the Jews. When this superscription was placed over the cross, the chief priests were greatly offended and they hastened to Pilate and remonstrated with him. "Write not, 'The King of the Jews,'" they said, "but that He said, 'I am the King of the Jews'."

But Pilate would not yield to their demands. "What I have written, I have written," he replied. And so Christ's Kingship was proclaimed in the languages of religion, culture and power.

**The Spectators.** Beneath the cross of Jesus the four soldiers, who composed His guard, divided His garments among them, casting lots as to which portion each soldier should have, and especially as to whom the seamless robe should belong, thus fulfilling the ancient prophecy. (Psa. 22:18). Now to the tortures of burning thirst and raging fever were added the insults of the spectators. Those who passed to and from the city, on the thoroughfare that lay near the place of crucifixion, cried in mockery, "A King is He! Let Him now show His power!"

Those who had witnessed the trial, remembering the accusation, exclaimed, "Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save Thyself: if Thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross." How little these realized that the Divine Sufferer was even then fulfilling the true meaning of His words.

The chief priests and scribes added their insulting words. "He saved others; can He not save Himself? Let Christ, the King of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe."

At each side of Him hung one of the thieves, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "He was numbered with the transgressors (Isa. 53:12), and even one of these men joined in the mocking cries. But the other rebuked him, saying, "Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss." And to Jesus he said, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy Kingdom." And Jesus said unto him, "Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." We love to know that in the midst of His terrible suffering the Saviour had the joy of welcoming this poor sinner to His Kingdom.

Near the cross there were many women who had loved and followed Jesus. Looking down He saw among these His mother, overcome by grief at His

suffering, and near her the disciple whom He so dearly loved. A smile of infinite tenderness lit up His white face as He said, "Woman, behold thy son." And to John he entrusted her with the words, "Behold thy mother."

**The Hours of Darkness.** At noon, after Christ had endured three hours of agony, a strange darkness came over the sky, which seemed to indicate the horror of nature at the awful scene which was being enacted. This darkness seemed to descend into Christ's very soul, shutting Him off even from communion with His Father, a communion that had been unbroken throughout His entire life. "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? (My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?) He cried aloud in His agony.

"He calleth Elias," said the crowd, "let us see whether he will come to help Him."

Then, "I thirst," came from those parched lips and a soldier, kinder than the others, dipped the sponge, which corked his bottle, into his own wine and lifting it on a reed, gave it to Christ to drink.

**"It is Finished."** Then with a loud voice Jesus cried, "It is finished," and with the sweet consciousness of His Father's presence once more restored to Him, He added, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." Thus did the purest soul and bravest spirit that ever blessed our earth heroically meet His death.

Once more nature revealed her horror at this awful crime that had been perpetrated. A great earthquake shook the earth and brake in pieces large rocks, the graves were opened and from them later the dead came forth. In the temple the great veil was rent from top to bottom, revealing the Holy of Holies, which no one but the high priest might enter, and even he only once a year. The way into the Holy Place was now opened to all through the Saviour's death.

The watchers on Calvary smote their breasts in fear and even the Roman centurion, dropping to his knees, exclaimed in awe, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

**Practical Truths.** 1. By His death on the cross Christ finished the work of redemption, and salvation becomes ours if we will but accept it. 2. He suffered the agonies of thirst that we may partake of the water of life freely. 3. Wicked men, in heaping insults upon Jesus, only fulfilled the prophecies of Scripture and proved Him the promised Messiah; thus does God cause even the wrath of men to praise Him. 4. Through the atonement of the cross God can fulfil His law that the soul that sinneth, it must die and yet save the sinner who through faith dies in Christ. 5. In no other way could God's love for us and His hatred of sin have been so clearly shown. 6. Having given us His Son shall we doubt that the Father will give us freely all other blessings? 7. Christ's love, as shown in His death, should call forth our deepest gratitude. "Thou gavest Thy life for me, what can I give to Thee?" should be the prayer of our hearts.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# THE BURIAL OF JESUS.

When the even was come, there came a rich



of Arimathæa,  
named Joseph,  
who also  
himself  
was Jesus'  
disciple: He



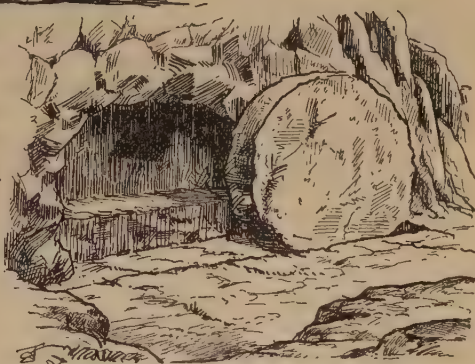
and begged the  
body of Jesus.  
Then Pilate  
commanded  
the body to be  
delivered. And  
when Joseph had



he



in a clean  
linen  
cloth, And  
laid it  
in his  
own new



which he had hewn out in the rock: and he



and departed.  
And there was  
Mary Magdalene,  
and the other Mary,



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 27:57-66; MARK 15:42-47; LUKE 23:50-56; JOHN 19:31-42.

**Prayer:** We thank Thee, Heavenly Father that because Thy dear Son rose triumphant from the grave, we may know, when we lay our loved ones to rest, that the power of death is destroyed. We rejoice that no watching guard nor imperial seal was strong enough to prevent the carrying out of Thy plans. Help us to realize even in our hours of darkness that Thy loving guidance directs all our ways. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

"He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to Heaven,  
Saved by His precious blood.  
There was no other good enough  
To pay the price of sin;  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of Heaven, and let us in."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time, Friday, April 7, A. D. 30, between 3 and 6 p. m. Place, on and near Calvary. Persons, Christ, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, women, Pilate, the chief priests, the Roman centurion and soldiers.

**Scripture Setting:** Ancient thoughts of the grave, Job 7:9; Ps. 6:5; 49:14; 88:5; Eccles. 9:10; Isa. 38:18. Contact brought defilement, Num. 19:16. Hope of righteous, Ps. 49:15. Promise of victory. Hos. 13:14. Christ's power over, prophesied, John 5:28. Revealed, John 11:43, 44. Paul's song of triumph, 1 Cor. 15:51-57.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** The special features of this story are: (1) The fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the body of Christ. (2) The burial by Joseph and Nicodemus, which involved the disgrace of their being known as disciples of the Nazarene. (3) The interment in a new tomb which prevented any doubt as to the identity of the body. (4) The guard set by the Pharisees and the sealing of the stone, which caused the fact of Christ's resurrection to be known to both the Romans and the Jewish leaders.

### THE LAST OFFICES OF FRIENDS AND THE LAST PRECAUTIONS OF FOES.

**The Passover Ceremonies.** The second day of the passover was even more sacred than the first, for then the "wavesheaf" was offered to the Lord. As the sun went down the previous evening three men reaped a sheaf of barley. The corn was then threshed out, parched and ground, and on the second paschal day this flour, mixed with oil and frankincense, was waved before the Lord. It was a joyous ceremony and there must be nothing to mar it.

The Jewish law ordered that the body of a criminal should not be left hanging over night, lest the land be defiled. The chief priests, who had not hesitated to put to death a just Man—One in whom Pilate had found no guilt—were scrupulous about the letter of the law. They went, therefore, to the governor and begged that the bodies of the crucified men might be removed from the crosses before their Sabbath began. According to Roman custom such bodies remained upon the crosses until devoured by birds of prey, but Pilate yielded to the request of the chief priests and sent soldiers to dispatch the criminals.

**Prophecy Fulfilled.** With a heavy wooden mallet the legs of the two thieves were broken and death at once resulted. But when the soldier came to Jesus, he found that He was already dead, so no bone was broken of that perfect form. When the Jews were told how they should eat the paschal lamb, on the night before their departure from Egypt, they were bidden to break no bone, nor was a bone broken of the "Lamb

of God who taketh away the sin of the world," and thus was the prophecy fulfilled which said, "He keepeth all His bones: not one of them is broken (Psa. 34:20).

But the soldier, to assure himself of Christ's death, thrust his spear into His side, thus once more fulfilling prophecy (Zech. 12:10). Out from the wound there flowed both blood and water. Some have thought from this that Christ died literally of a broken heart. Whether this be true or not, we know that it was the burden of sin—our sins as well as those of His murderers—that caused His death.

And the water and blood which then flowed forth may well typify the expiation and sanctification which He died to purchase for us. St. John, who tells us of this incident, dwells upon its meaning (1 John 5:6-8), and our two sacraments of Baptism and Communion commemorate it.

**Joseph's Request.** In the Sanhedrin there was a certain Joseph of Arimathea, a man of wealth and position, both just and good in character. He had secretly believed in Jesus but had never had the courage to openly profess his faith, because of the decree that all followers of the Nazarene should be put out of the synagogue. He had not consented, however, to the counsel of the Jews and we like to believe that he had endeavored to avert the doom imposed upon Jesus.

As he witnessed Christ's awful death, he found the courage which he had hitherto lacked, and going to Pilate, whom perhaps





## CHRIST BORNE TO THE TOMB

BY ANTONIO CISERI

After Christ's death, as the Sabbath was approaching and it was not well that the body of Jesus should hang on the cross, a man of position and rank, named Joseph of Arimathæa, and a secret follower of Jesus, went to Pilate and begged the body. He wrapped it in linen and they bore it to a tomb belonging to Joseph. This was a new tomb never used before and it was hewn from the solid rock.

The Italian artist, Ciseri, has made a most effective group of the disciples bearing the body. We may see John, a handsome young man, and Mary Magdalene with disordered hair, and Mary the mother of James, and the mother of Zebedee's children, and Joseph of Arimathæa who begged Pilate for the body, and Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night. All are sad-faced as they bear their burden along. This is one of the most beautiful compositions in this series and the feeling of grief and despair is forcefully rendered.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON



CHRIST BORNE TO THE TOMB.







he had first propitiated by a rich gift, he begged the body of Jesus. "Is He already dead?" asked Pilate in surprise. Not content with the assurance of Joseph that this was indeed true, he called the centurion and had the report confirmed by him. He then granted Joseph's request and the latter hastened back to the cross.

**Nicodemus' Help.** Nicodemus was another man who had not been brave enough to acknowledge Christ openly. We remember how he had gone to Jesus secretly by night and told Him that he knew that He was a Teacher come from God. And then had followed that wonderful conversation about the new birth of which St. John tells us (chap. 3). Nicodemus had asked in the Sanhedrin if it were lawful to judge Christ before He was given a hearing and for this question he had been accused of being a disciple (John 7:50-52). Now, like Joseph, he longed to do for the dead what he had not done for the living, so while Joseph was obtaining Pilate's permission to bury the body, he brought spices to embalm it and fine linen cloth in which it might be wrapped.

Tenderly was the Saviour lifted from the cross and the cruel nails taken from the feet, which had gone about the country day after day in loving service to the people, and from the hands, which had wrought so many deeds of kindness and healing. The wounds were washed and the body wrapped in the pure white cloths which had been sprinkled with the spices.

It is thought by some that John had taken Jesus' mother to his own home immediately after she had been commended to his care. But painters and sculptors have agreed in thinking that Mary remained on Calvary until the end, and in Reuben's wonderful painting, "The Descent from the Cross," Angelo's exquisitely carved "Pieta," and other masterpieces, we see her near her Son or holding Him once more in her arms.

But there were not many who followed the body to its resting place—only Joseph and Nicodemus, a few women and perhaps some of the disciples. He who had wept with those who mourned and, more than once had called their dead back to life, was forgotten by the people when death claimed Him.

**The New Tomb.** Joseph had a large garden, not far from Calvary, where the spring flowers were at their loveliest and where beautiful trees cast restful shadows. Hither, with the help of the others who loved Him, Joseph brought the body of our Lord, and

laid it in a new tomb which he had built for himself. Leaving more careful embalming to be done later, they rolled a large stone before the entrance of the tomb. These friends had had to perform these last sad rites with haste, for the Sabbath began at six o'clock, after which no work could be done. Indeed, by touching the dead body, they had made themselves unclean, so they could have no part in the passover sacrifice and feasting. But their hearts were too sad to care for that. Was this indeed the end? Were all the hopes they had cherished really buried in the tomb with their Lord and Master? Such questions must have filled their minds as sadly they took their way back to the city.

**The Sealed Stone.** But, though forgotten by His friends, words of Christ's were recalled by His enemies. Hastening to Pilate, the chief priests and Pharisees said: "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, 'After three days I will rise again.' Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say unto the people, 'He is risen from the dead'; so the last error shall be worse than the first."

Pilate was tired of the whole matter and answered them with impatience, "You have a guard; go, make it as sure as you can." So, taking the guard, they hurriedly went to the garden. There they sealed the stone with the imperial seal, which it was death to break and left the soldiers to guard the grave. Thus again unwittingly did they carry out God's plans and make the fact of the resurrection known to both Jews and Gentiles.

**Quiz.** 1. What prophecies were fulfilled by Gentiles in this story? 2. Tell of a great Gentile king who was an instrument in carrying out God's plans for His people. 3. Give instances of those who, like Joseph and Nicodemus, have been braver in hours of trial and danger than at other times. 4. Tell of some great pictures or sculptures, other than those mentioned, which describe Christ's descent from the cross or His entombment. 5. Describe an oriental tomb. 6. How did the action of the chief priests in setting a guard help to affirm the truth of the resurrection? 7. What other stone, mentioned in the Bible, was sealed with a king's signet?

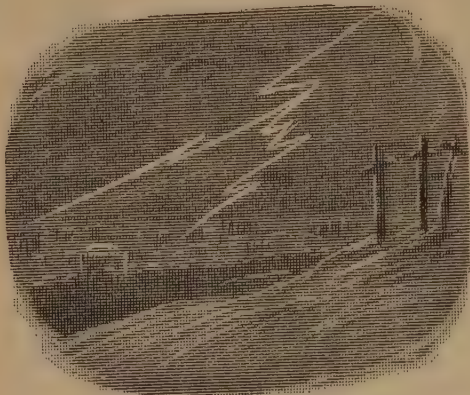
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Let us ever guard against having our religion one of form rather than of spirit. 2. The Jewish leaders endeavored to prevent the spreading of a report of Christ's resurrection but instead they helped to establish the proofs of its truth; evil men cannot prevent the fulfillment of God's plans. 3. How little the Roman soldiers appreciated the importance of their watch; so seemingly trivial duties may accomplish a great purpose. 4. Let us treat our friends with the same love and tenderness in life that we would show them in death. 5. The grief and overwhelming sorrow of Jesus' friends and followers were succeeded by joy greater than they had ever known, so our own affliction worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# JESUS RISEN.

His countenance was like



and  
his



white as snow: And for fear of him the



did  
shake,  
and  
became  
as



And the angel answered and said unto the



—•—  
Fear not  
ye: for I  
know  
that ye  
seek  
Jesus,  
which was  
crucified.  
He is not  
here: for  
he is  
risen, as  
he said.  
Come,  
—†—



where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

MATT. 28:3-8.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 28:1-15; MARK 16:1-8; LUKE 24:1-11.

**Prayer:** We thank Thee, O living Saviour, that Thou didst forever rob death of its sting and the grave of its victory. We bless Thee for the great proof which the resurrection gives us that Thou art indeed the Son of God. And now, having vanquished death, wilt Thou not free us from the power of evil also, so that we, being dead to sin, may live unto righteousness. Amen.

"Christ, the Lord, is risen to-day,  
Sons of men, and angels say;  
Raise your joys and triumphs high!  
Sing, ye heavens! and earth, reply!

"Vain the stone, the watch, the seal;  
Christ hath burst the gates of hell;  
Death in vain forbids Him rise;  
Christ hath opened Paradise."

—Charles Wesley.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30, at early dawn. Place, near Calvary. Persons, the Roman guard, two angels, the women and the disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Resurrection of Christ. Foretold in prophecy, Psa. 16:10. Foretold by Himself, Matt. 16:21; 20:19; Mark 8:31; 9:31; Luke 9:22; 18:33. Basis of Apostles' preaching and teaching, Acts 1:22; 2:24, 32; 3:15; 4:10; 10:40-43; 13:30-39; 17:31; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12. Resurrection of man foretold by prophets, Job 19:26; Psa. 17:15; Dan 12:2. Taught by Christ, Luke 14:14; John 5:28, 29. Preached by Apostles, Acts 4:2; 17:18; 24:15; Rom. 6:5; 8:11; 1 Cor. 15; Phil. 3:21; 1 Thes. 4:14-17; 2 Pet. 1:11; 1 John 3:2. The moral resurrection, Rom. 4:24, 25; 8:11; Col. 2:12, 13; 3:1-3.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The great central truth of this lesson is the resurrection of Christ. The actual death of Christ was a necessary basis for the reality of the resurrection. (a) His death

is proven by the spear, the spices, the sepulchre, the stone, the seal, the soldiers. (b) His resurrection is proven by the broken seal, the rolled away stone, the empty sepulchre, the discarded shroud, the terrified soldiers, the shining seraphs, the women's story, and the living Saviour. 2. Even the soldiers' wonderful story could not convince the hardened hearts of the chief priests of Christ's Divinity. Having compassed His death by deceit and lies, they attempted to conceal the fact of His resurrection by falsehood. 3. As angels announced the birth of Christ so again they came to tell that He had conquered death. 4. The tender love, which brought the women early to the tomb to perform the last sad rites for their dead Master, was rewarded by a vision of angels and by the first annunciation of the risen Lord. 5. The joy that filled their own hearts the women were eager to share with Christ's sorrowing disciples, but lack of faith prevented the latter from accepting the comfort their message might have given.

### THE FIRST EASTER MORNING.

**The Second Paschal Day.** On the Jewish Sabbath, which followed the burial of Jesus, the second day of the passover was joyously celebrated. The priests wore their richest robes, the silver trumpets were blown, the choruses sang their loud anthems of joy, while sacrifices were offered upon the altar.

Meantime the disciples of the crucified Nazarene spent the day in weeping and fasting, for their Lord was dead and buried. They did not believe Him an imposter, as did the chief priests; instead, they still thought Him the Son of God and expected to meet Him in Heaven, or possibly they looked forward to His coming again in glory at the end of the world. But they had entirely failed to grasp the meaning of his oft repeated words that He would rise again from the dead, and their hearts were sad and lonely.

Perhaps they met together in that upper room where they had partaken with Him of the passover and had heard His last loving words and His prayer for them. There they recalled the wonderful days they had spent with Him, and they talked of His acts of mercy and healing. How could they live without Him? They had hoped that all the nation would believe on Him, but how could they prove that He was the Son of God when He had died such a shameful death? Over

and over they asked each other these perplexing questions. How little they realized that soon the mystery would be solved, their doubts removed, their sorrow turned to joy.

**The Startling Vision.** Before the tomb the Roman guard kept their lonely watch. When evening came a fire was built, as the nights were cool, and the soldiers gathered about it. The hours passed slowly in that quiet place, but just as day was breaking an earthquake was felt. Startled, the soldiers sprang up and, to their amazement, saw the great stone rolled back from the entrance of the tomb, and on it an angel sitting, clad in dazzling white. Overpowered by the radiance which shone from his eyes, the soldiers fell to the ground, covering their faces in terror.

**The Jewish Calumny.** When the soldiers recovered somewhat from their fright, they found that the tomb was empty. Quickly they fled from the place and sought the Jewish leaders. To them the astounding story was told. A conference of the chief priests was immediately held and then the soldiers were summoned. "Take this," said the priests, offering them a large sum of money, "and say that His disciples came by night and stole the Body while you slept."

"But for a soldier on guard to sleep is death," they exclaimed.

"Have no fear," replied the priests; "we will see that you get into no trouble." So for many years this report was circulated among the Jews. But how different was the truth!

**The Early Visit of the Women.** Among the last at the tomb on Friday had been the women who loved Jesus,—Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the less, Salome the mother of James and John, and others. As they returned to their homes, they bought spices and ointments to embalm His Body. They rested on the Sabbath, for they would not profane that sacred day even to do a last loving service to their dear and honored Master. But very early the next morning they started for the tomb.

The air was still chill on that spring morning and they could hardly distinguish the way in the dim light. As they neared the garden, one of them exclaimed, "The stone! How shall we roll it away!" They knew nothing of the seal and the Roman guard but they had seen the stone placed before the entrance of the tomb and they knew that it was far too heavy for them to move. But on entering the garden, they found that their fears were groundless for the stone was rolled away. Startled at this sight they quickly entered the vestibule of the tomb.

**The Angel Announces the Resurrection.** Here they saw the angel whose appearance had so terrified the guard. They, too, were greatly frightened, but he said unto them: "Fear not, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly and tell His disciples and Peter that He is risen from the dead; and behold, He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him; lo, I have told you."

After hearing this wonderful news, the women hastily left the tomb, trembling with fear and amazement, yet with hearts filled with joy. They stopped to speak to no one as they ran to tell the good news to the disciples.

**The Unbelieving Disciples.** But the disciples could not believe such a wonderful story. "It was dark and you could not see," they said; "these are merely idle tales."

Jesus was alive! He had burst the bonds which fettered Him; the grave clothes wound tightly about His Body, the new sepulchre, the heavy stone carefully sealed, the watching guards, all had been powerless to prevent His rising again from the grave. "On the third day I will rise again." Over and over had He thus foretold His resurrection to His disciples. But their hearts were filled with doubt. To even an angel's words they could not give credence; they must see and touch before they would believe. And so yet longer must they sit in darkness because they doubted the news that would have given them such comfort and unspeakable joy.

**The Dead Come Forth.** And now near Jerusalem

strange things happened. From the graves, which had been opened by the earthquake at the time of the crucifixion, came the dead. The silent figures stole back to the city and entering the homes in which they had lived, they revealed themselves to their loved ones. Was there then really a resurrection? It had been a disputed question, the Pharisees believing in it, the Sadducees denying it, but surely the appearance of these who had been dead proved it. And if true, were the reports which began to be circulated throughout the city that Christ had risen, also to be believed? Such questions passed from mouth to mouth, but who could solve the mystery?

**The Meaning of the Resurrection.** For us there is a mystery no longer; instead, we may walk in the light. Because Christ rose from the dead, we know that we, too, shall rise, to share with Him eternal life. We lay our loved ones in the grave, believing that there is a beautiful awakening for them. And even here there is a new life for the Christian, since Christ can free us not only from the power of death and the grave, but also from the power of sin. As St. Paul declares, "We are dead and our life is hid with Christ in God." Thus the Easter joy may fill our hearts all through the year.

**Illustrations of the Resurrection from Nature.** The awakening to life of grass and flower, bush and tree, after the sleep of winter; or, as Longfellow describes it, "the annual miracle of the spring," are symbols of the resurrection. The emerging of the free and joyous butterfly from its cocoon, after its existence as a creeping caterpillar, and the dragonfly\* coming from the grub and darting about in joyous flight, typify the new life which shall be ours.

**Quiz.** 1. At what other time did an angel give news of Christ? 2. When did angels minister unto Him? 3. What proofs have we of Christ's resurrection? 4. What illustrations of the resurrection do we find in nature? 5. How did the fact of the resurrection prove Christ to be the Son of God? 6. How does it prove our immortality? 7. Does it give us comfort when our friends are taken from us?

**Practical Truths.** 1. Christ's resurrection proves His Divinity. If He had not risen from the dead, as He had said again and again that He would do, how could we believe His assertion that He was the Son of God? 2. The change of the Jewish Sabbath to the Christian Sunday marks the importance of the day upon which Christ arose. 3. His resurrection proves that there is immortal life. 4. It is an assurance of our own resurrection. 5. It is the symbol of the moral resurrection; being dead to sin, we are alive unto God. 6. If Christ could conquer death, we may be sure He can overcome all our enemies. 7. Angels are ministering spirits. As they were a guard about Elisha and as they bore a message of love to the sorrowing women, so they come to help and comfort God's children now. 8. No device nor deceit of the chief priests could prevent the great fact of the resurrection from becoming known. 9. The women would not break the Sabbath even to embalm the Body of the Master they loved. 10. How often do we find that difficulties which we have dreaded are already removed before we meet them.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.

\*See Mrs. Gatty's beautiful story of a dragonfly in "The Life Beyond."





## FIRST EASTER DAWN

BY J. K. THOMPSON

Having rested on the Sabbath day, some of the disciples went early in the morning of the first day of the week, to visit the tomb where Christ had been laid. They found it empty. An angel in shining garments asked why they searched for the living among the dead, as Christ had risen.

The artist Thompson shows us angels in shining garments descending from Heaven to roll away the stone from the door of the tomb. The dawn of this Easter morning is illuminating the horizon and light falls on Calvary's top where the three crucifixes still stand. These angels have graceful forms, with long, feathery wings. One of them shades the eyes against the light while looking at the spot where Christ was laid.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





THE FIRST EASTER DAWN

## THOMPSON.

Cephas Giovanni, elder, 1775-1856.  
 Cephas Giovanni, younger, 1809-1888.  
 Jerome K., 1814-1886.

The portrait painter in early New England days was as much a recognized part of the constituted social order as was the village clockmaker or the town attorney. Not infrequently, so simple was the organization of early colonial society, he practiced clockmaking and mending, or land surveying and map drafting, or perchance wheelwrighting and blacksmithing, or he taught music and elocution in the intervals of those commissions in which he portrayed the features of his fellow citizens, who, impressed with the responsibility of growing prosperity, felt the equal responsibility of leaving record of themselves to posterity.

Quite commonly the portrait painter of that day had a "circuit," so to speak, which he travelled regularly. More often than not, he paid for his lodging and the care of his horse with some slight sketch; or, asked to undertake a more important record, took his pay in some likely heifer or promising colt, with store of red apples, soundly barrelled cider, glowing pumpkins, a sack of seed corn, or such other homely produce.

The names of not many of these itinerant knights of the brush survive. Among those who attained to a certain exclusive distinction was Cephas Giovanni Thompson, the elder (to distinguish him from his son). Born at Middleboro, Mass., in 1775, he in no long time found his way to the South. The South, given to the maintenance of ancestral tradition, welcomed Thompson, as one capable of supplying an institutional need of good society. Hence, the elder

Thompson found the South a fruitful field of work, numbering among a list of sitters that comprised the wit and beauty of the Old South: John Marshall, John Howard Payne, and Decatur.

Cephas Giovanni, the younger (1809-88), portrait and figure painter, born also at Middleboro and for a short time the pupil of his father, was chiefly self-taught. He painted principally in Boston, Providence, New York and Philadelphia. In 1852 he visited London, Paris and Florence, and settled in Rome, where he spent seven years. Upon his return to the United States in 1860 he took up his residence in New York City, and was made an associate of the National Academy. His portraits include those of Longfellow, Charles Fenno Hoffman (New York Historical Society), Sebastian Cabot (after Holbein), Hawthorne, and Dr. Matthews (New York University). Among his best known figure paintings are the "Guardian Angel," "Prospero and Miranda," and "Saint Peter Delivered from Prison." His most celebrated picture is his copy of Guido Reni's "Beatrice Cenci."

His brother, Jerome Thompson (1814-86), landscape and figure painter, studied for a short time under his father, and then with Morse and Jarvis. He painted chiefly in New York City, where he took up his residence in 1832. In 1850 he was made an associate of the National Academy. Among his paintings are the "Old Oaken Bucket," the "Dakota Canon" (1880), the "Indian's Prayer" (1884), a "Study from Nature" (1886), and "First Easter-Dawn."

JAMES BEALINGS.



But Mary stood without



and as she  
wept, she



And seeth



the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the  
body of Jesus  
had lain.

And they say  
unto her,

Woman, why  
weepest thou?

She saith unto  
them, Because  
they have taken  
away my Lord,

and I know not where they have laid him.

And when she had thus said, she



back, and saw



and knew not that  
it was Jesus.

Jesus said unto her,  
Woman, why weepest  
thou? whom seekest  
thou? She, sup-  
posing him to be the



saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 28:1; MARK 15:47; 16:1, 2, 9-11; LUKE 23:56; 24:1, 12; JOHN 20:1-18.

**Prayer:** O loving Saviour, We thank Thee that because Thou first showed Thyself to a sorrowing woman after Thy resurrection and addressed to her words of tender sympathy, we may know of Thy love and sympathy for all who are in grief and distress. May we ever come to Thee for comfort and help in our hours of darkness. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"I leave it all with Jesus, for He knows  
How to steal the bitter from life's woes;  
How to gild the tear-drop with His smile,  
Make the desert garden bloom awhile:  
When my weakness leaneth on His might,  
All seems light."  
—Ellen H. Willis.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30, at early dawn. Place, near Calvary. Persons, Christ, two angels, Mary Magdalene and other women, Peter, John and other disciples.

**Scripture Setting: The Love and Tenderness Shown by Christ to Women.** 1. His first miracle performed to please His mother, John 2:1-11. 2. His last loving thought for her, John 19:26, 27. 3. His first annunciation of Himself as the Messiah to a woman, John 4:4-27. 4. His healing of women, Luke 13:11-13; Mark 1:30, 31; 5:25-34; Luke 8:2, 3; Matt. 15:22-28. 5. His forgiveness of a repentant woman, Luke 7:36-50. 6. His pardon of a sinful woman, John 8:3-11. 7. His raising to life the widow's son, Luke 7:11-15. 8. His raising to life the daughter of Jairus, Mark 5:22-24, 35-43. 9. His deep sympathy for Mary and Martha, John 11:33, 35. 10. His greatest miracle performed for them, John 11:43, 44. 11. His appreciation of Mary's loving act, Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8. 12. His first appearance after His resurrection to Mary, John

20:14-17. 13. His second appearance to the women, Matt. 28:9, 10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The chief features of the story are: 1. Mary's love, which is shown by her coming early to the sepulchre. 2. The proof of the resurrection which is furnished by the empty tomb and discarded grave clothes. 3. John's conviction of the fact of the resurrection which was produced by the sight of the empty sepulchre and the linen clothes, even before the risen Lord had been seen. 4. Christ's first appearance to Mary,—a high honor given her as a reward of her devoted love. 5. Her quick recognition of Him when He spoke her name, a presentiment of our recognition of friends after death. 6. Her willingness to leave Him that she might carry His message of comfort to His sorrowing disciples. 7. Christ's second appearance to the women, who seemed more easily convinced of His identity than were the men who had followed Him. 8. The incredulity of the disciples, who required tangible proofs of His resurrection.

### CHRIST'S FIRST APPEARANCE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

**Mary's Love for Christ.** As we heard in our last story, one of the women who started for the tomb very early on the morning after the Jewish Sabbath was Mary Magdalene. Some years before, she had had a terrible disease which, in those days, was called being possessed of devils. She had gone to Christ in her great trouble and He had cast out the seven demons which had caused her such dreadful distress. Since that time she had followed the Master from place to place, doing all that she could for Him to show her love and gratitude for what He had done for her.

She had watched Him with a breaking heart as He hung upon the cross. She had followed the Body to Joseph's garden and then she had lingered near the tomb, after all the others had gone, for she could not bear to leave her Lord, even though He were dead. Through the Sabbath her mind had been entirely filled with thoughts of Him. She remembered His words of love and deeds of mercy and how, unlike other men, He had always been tender and considerate to women, for in those days they were not always treated so kindly.

And then before it was light the next morning, she and the other women started for the tomb that they might embalm the

Body of Jesus with the spices and ointment which they had prepared. But Mary's eagerness was so great that she hastened on ahead of the others and she was therefore the first to enter the garden. The perfume of the flowers made the air sweet, and a soft gray light was in the sky.

**The Stone Rolled Away.** But as Mary came near the tomb, what did she see! The stone had been rolled aside. "They have stolen my Lord," she thought. Turning swiftly, she hastened from the garden to tell the disciples the dreadful news. She came first to the house where Peter and John were staying and told them of her discovery.

"They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre," she said, "and we know not where they have laid Him."

**Peter and John at the Tomb.** At her words Peter and John sprang to their feet and hastened to the garden. John, being the younger, outran Peter and reached the tomb first. Here he paused and, looking in, saw the empty niche and the linen clothes lying at one side. Very soon Peter joined him and he at once entered the tomb, followed by John. It was indeed true! The Body of their Lord was not there! But there were the grave clothes, lying at one side and near them was the napkin neatly



folded, which had been about His head. It did not look as if the Body had been stolen, for there were no signs of haste or violence. What could it mean? To John, the Saviour's best beloved, first came the wonderful thought. "He is not dead: He has risen." But he could not speak of his belief even to Peter. Silently and buried in thought the two disciples returned to their home.

**Christ Appears to Mary.** But Mary—she could not leave the place where her Lord had been. Tears flooded her eyes. Could she not even perform the last sad rites for His dead Body! She stooped and looked into the sepulchre and lo, it was **not** empty. Two radiant forms were seated there; one at the head and one at the foot of the place where the Lord had lain. Mary was startled but, as she gazed upon them, they asked, "Woman, why weepest thou?"

Their question reminded her of her great loss and forgetting her fears in her eagerness to know the truth, she replied, "Because they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him."

Just then a shadow fell upon her and looking back into the garden, she saw a man standing near her. Her tear-blinded eyes prevented her from seeing clearly and she supposed Him to be the gardener. Surely He would be able to answer her question and tell her what she wished to know. Before she could speak, however, He repeated the question which the angels had asked, "Woman (the Galilean word of tenderness and respect), why weepest thou?" His first words after He had conquered death were not a paean of victory nor a great message of truth but, instead, a tender inquiry of sympathy. "Whom seekest thou?" He added. How well He knew that her thought was only of Him, but He would have her give expression to her love.

"Sir," she replied, "if thou hast borne Him hence, tell me where Thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away. To her great love anything seemed possible, even the carrying of the Body of her Lord.

But what did she hear! Her own name, "Mary," spoken in softest, tenderest accents. But one voice could so speak it. She gazed upon Him. Now she **saw**! It was indeed **He**! "Rabboni" (Master), she cried, as she flung herself upon the ground, weeping for joy, and would have clasped His feet.

But He motioned her back. "Touch Me not," He said gently, "for I am not yet ascended to My Father." Thus far Mary had

loved Christ because she could hear Him, see Him, touch Him, but now He would teach her that He was more than a human friend, so that when He left her, she might still feel His spiritual presence near her. But He would let her serve Him, that she might find expression for her love. "Go unto my brethren," He added, using this tender term for the disciples whom He so loved, "and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and My God and your God."

Ah, how hard it was for Mary to leave her Lord, whom she had believed to be dead and who, instead, stood there by her side **alive**! But she could do something for Him. Joy and love gave wings to her feet.

**The Unbelieving Disciples.** Into the room where the disciples sat, silent and grief-stricken, she came, —a joyous bearer of good tidings. "He is alive!" she said. "He has risen from the dead! I have seen Him and He bade me tell you that He would ascend unto His Father and your Father and His God and your God."

While she was speaking, came Peter and John. Yes, the tomb was empty, they affirmed, and John, hearing Mary's wonderful news, told of the hopes that filled his own heart. Could the disciples believe that Christ had indeed risen from the dead? While they hesitated, back came the other women, whose first accounts of the angel's announcement they had not credited. "We have seen Him!" they cried. "As we were returning to the sepulchre we met Him—Christ Himself—and He spoke to us, saying 'All hail.' We fell at His feet and worshipped Him, and He said unto us, 'Be not afraid; go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee and there shall they see Me.'"

But the disciples could not yet believe. It was too wonderful,—indeed it was impossible. In spite of the assurances of the women, they still cherished their doubts and sat in darkness, with hearts bowed down by grief.

But Mary's joy was greater than any she had ever known. He was living, her Lord and Master! Though she had seen Him die upon the cross, though He had lain in the grave, He was not dead. Ah, how the wondrous thought filled her eyes with glad tears, how her heart sang for joy! The disciples might doubt, but she knew. Had He not come to her and called her by name? All her life she would serve Him to show her gratitude for this evidence of His tender love for her.

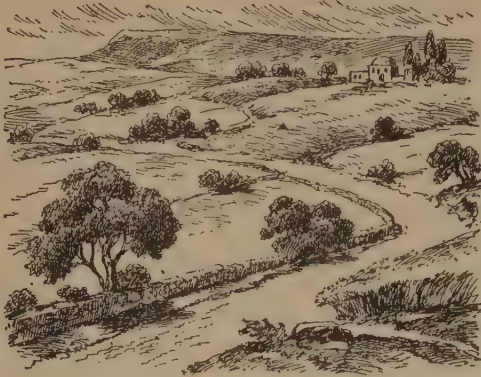
**Practical Truths.** 1. The Lord who cast out seven demons from Mary can destroy the power of sin over us. 2. Like Mary, we should show our gratitude for what Christ has done for us by devoting our lives to His service. 3. Even in her grief, Mary clung to her faith in Christ, so we, like her, should say, "My Lord," even in hours of darkness. 4. While Mary was weeping over the stolen body, her risen Lord stood beside her; let us not by thinking of our losses and blindly giving way to grief, miss the rich blessings which God has provided for us. 5. Let us listen for Jesus' voice, so we may respond instantly to Him, when He speaks our name. 6. And may we obey His commands which send us with messages to His brethren.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

And, behold, two of them went that same



to a



called Emmaus,  
which was from



about three-score  
furlongs. And



together of all these  
things which had  
happened. And it  
came to pass, that,  
while they communed  
together and reasoned,  
Jesus himself  
drew near, and



But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And they drew



whither  
they went:  
and he  
made  
as though





# THE WALK TO EMMAUS.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS LUKE 24:13-35; MARK 16:12, 13.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Open Thou our eyes so we may behold Thee. Wilt Thou make the Scriptures a new revelation to us, as Thou didst to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. May Thy Holy Word tell us of Thee. May we see Thee in nature,—in budding tree and opening flower, in the glories of sunrise and sunset, and in lofty mountain and storm-tossed sea. We would see Thee in our fellow-men, also, so we may realize that service done to even the lowliest is done to Thee. Amen.

"Hath not thy heart within thee burned,  
At evening's calm and holy hour,  
As if its inmost depths discerned  
The presence of a loftier power?"

"It was the voice of God that spake  
In silence to thy silent heart;  
And bade each worthier thought awake,  
And every dream of earth depart.  
—Berthold Tours.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Sunday afternoon, April 9, A. D. 30. Place, On the road to Emmaus, at Emmaus, and at Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, Cleopas and another disciple, the ten disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Some of the Prophecies Concerning Christ to Which He May Have Referred. The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent, Gen. 3:15. The birth in Bethlehem, Mic. 5:2. The Triumphal Entry, Zech. 9:9. And Christ's sufferings, Psa. 22; Isa. 53. He is typified by the brazen serpent, Num. 21:8, 9. Moses in the law foretells the coming of a Prophet, Deut. 18:15, 18. Through Christ, David's kingdom shall be established forever, 2 Sam. 7:16; Jer. 23:5, 6; Psa. 89:4, 29, 36, 37. Like a shepherd shall He feed His flock, Isa. 40:11. He shall be the Messiah, Dan. 9:25; the Desire of all nations, Hag. 2:7; the Messenger of the Covenant, Mal. 3:1; and the Sun of Righteousness, Mal. 4:2. His reign shall be one of peace, Isa. 11; and it shall be everlasting, Isa. 9:6, 7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. By overcoming the doubts of those to whom He appeared, Christ firmly established the truth of His resurrection. As has been said, "they doubted that we might believe." 2. Because these two disciples loved Jesus and because their minds were so filled with thoughts of Him that they could talk of nothing else, He appeared unto them, enlightening their darkness and bringing joy to their hearts. 3. The sympathy, which He always feels for those in trouble, drew forth their confidence. 4. His new interpretation of the Scriptures, rather than His bodily form, caused their hearts to burn within them. 5. Had they not urged Him to abide with them, they would have missed the joy and blessing which His presence afforded; for Christ enters no home uninvited. 6. Joy unshared is not true joy; the great fact of Christ's resurrection these two were eager to share with the disciples.

### THE OPENED SCRIPTURES.

**On the Way to Emmaus.** On the afternoon of the day on which Mary and the women saw the Lord, two of the disciples left the city of Jerusalem by the western gate. One of these was Cleopas, whose wife had been among the women who stood near the cross on the day of the crucifixion. Perhaps he, too, had been in that sad group. We do not know the name of the other disciple. Possibly it was St. Luke, who has given us the account of this incident. We do know, however, that both these men had loved Jesus and had been His followers and now they could think and talk of nothing but Him, as they went towards Emmaus, where one of them lived.

As they climbed the hill towards the little town, sweet flowers blossomed by the wayside, while, on the trees, the gold of orange and paler yellow of lemon gleamed among shining leaves. The day drew to its close and the sun went down amidst a blaze of glory, but they had no eyes for any of these beauties. Their hearts were crushed with sorrow and their faces bore the marks of sadness, for He whom they loved was dead and buried. They were returning from Jerusalem, where they had heard the report of what the women had seen at the sepulchre of Christ, but the strange tale had only added to their doubts and perplexities.

**Christ Joins Them.** Christ knew both their love and their grief, and He came to comfort them. Had He not promised to manifest Himself to those who love Him? As they walked on, He overtook them, but St. Luke tells us that their eyes were "holden," and St. Mark that He appeared in another form, so they did not recognize Him. Certainly they had no expectation of ever seeing their Master again, and they supposed this Man was only one of the many strangers who filled the city, as Mary had thought Him the gardener. They were surprised, therefore, when He addressed them. "Of what are you talking?" He asked, "and why are you so sad?" He spoke in so kind and sympathetic a tone that they could not resent His questions.

Hardly glancing at Him, Cleopas replied, "Are you a stranger in Jerusalem that you do not know of the things which have happened there in these days?"

"What things?" asked Jesus.

"The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth," they replied, "who was a Prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him up to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we hoped that it was He who should redeem Israel.

And besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover certain women of our company, who were early at the tomb, amazed us by saying that His Body was not there but that angels had told them that He was alive. And certain of the disciples went to the sepulchre and found it empty just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

**Christ Opens the Scriptures.** Then Christ said: "O foolish men, do you not believe all that the prophets have spoken? Was it not written that Christ must suffer all these things before He entered into His glory?" Then He began to explain the Scriptures to them. He reminded them that the Lord had said in the garden of Eden that the seed of the woman should overcome the Serpent, or the Evil One, but that He should be bruised in the conflict. He told them that the brazen serpent, which was lifted up in the wilderness to save the people from the death which their sins had merited, was a type of Christ's death on the cross which saved the people from their sins.

He repeated Isaiah's prophecies which foretold that the Messiah should be a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men, and cut off from the land of the living. Other prophecies, also, He explained and as He talked the two disciples listened first with wonder and then with joy. How blind they had been not to see that Christ's death, instead of destroying all their hopes, really proved that He was the promised Messiah.

**The Disciples Recognize Their Lord.** The end of their journey came while they were still talking and the stranger was about to leave them. But they urged Him to stay with them. "Abide with us," they said, "for 'tis toward evening and the day is far spent."

And He yielded to their entreaties and entered their home. Soon their simple meal was ready and they gave Him the seat of honor at the head of the table. Taking up the bread, He gently broke it in pieces, then reverently bowing His head, He asked the Father's blessing upon it. Was it the familiar and beautiful attitude, as He bent His head in reverence; was it the tender and reverent tones of His voice; was it a loving request for them that finally opened their eyes? We do not know, but at last the wondrous truth dawned upon them. He whom they had believed dead was **alive**; their Lord and Master was again with them here at

their table! In love and awe they gazed upon Him, but before they could give expression to their astonishment and joy, He vanished from their sight.

Then they remembered the walk and the wonderful conversation. How could they have failed to recognize Him before! "Did not our hearts burn within us," they said to each other, "while He talked with us by the way and while He opened to us the Scriptures? We must tell the others," they cried; "they, too, must know that Jesus is really alive."

**Sharing the Good News.** They did not stop to finish their meal but started at once back to Jerusalem to tell the glad tidings to the other disciples. When they reached the city, they went at once to the upper room where ten of the disciples were gathered. Perhaps it was the very room where the Last Supper had been eaten. As they entered, some of the disciples cried out, "The Lord has risen indeed and hath appeared unto Peter!"

"We, too, have seen Him," said Cleopas and his friend, and then they told of their wonderful experience. But though most of those who were gathered in that upper room rejoiced because their Lord was alive once more, some still doubted, finding it impossible to believe that Christ had really risen from the dead.

**Quiz.** 1. Where was Emmaus? 2. Give a promise, made by Christ in His talk with His disciples at the Last Supper, which He fulfilled in this story. 3. Tell of others, besides the two in this story, who failed to recognize him, when He came to them after the resurrection. 4. Give other passages in which Christ is called a Prophet. 5. At Christ's birth what two people spoke of Him as a Redeemer? 6. Give some of the passages regarding Christ which He may have repeated to these two disciples. 7. At what other times did He break bread with His disciples? 8. On what other occasions did He suddenly vanish from sight?

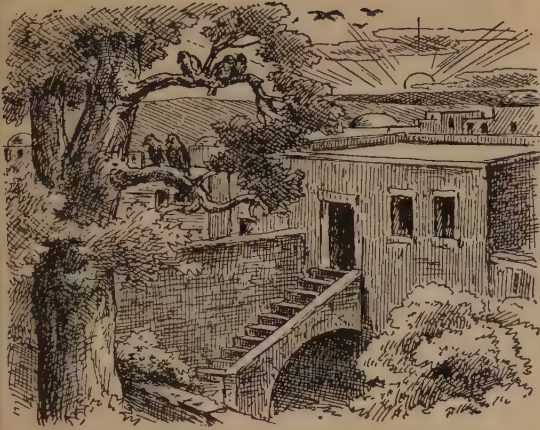
**Practical Truths.** 1. When our minds are filled with thoughts of Christ, a vision of Him is often granted to us. 2. If we search the Scriptures, we, too, shall find that they are they which testify of Him. 3. He makes Himself known to those who are loyal and true hearted, however humble may be their station in life. 4. His companionship will turn sorrow into joy. 5. We may be conscious of our Saviour's presence at all times, as we gather about the table, as we walk along the highway and as we engage in any right duties or pleasures. 6. Faith opens the eyes which unbelief has darkened. 7. Hospitality shown to strangers often brings unexpected blessings. 8. Whatever new truth or experience comes to us, we should hasten to share with others. 9. Christ will not enter our hearts or our homes unless we invite Him to do so.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# JESUS APPEARS TO THE APOSTLES.

Then the same day at



being  
the first  
day  
of the  
week,  
when the



were shut where the



were  
assembled  
for fear  
of the  
Jews,  
came  
Jesus  
and



and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he



and



Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 20:19-23; LUKE 24:36-48; MARK 16:14.

**Prayer:** Dear Saviour, We thank Thee for the loving tenderness with which Thou didst convince Thy disciples of Thy resurrection. Thou wast not disheartened by their blindness and lack of faith; instead, Thou didst remove all doubt from their minds and give them joy unspeakable. Wilt Thou give us, also, visions of Thyself, O risen Saviour, and may we be witnesses of Thee unto all men. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we, that have not seen Thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove!

"Thou seemest human and Divine,  
The highest, holiest art Thou:  
Our wills are ours, we know not how;  
Our wills are ours to make them Thine."  
—Tennyson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Sunday evening, April 9, A. D. 30. Place, An upper room in Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, the ten disciples and others.

**Scripture Setting:** Jesus' Presence. Brings peace, John 20:19; Eph. 2:13, 14; Col. 1:20; John 14:27. Removes doubt and fear, John 20:20; Luke 24:38-43; Rom. 8:15; Heb. 13:6; 1 John 4:18. Cures unbelief, Luke 24:25-27, 41-43; Mark 5:36; John 20:24-28; John 1:7. Removes sadness, Luke 24:38-43; John 16:20. Gives enlightenment and understanding, Luke 24:27, 32, 45; Acts 16:14; Eph. 1:17, 18; Col. 2:2, 3; 2 Tim. 2:7; 1 John 5:20. Brings joy, John 20:20; 15:11; 16:22; 1 Pet. 1:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The fact that the disciples were convinced that Christ had risen from the dead, in spite of their unbelief, is a strong proof of the truth of the resurrection. 2. Christ removed their doubts by showing them His hands and feet and by eating before them. 3. Their sorrow was thus turned into joy. 4. Unto them, as unto the two on the way to Emmaus, Christ opened the Scriptures, showing that His sufferings proved Him to be the Son of God. 5. He gives them the high dignity of being witnesses of Him, and, as He had been sent from the Father to save men from sin, so He now commissions them to preach forgiveness of sin through His name.

### JESUS TURNS THE SORROW OF HIS DISCIPLES INTO JOY.

**The Disciples in the Upper Room.** What eager, excited voices were heard in that upper room as the wonderful news of Christ's resurrection was discussed. Peter, whose days had been sad and bitter with remorse since his denial of his Lord, had now a face shining with joy and a heart overflowing with gratitude because Christ had come to him and spoken words of love and forgiveness. Of the truth of the resurrection he, at least, had no doubt. Nor had John, to whom the wondrous fact had come as a possibility even as he looked at the empty sepulchre and discarded grave clothes. The women's stories were commented upon with doubt or faith by the wondering disciples and also the account of Christ's walk to Emmaus which had been given them by Cleopas and his friend. What could it all mean? Some still maintained that it was impossible He should rise, such a thing could not be—it was only a vision these different ones had seen or imagined. Others were ready to believe that Christ could transcend even the laws of life and death.

**Jesus Appears Unto Them.** As the disciples talked His marvellous Presence glided into the room! The loud voices ceased as one by one they discovered Him, and terrified, they gazed upon the wondrous Form, like and yet unlike their Master. For a radiance was about Him, an ethereal light that they had never seen before; such joy, such peace did His countenance express; no longer was there a trace of sadness or suffer-

ing. Was it He! Had the closed doors, which had been locked for fear of the Jews, no power to keep Him out? Was He no longer bound by natural laws? Or was this only a spirit that suggested Him to their minds? As they gazed in doubt and terror upon Him, they heard the greeting, the usual one given by one to another in those days but assuming a new meaning as it fell from his lips, "Peace be unto you."

**He Quiets Their Fears.** Seeing their white and terrified faces, Jesus asked, "Why are ye troubled?" He loved these dear friends so tenderly, and He wanted to make them rejoice because He was no longer dead. He could not bear to see them so terrified. "Wherefore do questionings arise in your hearts?" he asked. "See my hands and my feet that it is I, Myself: handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have;" that is, "See, it is really I. Look at My hands and My feet, and come and touch Me."

Then He showed them the print of the nails in His hands and in His feet and the wound in His side where the spear had pierced Him. The disciples were overcome with joy. Was it really their Master come back to life again! It seemed too wonderful to be true.

**He Removes All Doubts.** Seeing that they still found it hard to believe, Jesus turned to the table where they had been eating their evening meal and asked, "Have ye here anything to eat?"



Quickly they brought Him a piece of broiled fish and a little honey. And He took these and ate them. Then they were sure He was not a spirit but their own dear Lord. How often they had eaten with Him!

**Memories of the Past.** They had helped Him feed the five thousand with the five loaves and two small fishes and again the four thousand with the seven loaves and few fishes. They had watched Him at the wedding in Cana, when His mother had called Him from the table to change the water into wine. They had heard His tender story about the debtor who loved much, when he sat at the Pharisee's table and the repentant woman had washed His feet with her tears; and they had seen His look of love as He praised Mary for the costly ointment with which she had anointed His head when He sat at meat in the house of Simon the leper.

They had been with Him in that beautiful home in Bethany and had heard His loving words of reproof to Martha who was so eager to give Him of her best that she took no time to listen to His words, as Mary did. They remembered that everywhere they had gone Jesus had loved to share the social life of the people and that it had been His joy to break bread with them. Not only to rich men's houses like the Pharisee's had He gone, but to those of the despised, like Matthew's, where He had eaten with publicans and sinners because, as He had told the Pharisees, it was just such people that He had come to help. He had asked Zacchaeus, also, whom every one looked down upon, to entertain Him. All these occasions the disciples remembered.

Then, most precious memory of all, the disciples recalled the last passover they had had together, when Jesus had washed their feet to show them how they must love and serve each other; when He had asked them to remember Him, as they broke the bread and drank the wine, and when He had prayed to the Father, asking Him to keep them safe from the evil in the world.

But those hours of tender fellowship had been followed by such terrible scenes. In spite of their love for their Master and the devotion which they had so loudly professed, they had deserted Him in His hour of need, and Peter had even denied Him. The remembrance of their disloyalty, and of His sufferings and awful death on the cross which had been followed by His burial, and the crushing of all their hopes, had left them too overcome by grief to care for food. Ah, what hours of darkness and doubt they had had! But now He was with them again—their risen Lord—He was once more eating with them. Glad tears filled their eyes and their hearts sang for joy.

**The Prophecies Foretold His Sufferings.** And then He talked with them. First He showed them, as that afternoon He had shown Cleopas and his friend, how the prophecies had all told of His sufferings and death, and they, too, saw how those terrible scenes in His life, which they had thought the end of all, were, instead, the proof that

He was indeed the Messiah. He reminded them how He had told them again and again that He must be betrayed into the hands of the chief priests and be mocked and scourged and crucified, but that He should rise again on the third day. And now these words, which they had never before understood, were all plain to them.

**Their Call to Service.** And then He said to them: "As My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you." What wonderful words! Were they really to take His place,—to comfort and help people and to turn them from evil ways and lead them to desire a holy life? "I want you to tell every one," He continued, "that if they repent and believe in Me, their sins will be forgiven. Ye are My witnesses," said He. Ah, they could be that! They could tell others of Him: of His life of loving service, and of the cruel death He had died that He might save people from their sins. After giving them this service to do for Him, the Saviour vanished as suddenly as He had come.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What promise of Christ's in regard to the gathering together of two or three in His name did He fulfill in this scene? 2. Give some of the passages in which Christ, during His life, had told His disciples of His sufferings and death. 3. Why did the Heavenly Father send Christ into the world. 4. Give the verse that tells of Christ's promise to see His disciples again and to turn their sorrow into joy. 5. Give another instance when the disciples thought that Christ was a spirit. 6. Tell of some occasions when, instead of hiding behind locked doors, the disciples bravely preached of Christ and risked death for His sake. 7. What patriarch heard news which he could not believe for joy? 8. Tell of another company which was assembled together, praying, when, suddenly, the man for whom they prayed knocked at the door.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Christ gave ample proofs of His resurrection to all who doubted and so convinced were the disciples of its truth that they made it the basis of their preaching. 2. Through their words, they led thousands to believe in it, also. 3. Their lives were transformed by the great fact that they were willing to sacrifice even life itself rather than relinquish their faith in it. 4. Jesus' recognition by His disciples gives us assurance that we shall know our friends after death. 5. No doors will keep Christ away from His disciples when they are in grief and sorrow. 6. He says to us, as He said to the disciples, "Why are ye troubled?" and He will remove all cause for sorrow, if we but hearken to His words. 7. He came to prove the truth of the Scriptures, as they in turn prove that He is the Son of God. 8. We, too, may be witnesses of the risen Lord. 9. "As the Father has sent Me, even so send I you." These words mark the three-fold relation of the church to the Son, to the Father, and to the world, and her position in it."

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



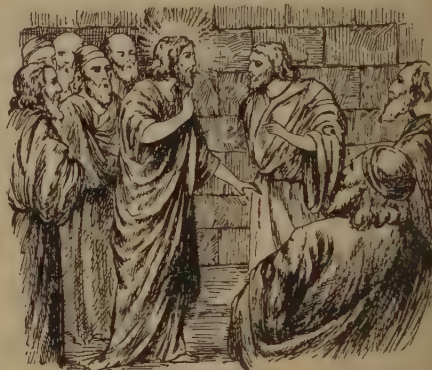
But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore



We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the



and



and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold



and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into



and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. And many other signs truly did



in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 20:24-29.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, We thank Thee that Thou hast given us such strong proofs of Thy resurrection that, though we cannot touch Thee, as Thomas did, we may know Thee as our risen Savior.

Take doubt out of our hearts. May we know that, having conquered death, Thou canst protect us in danger and keep us from sin. And may our faith in Thee enable us to do great things for Thee. Amen.

"My Father, it is good for me  
To trust, and not to trace;  
And wait with deep humility  
For Thy revealing grace.

"So faith and patience, wait awhile!—  
Not doubting; not in fear;  
For soon in Heaven my Father's smile  
Shall render all things clear."

—George Rawson.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Sunday evening, April 16, A. D. 30. Place, An upper room in Jerusalem. Persons, Christ, Thomas and the other ten disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Faith. A definition, Heb. 11:1. Jesus, the Author and Perfecter, Heb. 12:2; Examples, Heb. 11:4-38. Praised by Christ, Matt. 8:10; 15:28; John 20:29. A condition of healing, Matt. 9:29. Brought healing, Matt. 8:13; 9:6, 7; 15:28; Mark 5:34; 10:52; Luke 17:19; Acts 3:16; 14:9, 10. Brought forgiveness of sin, Matt. 9:2; Luke 7:48, 50. Prayer of faith answered, Matt. 21:22; Jas. 1:5, 6. Purifies hearts, Acts 15:9. Justifies, Rom. 4:5; 5:1; Gal. 2:16. Sanctifies, Acts 26:18; Col. 1:21-23. A shield, Eph. 6:16. A breastplate, 1 Thess. 5:8. Dead without works, Jas. 2:17.

Made perfect by works, Jas. 2:22. Faith overcomes the world, 1 John 5:4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The special features of this story are: 1. Thomas' unbelief in spite of the positive assurance of all the disciples that they had seen the Lord. 2. His assertion that he would not believe that Christ was alive again until he, himself, had touched Him. 3. Jesus' love and tenderness in giving this doubting disciple the proofs he required. 4. His gentle reproof of Thomas' faithlessness. 5. Thomas' confession of faith, which is another proof of the truth of the resurrection. 6. Jesus' words of approval to those who walk by faith and not by sight. 7. Jesus appears unto James.

### JESUS TENDERNESS TO HIS DOUBTING DISCIPLE.

**Thomas' Grief.** When Jesus appeared to the disciples in that upper room, Thomas was not with them. This disciple had been so crushed by Jesus' awful death that he no longer wished to live. He stayed by himself, thinking sadly of all the dreadful things which had happened and not wishing to see even the other disciples.

**He Is Told of Christ's Resurrection.** But one day some of the disciples came to him and exclaimed: "Good news, Thomas! Such wonderful news we have to tell you! Jesus is no longer dead! He is risen and we have seen Him!"

As Thomas looked up incredulously, they said: "Mary Magdalene saw Him first and then some of the other women, but when they told us of it, we could not believe such a thing possible. But last night, as we sat at meat, Peter came in and told us that he, too, had seen the Lord and, just as he finished speaking, Cleopas and his friend entered the room and told us that Jesus had overtaken them on the way to Emmaus. They did not know Him at first and He walked to their home with them, explaining the Scriptures and showing how they foretold the Messiah's sufferings. They asked Him to come into their home, and when He blessed and brake the bread, they recognized Him.

"We were all filled with wonder, but it was so inconceivable that Christ could be alive once more that we still doubted, when,

suddenly,—ah, how can we tell you—He stood in our midst! The doors were tightly locked for fear of the Jews, but notwithstanding that, He had entered. At first we were all terrified and thought He was a spirit, but He said: 'Fear not: it is really I, your Master. See the prints of the nails in My hands and feet. Come and touch Me and see for yourselves that I am not a spirit.'

"And, Thomas, then we were convinced, and you may know how glad we were that He is alive again. He even ate before us that no doubt of His reality might linger in our minds. Then He said that He wished us to be His witnesses and tell others of His life and death and of His rising again from the grave. We have hastened to share the good news with you, for we knew how sad you were."

**Thomas' Unbelief.** But Thomas shook his head. "Such a thing could not happen," he replied. "You have all been deceived. Unless I, myself, can see the print of the nails in His hands and put my finger into those prints, and my hand into the wound in His side, I will not believe."

"Ah, Thomas," replied the disciples, "why will you be so doubting of heart? What joy might be yours if you would only believe." Sadly they turned away, but at the door they stopped. "Will you not at least meet with us, Thomas?" they asked. "Each night we shall be in that upper room and perhaps, oh perhaps Jesus may come to us again."

Thomas consented to do as they wished and that evening he went to the disciples, but as the hours passed and Jesus did not come, he was strengthened in his doubts. Still he waited evening after evening in that upper room, growing more gloomy and sad each day. He had doubted even when the disciples first joyously brought their news, and now he was convinced that there could be no truth in what they had said. They had seen only a spirit or a vision. On Saturday night he said, "I shall come no more to these meetings: I am going to Galilee to-morrow."

"Oh, wait just one more day, Thomas," they urged. "It is just a week to-morrow since Jesus rose from the dead and since we saw Him,—that day will always be sacred to us for that reason, and each week we shall remember Him upon it. Perhaps to-morrow He will come again to us."

"Well, I will come one more evening," Thomas replied.

**Jesus Appears.** When Sunday evening came, once more the eleven disciples were together; the ten, glad of heart in the sure faith that their Master lived and might at any time appear to them; Thomas, sad and depressed, convinced that he should never again see the Lord whom he so loved. But suddenly, there was a slight movement and, looking up, the disciples saw that Jesus was in their midst.

Ah, how wonderful was His appearance! The face that had been white and drawn with pain, when they had seen Him on the cross, was as bright as the sun. Such a look of rest and peace was in His eyes, for all suffering and pain had passed. He was like the Jesus they had known,—the same dear form, the same tender looks and loving smile, and yet He was different. Such a radiance, such a glory was about Him that they could scarcely look upon Him. They hid their faces, as they had done upon the Mount, when He was transfigured before them.

**Jesus Removes Thomas' Doubt.** He turned first of all to Thomas: "Ah, My Thomas," He said, "Could you not believe that I was alive unless you touched me? Then come, put your finger in these nail prints in My hands, and put your hand in the wound of the spear here in My side, and be not faithless but believing."

But the doubt had vanished from Thomas' heart. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and amidst the sobs which shook him,—tears of repentance and of joy—he exclaimed, "My Lord, and my God."

Lovingly the Saviour laid His hand upon the head of the weeping disciple, "Ah, Thomas, dost thou believe now thou hast seen Me," He said; "blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

**Jesus Reveals Himself to James.** To one other doubting one did Jesus show Himself. One of the griefs of His earthly life had been the knowledge that his own brothers did not believe that He was the Son of God. He had so loved them and He had longed to have them among the first to receive the Father's message which He had brought. But at one time, when He was doing His wonderful works of healing and when the people were thronging about Him, so that neither He nor His disciples could find time to eat, His brothers had tried to take Him away, because they thought He had gone crazy.

Indeed, so little did they believe in Him and His message that one day when He was told that they wished to speak with Him, He sadly replied: "You are more truly my brothers than are they, for whosoever shall do the will of My Father who is in Heaven, he is My brother."

But now that He had risen from the dead, surely they would believe, so He sought His brother James, and revealed Himself to him. We do not know what was said at that interview, but we know that not only was James led to believe that Jesus was really the Son of God, but that he influenced his brothers, also, to believe, so after that we find them working with the disciples. It must have been a great joy to Jesus to have the members of His own family at last believe in Him.

And so from the minds of one and another of those whom Jesus loved and who loved Him did He remove all doubt. His voice was enough for Mary, while Thomas required an actual touch. But in convincing them all of the reality of His existence, He has given such strong proofs of His resurrection that we may sing with Tennyson:

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,  
Whom we that have not seen Thy face,  
By faith, and faith alone, embrace,  
Believing where we cannot prove,"

and may rejoice with glad hearts in a living Saviour.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Why would not Thomas believe that Christ had risen? 2. What proofs did Jesus give him? 3. What were the words in which he confessed his faith? 4. Whom did Jesus declare to be blessed? 5. What is the chapter on faith in the Bible? 6. What definition does it give of faith? 7. Give the names of those mentioned in it who lived lives of faith. 8. How did Noah show faith? Abraham? Gideon? 9. Give an instance of some missionary who showed faith. 10. Give an instance of faith of which you have known.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Thomas' confession of faith, "My Lord and my God," should be ours, also. 2. By convincing the disciple who doubted that He had risen from the dead, in spite of what the others said, Jesus gave an infallible proof of His resurrection. 3. Christ is able to save us from doubts as well as from sin. 4. All things are possible to him that believeth, but doubt prevents any successful action. 5. Faith is the basis of business, invention and discovery, and how much more of a right religious life, for without faith it is impossible to please Him. 6. In His own country Christ could do no mighty works because of the unbelief of the people, so we, through lack of faith, often miss the blessings God would so gladly bestow upon us. 7. "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief," should be the cry of our hearts.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# JESUS AND PETER

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?



was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.



said unto him,  
Feed my



Verily, verily,  
I say unto thee,  
When thou wast  
young, thou



thyself,  
and  
walkedst  
whither  
thou  
wouldest:  
but when  
thou  
shalt be



thou shalt stretch forth thy



and  
another  
shall



and



whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS JOHN 21:1-19.

**Prayer:** O loving Saviour, Who didst so tenderly call Thy erring disciple back to Thy service, Thou knowest that we love Thee. But wilt Thou not make our love burn more brightly.

"More love to Thee, O Christ, more love to Thee! Hear Thou the prayer we make on bended knee."

Not for a selfish love do we pray, but for one that shall show itself in service. May we hear Thy call to feed Thy lambs,—the little ones of Thy fold

—and to give to Thy sheep the blessings which Thou hast lavished upon us. Amen.

"O Love, that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in Thee;  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be."

G. MATHESON.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting.** Time, the last of April or first of May, A. D. 30. Place, the Sea of Galilee. Persons, Christ and seven disciples.

**Scripture Setting: The Similitude between Peter's Life and a Present Day Disciple.** He was called to service, Matt. 4:19; 28:19. His confession of faith, Matt. 16:16; 10:32. He showed his love in words rather than deeds, Luke 22:33, 34; Matt. 7:21. He denied Christ, Matt. 26:69-74; Isa. 53:3, 6. But Christ's look of love led him to repentance, Luke 22:61, 62; Rom. 2:4. And his repentance worked a transformation in his character, Acts 2:14-36; 5:29-32; Eph. 4:22-24; Col. 1:21, 22. He was protected by an angel, Acts 12:7-10; Psa. 91:11, 12. His service entailed suffering, John 21:18; Matt. 5:10, 11. But brought rich rewards, Matt. 5:12; 1 Pet. 1:3-8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Waiting for Christ did not prevent the disciples from engaging in their

customary work: 2. While thus engaged, their thoughts were upon their Master, for love and labor may go hand in hand. 3. Christ's power was shown in the miraculous draught of fishes but this miracle was dependent upon the obedience of the disciples. 4. John's love made him the first to recognize his Master and Peter's zeal brought him first to His side. 5. Not only did Christ have thought for the spiritual needs of His disciples, but He also tenderly provided both food and warmth for their physical needs. 6. Though Christ, by His thrice repeated question, recalled to Peter his triple denial, He reinstated him before the other disciples by entrusting him with His work. 7. Not by words only, but by service to others, was Peter's love for Christ to be shown. 8. Trial and suffering are often a part of service for Christ, for the disciple must be as the Lord. 9. "The last word and the first word of Christ is the same, 'Follow Me.'"

### "LOVEST THOU ME?"

**The Disciples Return to Galilee.** The days passed and the disciples did not again see Jesus after that meeting in the upper room with Thomas. Even Sunday, the day on which He had twice appeared to them, went by and He did not come. Then they remembered that He had said to the women, "Tell My disciples to go into Galilee," so they started for their old homes, hoping to meet Him there. But again they waited day after day, and Jesus did not come to them.

How vividly the Lake of Galilee reminded them of Jesus! There they had been chosen to be His disciples. From it they could see the mountain where Jesus had preached His great sermon about those who were blessed and about true righteousness and had taught them the Lord's prayer. Near there, also, He had fed the multitude and had performed many of His great acts of healing.

As seven of the disciples sat one evening by its blue waters, thinking of their Master, they saw the sailors hoisting their sails and going out in their boats to fish. Among the seven disciples were Peter, John, and his brother James, Thomas, who doubted no longer, and Nathanael, who had been a faithful follower of Christ ever since he had been persuaded, years before, that He was indeed the Son of God. After watching the boats, as, one by one, they sailed away, Peter suddenly sprang up and said, "I am going fish-

ing." Then said the others, "We will go with you."

So Peter hoisted the sail on his own boat and put the torch in the stern to attract the fish, and the disciples started. All night long they sailed up and down but they caught no fish. Weary from their hours of fruitless effort, they decided, when the first faint streaks of morning appeared in the sky, to give up and come in.

**The Miraculous Draught of Fishes.** As they neared the shore, they saw, in the faint light, a stranger standing on the white beach. "Children," He called (using the sweet term often applied even to grown people), "have ye aught to eat?" (or "Have you any fish?") "No," they answered. They thought that perhaps He wanted to buy some fish.

But He spoke again to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find." Had He perhaps seen a shoal of fish there, they thought. Quickly they obeyed Him and cast the net as He directed when—O marvel of marvels!—it grew heavier and heavier, so it was all they could do to hold it. John remembered that other scene when Jesus gave them the wonderful draught of fishes and then called them to be His followers, and turning to Peter, He said, "It is the Lord."

Impulsive Peter, upon hearing these words,



at once jumped into the water and swam swiftly to shore, as he could not bear to wait to reach his Master in the boat. The others, leaving their ship anchored, took the little boat which was fastened to it and rowed ashore, dragging the net after them.

**Jesus Gives the Disciples Food.** On the shore there was a little fire which seemed good to the disciples, after the long hours spent in the cold. On the coals a fish was broiling and a loaf of bread was near the fire. Jesus—for it was really He,—said to the disciples, "Bring of the fish which you have just caught."

Peter sprang up and, with the help of the others, pulled the heavy net up on the shore. Then they found that there were one hundred and fifty-three large fish, and yet the net had not broken. Then Jesus said, "Come and break your fast."

He took the bread and fish and gave them to the disciples. Would He show them first through the miraculous draught of fishes and now through this provision for their temporal needs that, in their work as fishers of men, they must look to Him for spiritual support?

**"Lovest Thou Me."** After they had breakfasted, Jesus turned to Peter and said, "Simon, son of Jonas" (his old name before he had become a disciple), "lovest thou Me more than these?"

Peter at once remembered that night before the crucifixion when, as they were going to Gethsemane, Jesus had told His disciples that they should all be offended because of Him and he had boastfully answered, "Though all should be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended." He recalled, too, how he had added, when Christ told him that he would deny Him, "Though I should die with Thee, yet will I not deny Thee." And yet he had forsaken Him and fled and, worst of all, he had denied Him thrice. Jesus indeed had come to him alone, since His resurrection, and had heard his confession of sorrow and repentance. Would He still remind him of his sin? These thoughts passed through the mind of the erring disciple, but Jesus wished the other disciples to know that He still loved Peter, in spite of his sin, and trusted him with His work. So He asked, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me more than these?"

Peter was no longer boastful. He did not reply as before, "I love Thee better than the others and would do more for Thee." He did not even use Christ's word for love, which meant a reverent love, based on well considered choice; instead, he replied

humbly, "Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee," the word he used meaning personal attachment and friendship.

Jesus said unto him, "Feed My lambs," that is, "If you care for Me, I will give you work to do for Me. Take care of the little children whom I love."

Again Jesus said to Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" And once more Peter answered, "Yea Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee."

And now Jesus said, "Feed My sheep." ("Guide and protect the grown people, also, whom I love.") Then Jesus said the third time, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" And now He used Peter's word, "Are you sure that you care for Me as a friend?"

Peter was grieved because He asked him the third time, "Lovest thou Me?" He knew that he had denied Christ thrice but he felt sure that Jesus knew how deeply he had repented. Surely Jesus must know that he loved Him, so he answered, "Lord, Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee." And now Jesus said, "Feed My sheep (a word which meant both sheep and lambs), that is, 'I want you to care for people, as I have done, guiding and protecting them, and giving them all that they need.'"

As Peter heard these words and knew that Jesus wished him to work for Him, in spite of his fall, his heart was filled with love and he was eager to enter upon the service.

"The true lesson of this scene is for all the disciples of Christ. We are all, through Peter's experience, admonished to show our love for our Master, not by asking permission to do great things (as to walk on the waves), not by refusing to accept His humiliation for us (as by refusing to allow the feet-washing), nor yet by professing what we will do in the hour of difficulty and danger (as by the assurance, 'I will not deny Thee'), nor even by entering into fierce battle against His foes (as by drawing the sword on Malchus), but by laying down the life in quiet, humble, self-denying service for the Master's sheep—the followers of Christ, the wanderers from the fold, and the weakest and feeblest in the fold."—Abbott.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Tell of another time when Jesus gave the disciples a miraculous draught of fishes. 2. Tell how He called Nathaniel to His service? 3. John writes that this is the third time Jesus showed Himself to his disciples after He was risen from the dead (v. 14); what were the other two? 4. Why did Jesus ask Peter three times if he loved Him? 5. What did He mean by feeding His sheep and lambs? 6. Give passages in which Jesus speaks of Himself as a Shepherd, or is called this name by others. 7. How did Peter serve Christ after this? 8. What death did he die?

**Practical Truths:** 1. Jesus asks each of us, as He asked Peter, "Lovest thou Me?" 2. Our answer should be given not only in words but in service. 3. In spite of our failures and sins, Jesus loves and desires us to work for Him. 4. While pursuing our daily work, we, like the disciples, may have a vision of our Lord. 5. As He provided warmth and food for them, so He gives us all that we need. 6. Through obedience the disciples received a rich blessing, so may we when we obey Christ's commands. 7. "The risen Christ on the eternal shore, unrecognized, guides His people's work on life's tossing sea."

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.





Then the eleven

into



into a



where  
Jesus had  
appointed  
them. And  
when they  
saw  
him they



but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in



and in



Go ye, therefore, and  
teach all nations,  
baptizing them in  
the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and  
of the Holy Ghost:



them to observe  
all things whatsoever I  
have commanded you:  
and, lo, I am with you  
always, even unto the end  
of the world. Amen.



**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MATT. 28:16-20. READ MARK 16:14-20; LUKE 24:46-48.**

**Prayer:** Dear Saviour, May we obey Thy last and great command. As the disciples felt themselves to be Thy witnesses and gave their lives to spreading the Gospel, so may we witness for Thee and devote our time, our money and our prayers to the work of missions. May we thus help to hasten the day when all nations shall know and worship Thee. For Thy name's sake. Amen.

"We've a message to give to the nations,  
That the Lord who reigneth above,  
Hath sent us His Son to save us,  
And show us that God is love.

"We've a Saviour to show to the nations,  
Who the path of sorrow has trod,  
That all of the world's great people  
Might come to the truth of God."

—H. E. Nichol.

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, probably early in May, A. D. 30. Place, a mountain in Galilee. Persons, Christ and His eleven disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** The Evangelization of the World. The ingathering of the nations prophesied, Isa. 52:10; 62:2; Psa. 98:2, 3; and the sending of missionaries, Isa. 52:7. The command obeyed: (1) By the disciples to the Jews, Acts 2:4, 32, 41; 4:20; 5:32; and to the Gentiles, Acts 8:26-39; 10:34-48. (2) By Paul to the Jews, Acts 13:5, 14; and to the Gentiles, Acts 13:46-48; 16:9-13; 17:22-31, etc.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. All power was given to Christ, but He used it in teaching, not in subduing, the nations; He wished them to give Him a voluntary, not a forced allegiance. 2. "His

power is exercised in patience, long-suffering and love and has its highest exemplification in the cross."—Abbott. 3. The knowledge of this power of Christ's gives strength to His disciples as they preach of Him. 4. The Jews kept their faith to themselves, but Christ's Gospel was to be preached to every creature. 5. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is adapted to all nations, as it is a universal religion. 6. We become disciples through baptism and we remain such through obedience to Christ's commands. 7. Christ's promise is "I am," not, "I shall be, with you." He is ever present, and as the promise was given in connection with His last command, we may be especially sure of His help in all our work for missions.

**CHRIST'S LAST COMMAND.**

**Christ Meets His Disciples.** Before leaving Galilee, Christ wished to have a last talk with His disciples, so He sent them word to meet Him on a mountain. As they waited, eagerly expectant, they saw Him approach, but so radiant was His appearance, so dazzling His face, that some thought an angelic presence drew near. Jesus, perceiving their doubt, came closer to them, so that they might see Him more distinctly and touch Him, if they chose. As they perceived that it was really their beloved Master, they bowed to the ground, in awe and deepest love, and worshiped Him. "All power is given unto Me," He said, "in Heaven and in earth."

Now indeed had He come into His Kingdom: not as King of the Jews only would He reign, though to Him was now given the throne of His father David, but His was a universal realm.

**"Go Ye Into All the World."** In establishing this Kingdom, He would allow His disciples to be co-workers with Him. "Go ye," He said, "and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And then He gave them a promise, the one of all others they would most rejoice to receive: "Lo, I am with you always," He said, "even unto the end of the world."

Never more should they be alone, never again without Him! If sad or discouraged, He would comfort them, if overburdened, His help would be theirs; His presence would lessen their sorrows, increase their joys and give them strength and inspiration. And the work He asked of them, how glorious it was! What a high privilege to tell others of Him, to make them His disciples through baptism, to teach them to do His will and to obey His commandments.

**The Last Command, Obeyed by the Disciples.** Joyfully the disciples listened, and faithfully did they obey this last command of their risen Lord and Master. After the Holy Spirit came upon them at Pentecost, they preached with all boldness. Weak and faithless Peter, who, terrified by a woman's question, had denied his Lord, became fearless and eloquent. Even before the dread council did he tell of Christ, and boldly declare that he should obey God rather than men and continue to preach, in spite of the commands of the chief priests. The other disciples, also, with equal fidelity, spread abroad Christ's Gospel, so that thousands were baptized in a single day.

**The Converts Proclaim the Good News.** And not only was the good news proclaimed by the eleven disciples; those, also, who had been baptized, took up the work, for Christ's last command was given to *all* His disciples,

not only to those whom He had called, but to all others who would be known by His name. Stephen's consecrated life and active service so aroused the opposition of the chief priests that he was stoned to death, and others suffered persecution. But this persecution only increased the number of Christians, for the disciples rejoiced that they were called to be partakers of Christ's sufferings.

**The Gospel Preached to the Gentiles.** And now they learned that it was not only to their own people that they were to proclaim God's love, as shown in the life and death of His Son: Peter, in a vision, was shown that to the Gentiles, also, was he to preach; Philip was sent to an Ethiopian eunuch; Paul heard and obeyed a call for help from Macedonia, and through Asia Minor, Greece and other countries he told of the Christ who was crucified for the sins of the world. Many of the disciples laid down their lives for the Gospel, but the terrible persecutions under the Roman emperors could not stamp out the new religion.

**The Gospel Carried to India by Carey.** And now the years pass and to other Christians does the call come. William Carey, teaching geography to the boys of his school, thinks of the countless millions in those far-away lands who know nothing of Christ. As he makes shoes in his little shop, he ponders over Christ's last command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

At last he gathers courage to present the subject at a meeting of ministers and, though receiving a severe rebuff at first, he persists in urging the duty of sending out missionaries. At length a society is formed and Carey is sent to India. The account of his life and work there reads like a romance; he preaches and teaches, he founds schools, he translates the Bible into the many different languages which are spoken in that country, undaunted by the hardships and perils which he is called upon to endure.

**Morrison Goes to China.** And as the Gospel was carried to India by Carey, so in China did Morrison labor to bring the people of that vast land to the Saviour. He was in constant peril of his life; at times he dressed like a Chinaman, ate with chopsticks and lived in the basement of a warehouse. But though it was seven years before he had a single convert, he was not discouraged, but kept constantly at his great task of translating the Bible into that most difficult tongue.

**Missionaries to Africa.** Into darkest Africa went David Livingstone, showing the black people the love of Jesus through his own life of loving service. He died to bring the light to that dark land and begged that the door which he had opened might never be closed.

**Judson Goes to Burmah.** Adoniram Judson was another hero whose life was filled with thrilling experiences, and through whose efforts two Missionary Boards were started in our own land. He was taken prisoner by pirates and cast into a French prison; he was refused permission to live in

India, after his long voyage out there, and being unwilling to return to America, he and his wife went alone to Burmah. After years of toil and hardship in that country, he was thrown into an awful prison and kept there for almost two years. But at last, largely through the efforts of "the Jesus man," as Judson was called, Burmah was opened to missionaries.

**The Gospel Preached to the Indians.** And in our own land we read of the great heroism of Marcus Whitman who, with his equally heroic wife, carried the good news of Christ's love to the Indians. He took one of the most wonderful rides ever recorded in history and was at length massacred by the red men to whom he had devoted his life.

**Other Heroic Missionaries.** There is not time to tell of Keith-Falconer, the Scottish nobleman and world renowned athlete, who left home, wealth and position to give his life to the Mohammedans in southern Arabia; of Queen Kapiolani, the converted Hawaiian queen, who dared the terrible fire goddess, Pele, in her burning lake of fire, to free her people from superstition and give them a knowledge of the true God; of Pundita Ramabai, who is devoting her life to the rescue and education of the poor little Hindu widows in India; of Dr. Grenfell, who, through countless perils on land and sea, has carried the Gospel to the people of northern Newfoundland and Labrador, those countries in the frozen North.

**Open Doors for Us to Enter.** All of these and countless more have given time, money and life itself to obey Christ's command. And now the countries are open to missionaries,—China, Japan, Korea, which were once hermit nations, India, Africa, the Isles of the Sea, all now welcome those who come to preach Christ's Gospel. But though the fields are white to the harvest, the laborers are few. Let us each one heed Christ's call and, if possible, carry His Gospel to some foreign land. But if we, ourselves, cannot go, let us do our share at home, helping with our time, our prayers, and our money to send the Gospel, so that, in this generation, all the nations of the earth may know and love our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How do we regard the last request of a friend? 2. What words in Christ's last command show that it was addressed to others besides the eleven disciples? 3. Give the life of some early missionary. 4. In what foreign country are you most interested? 5. Tell of the missionary work which has been done there. 6. Tell of some missionary whom you have known personally. 7. Are you going out as a missionary? 8. If not, what are you doing for missions?

**Practical Truths.** 1. "Christ's commission comes from an Almighty King and requires an aggressive ministry. 2. It defines Christianity as a universal religion, adapted to all nations."—Abbott. 3. It has been said that the question is not whether the heathen can obtain salvation, if the Gospel is not preached to them, but whether we can be saved, if we fail to obey Christ's last command. 4. When told that India seemed like a gold mine as deep as the center of the earth, Carey replied that he would go down if those at home would hold the ropes. If we cannot go to foreign lands, we can at least "hold the ropes" for those who do go. 5. When scornfully asked if he really expected to make an impression on the great Chinese empire, Morrison replied, "No, but I expect God will."

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



# JESUS ASCENDS INTO HEAVEN.

And he



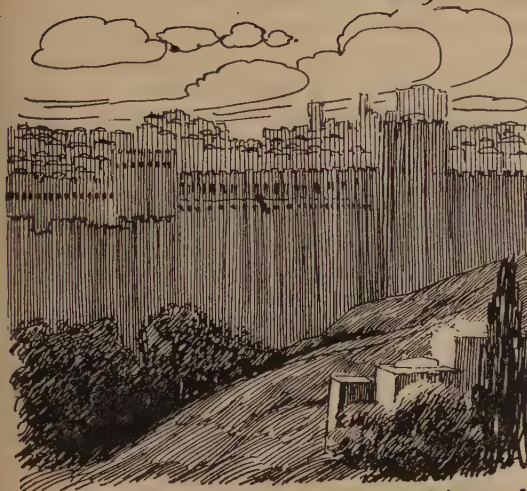
out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and



And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried



And they worshipped him, and returned to



with great joy: And were continually



praising and blessing God. Amen.

LUKE 24: 50-53.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS MARK 16:19, 20; LUKE 24:50-52; ACTS 1:2-12.

**Prayer:** O risen Saviour, Once more we thank Thee, with hearts overflowing with gratitude, for Thy life of loving service and for Thy sufferings and death. We rejoice that the grave could not hold Thee but that Thou didst ascend to Thy Father and our Father. We know that, at His right hand, Thou dost plead for us, as our Advocate and High Priest. Make us Thy loving, faithful followers here below and, at our death, take us to be with Thee in that bright world above. Amen.

"Hail the day that sees Him rise,  
Glorious to His native skies!  
Christ, awhile to mortals given,  
Enters now the gates of Heaven.

"See, the Heaven its Lord receives!  
Yet He loves the earth He leaves:  
Though returning to His throne,  
Still He calls mankind His own."

—Charles Wesley.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, May 14, A. D. 30. Place, Mount of Olives, near Bethany. Persons, Christ, His eleven disciples and two angels.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ parted from His disciples with a blessing, Luke 24:51; and left them with hearts filled with joy, Luke 24:52; He was seen in Heaven by Stephen, Acts 7:56, and John, Rev. 1:13-18; He came from Heaven to call Saul to His service, Acts 9:3-6. In Heaven, He prepares a place for us, John 14:2, where we shall be with Him, John 17:24. He sits at the right hand of God, Luke 22:69, where He acts as our Advocate, 1 John 2:1, our Mediator, 1 Tim. 2:5, and our High Priest, Heb. 8:1; 4:14-16; and from thence He shall come in glory, Matt. 26:64, to reward every man according to his works, Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46, and to give a crown of glory to those who love His appearing, 1 Pet. 5:4, 2 Tim. 4:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Christ's ascension to His Father denoted the completion of His work

upon earth. 2. Having beheld Him ascend into Heaven, His disciples no longer expected to see Him upon earth and they could thenceforth think of Him as their risen Lord, sitting at the right hand of God. 3. That the disciples still clung to their Jewish belief in the establishment, by the Messiah, of an earthly kingdom for their race, was evidenced by their last question to Him, but, in His answer, He strove to lead them to realize that, through their own work, they could hasten the coming of His universal realm. 4. The promise of the Holy Spirit was Christ's greatest promise to His disciples and to us, since, through Him, a consciousness of the Saviour's continual presence may be felt. 5. The Heavenly messengers were ever ready to carry the Father's words of comfort and enlightenment, and through their ministrations, the disciples returned to Jerusalem with hearts filled with joy, rather than sorrow, and eager to take up their great work of spreading the Gospel.

### JESUS RETURNS TO HIS FATHER.

**A Retrospect of Christ's Earthly Life.** At last the earthly days of our Saviour drew to a close. For thirty-three years He had lived in human form. He had been a wonderful Child, in His manger cradle in Bethlehem, adored by His Mother and worshipped by shepherds, and wise men from the East; a gentle, obedient Boy, in His home in Nazareth; and a great Teacher and Preacher, explaining and illuminating the law,—transforming it, indeed, so that justice might include mercy, purity be that of thought and look as well as deed, love be shown to the enemy as well as to the friend. He had performed wondrous acts of healing which drew about Him great crowds of followers. He had chosen as His disciples, fisherfolk, a publican, and other men of lowly station, whose lives He had strengthened, beautified and uplifted, so they might be His witnesses unto all men.

Then through days of decreasing popularity and increasing opposition and hatred, He had gone on His way, calm and serene, continuing His deeds of love and mercy. But at length the last days had come and His life had closed amidst scenes of unparalleled suffering,—the hours of agony in Gethsemane, when, alone with His Father, He had faced and accepted His awful fate, the unjust

and protracted trials, which, though deserted by His friends and scorned and buffeted by His foes, He had endured with marvelous patience and courage, and the terrible scourging, cruel mockery and awful death upon the cross, which had marked its end.

**The Price of Salvation Paid.** The end did we say? With joy and gratitude we may change the word, for Christ's life did not end thus. It was indeed the end of His work. By this great price was salvation bought for all mankind, and through His death, the demands of the law that the soul that sinneth it shall die, were fully met. But from the grave Christ rose triumphant, and by one marvelous manifestation after another, He removed the doubt and incredulity from the minds of His disciples and followers, and changed their sorrow into joy. In Jerusalem and in Galilee He met them, being recognized by His voice, in the breaking of bread, and through His appearance, which, though still human, had about it much of the Divine.

**The Necessity of the Ascension.** And now He must leave these earthly scenes, which were so dear to Him, and these disciples and friends whom He so tenderly loved. He must return to His Father and, in order to still further confirm the faith of His followers, He must do this in their sight. They



had learned that death had no power over Him; they knew that He could transcend human limitations, entering rooms through closed doors, appearing and disappearing from their sight, and now they must see Him rise towards Heaven, so they should no longer expect Him to be among them in His human form. But through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, they would learn that He was indeed still with them,—more really with them than when He walked by their side.

**The Promise of the Holy Spirit.** Once more He met them in Jerusalem and again He repeated His commission. They were to preach the good news that, through repentance and faith in Him, men might be saved, and they were to baptize those who believed. First in Jerusalem, then throughout all Judea, next into hated Samaria, and at last to all the world, they were to carry His Gospel and be witnesses of Him. But before starting upon this glorious mission, they were to tarry in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit, with whom John had foretold He should baptize them, had come upon them, giving them power for their great work.

**The True Nature of Christ's Kingdom.** When they heard these words, the disciples recalled Joel's prophecies, which foretold such an outpouring in connection with the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom, and eagerly asked, "Lord, wilt Thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"

But Christ would free them from their narrow Jewish prejudices. The Holy Spirit, whom He would send, would teach them that His Kingdom was a universal one, not to be confined to the Jews alone, as they had believed, but "open to all mankind, without distinction of race or rank, of bond or free, of barbarian or Greek, of Jew or Gentile." And the gift of the Holy Spirit would mark the establishment of this Kingdom. Later, He, Himself, would indeed come in glory, but of that He would not now speak. "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons," He replied, "which the Father hath set within His own authority. But ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, to do this great work with which I have entrusted you."

**Christ's Last Walk With His Disciples.** After this earnest talk, which they realized was indeed His earthly farewell to them, He led them out of the eastern gate of the city, across the brook Kidron, past the Garden of Gethsemane, where He had struggled

in agony and won His great victory, and up the Mount of Olives. Those who passed them saw only the eleven disciples, but not their Master, and thus did He manifest Himself to them and not to the world, as He had said He would do.

And now, as they were near Bethany, the home of His dearest friends, He took them aside to a retired place, hidden from both road and village. Below them lay Jerusalem, the city He loved and over which He had wept; the city which had rejected and crucified Him, and which still contained His tomb and refused to acknowledge His resurrection. We know not what thoughts filled His mind, as He gazed upon it, nor are we told what were His last words of farewell to His followers, but we know that they were full of tenderness and love for those who were so devoted to Him.

**The Ascension.** After speaking to them, He spread out His hands and once more invoked the Father's blessing upon His disciples. Then slowly He rose from the ground and floated up towards the sky, which has always been regarded as a symbol of the abode of God. As with eyes filled with love and longing, His friends watched His retreating form, a cloud received Him out of their sight.

**The Heavenly Welcome.** Let us follow Him as He rises through the air and let us listen to the words of the angels who have come down to meet Him (those words of the Psalmist's, which Handel has set to such wonderful music in "The Messiah"). "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."

"Who is the King of glory?" sing the angels within the pearly gates.

"The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle," comes the answer, in a strong chorus of those with Jesus. "Lift up your heads," again they sing, "O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."

"Who is the King of glory?" is once more questioned.

"The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory," comes the glad reply.

Thus we picture Christ returning to Heaven, not to resume merely His former state of glory, but to receive the added honor and approbation which His great work of bringing salvation to mankind merited, and to hear ten thousand times ten thousand angels and thousands of thousands singing His praise: "Worthy is the Lamb that was

slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, forever and ever."

**The Angels' Message.** But now we must return to Christ's friends, from whom He had parted. As with fascinated gaze, they continued to look up, behold, two men in white apparel stood by them, who said: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into Heaven? This Jesus, who was received up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into Heaven."

The angelic messengers, who announced Christ's birth, who came to strengthen Him in the wilderness after His temptation, and in Gethsemane, during His agony, and who announced His resurrection to the sorrowing women, now came once more to tell His followers of His coming again in glory.

**The Joy of the Disciples.** Their presence and their promise of the return of Christ in glory removed the last trace of sadness from the hearts of His followers. With great joy and with songs of praise, they went back to the city, for had they not seen their Lord return to Heaven. Now indeed they could say, "He lives; He is with the Father. We saw Him ascend, in His human Body, towards the sky."

From this time on they spoke of His return as a triumph (Acts 2:33-35; 5:31; Phil. 2:9-11), and they knew Him now as King of kings and Lord of lords (I Tim. 6:15). "Gradually Christ had raised their conception of Himself from a great Teacher to the Son of God, and then, through His resurrection, to the promised Messiah, the Conqueror of death, the Lord of all."

**Their Transformed Lives.** Now in Jerusalem the disciples could await with glad and eager expectation the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. And when their patient waiting was rewarded, they were transformed by that wonderful experience. From that time on, with boldness and faith, they preached Christ, telling of His life of love, of His suffering and death for the sins of the world, and of His resurrection and return to the Father.

**Christ Is Indeed Immanuel.** And still is it the task of Christ's followers to be witnesses of Him, and still their joy and high privilege to know that He is Immanuel, God with us. By going farther away, He has in reality come nearer. Were He in the world today, in human form, He could only touch, as He did when here, a limited number of people; He could only do His wondrous works in a very limited space, but now, through His Holy Spirit, He can be with His followers throughout the whole wide world. "His pitying eye still looks

upon us, His powerful hand still reaches out to save," and at the right hand of the Father, He ever maketh intercession for us. And we may be conscious, daily, hourly, of this Divine communion. "Speak to Him, thou, for He hears, and Spirit with

Spirit can meet—  
Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How did the sight of Christ's ascension add to the faith of the disciples? 2. What great gift did He promise them? 3. Why can the Holy Spirit do even more for Christians than Christ Himself could have done, had He remained upon the earth? 4. Describe the difference between the Kingdom of the Messiah, as the Jews had conceived it, and the Kingdom Christ came to establish. 5. Describe the change in the lives of the Apostles which Christ's resurrection and ascension produced. 6. Give verses of Scripture which tell of the honor given to Jesus because He had redeemed mankind. 7. What is now His exalted position in Heaven? 8. What offices does he perform there for His followers?

**Christ's Continued Influence.** "No life ends for this world when the body by which it has for a little been made visible disappears from the face of the earth. It enters into the stream of the ever-swelling life of mankind, and continues to act there with its whole force for evermore. Indeed, the true magnitude of a human being can often only be measured by what this after-life shows him to have been. So it was with Christ. His influence on the modern world is evidence of how great He was."

"The life of Christ in history cannot cease. His influence waxes more and more; the dead nations are waiting till it reaches them, and it is the hope of the earnest spirits that are bringing in the new earth. All discoveries of the modern world, every development of juster ideas, of higher powers, of more exquisite feelings in mankind, are only new helps to interpret Him; and the lifting-up of life to the level of His ideas and character is the programme of the human race." (Condensed by Blakeslee from Stalker's "Life of Christ.")

**Practical Truths.** 1. "Between us and Christ's visible presence—between us and that glorified Redeemer who now sitteth at the right hand of God—the cloud still rolls. But the eye of faith can pierce it; the incense of true prayer can rise above it; through it the dew of blessing can descend."—Farrar. 2. "The ascension is the guarantee for the continued existence of Him who became incarnate for our sakes, and for the continued effect of His work."—Sanday. 3. From our knowledge of Christ's life, which was filled with acts of love and mercy, we may know how tenderly He will intercede for us, as our Advocate and Mediator, in Heaven. 4. But if we refuse to accept Him,—if we spurn His proffered mercy—then He becomes our Judge and not our Saviour. 5. "In the days of His humiliation Christ walked among men seen but unknown; now the exalted and glorified Christ still walks among His followers known but unseen (Matt. 28:20). 6. Christ's ascension was prophetic of the experience of all who love Him, who are not only raised up together with Christ, but made to sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Luke 24:51.)"—Blakeslee.

LAURA ELLA CRAGIN.



SECOND DIVISION  
THE ACTS

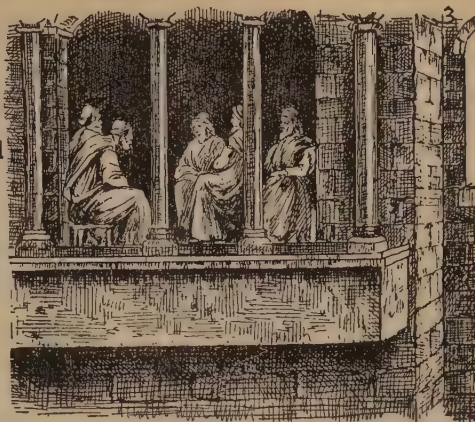




And when the day of



was fully come,  
they were all  
with one accord  
in one place. And  
suddenly there  
came a sound  
from heaven as  
of a rushing  
mighty wind,  
and it filled  
all the house



And there  
appeared unto  
them cloven  
tongues like as  
of fire, and it



And they were all  
filled with the  
Holy Ghost, and  
began to speak  
with other tongues,  
as the Spirit  
gave them utterance.  
And there were  
dwelling at  
Jerusalem Jews,  
devout men, out of



under  
heaven.  
Now  
when  
this was  
noised  
abroad, the



came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 2:1-36.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We pray for the giving anew of the Holy Spirit unto us, unto the church and unto the world. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Proceeding Spirit, our defence,  
Who dost the gifts of tongues dispense  
And crown'st Thy gifts with eloquence.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, the Apostles and other followers of Christ, the Jews and foreigners in the city.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Pentecost. The Feast of Weeks, Lev. 23:15; Deut. 16:10. Description of, Num. 28:26-31. Preparations for, Ex. 34:22. Private offerings at, Num. 28:26; Deut. 16:10-12. Restricted to one day, Lev. 23:21; 23:26. Mentioned in historical books, 2 Chron. 8:13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. "The Pentecostal gift furnished new evidence of Jesus' claim to be the promised Saviour. 2. The age of promise preceded and the people of God waited long; but then the fulfilment occurred suddenly." 3. "The Holy Spirit is given, not to the contentious and ungodly,

but to those who dwell together in unity, and continue in supplications and prayers." 4. "United prayers, when they are perseveringly offered, are specially acceptable and effectual." 5. "The human heart is never empty; in the same proportion in which it is delivered from the love of self, of the creature, and of sin, it is filled with the Holy Spirit. 6. O blessed fulness of the Holy Spirit! It does not burden, but rather lifts up the soul and impels it to adore God." 7. "The same measure and the same gifts were not bestowed upon all; nevertheless, each one was filled, receiving the measure of the Spirit which corresponded to his capacity, and to the work in which God designed to employ him."

### ONE OF GOD'S GREAT GIFTS TO MEN.

**The Gift Expected.** Jesus had been put to death; had risen from the grave and ascended into Heaven. Now the disciples were without His visible presence, but they were to carry on His work. He had promised that when He would leave them He would send them another Comforter. They had His promise. They knew what was to come. They knew that when they received this gift the future would be prepared for. Now they were expecting the fulfilment of the promise, preparing for it in the way Jesus had commanded. He had bidden them gather in Jerusalem, and to wait until endued with power from on High.

They were all in that city and were waiting. The believers had gathered together from all the region round about. "The day of Pentecost was fully come." That was an appropriate time. God often uses special occasions and seasons, though He does not limit His work to them. It is a mistake to underrate the value of special times and seasons, but it is also an error to make God's work depend upon them. God works how and when and where He wills. But there was a beautiful fitness in the coming of the great gift of God's Spirit on the occasion of a great Jewish feast, when multitudes were in the city, when the work could have opportunity to spread and touch many lives and people of many nationalities.

"They were all with one accord in one place." They were fulfilling the conditions. For a divine gift there is needed the readiness to receive. For a gift in common to many, united readiness, sympathy, unity of purpose are essential. A harmonious church, with union of spirits, devoted to one great

end, is the one that obtains the blessing. All friction, antagonism, selfishness, interfere and prevent the outpouring of the Divine favor. Being "in one place" was the natural and useful outcome of unity of desire. Christians who are really eager for the growth of God's kingdom, who are in harmony with their fellow-workers, will be moved to gather in one place: to the place of public worship. When, unless prevented by providential reasons, they do not so assemble, it is proof that their spirits are out of harmony with their Christian brethren.

God has many ways of working, of doing His wonders. There is infinite variety in the ways of Providence. Sometimes His footsteps are very noiseless and His presence can be discerned only by the gradual results. Again He speaks in the storm, in revolutions, in great and sudden changes in society and in the lives of individuals. Though in that special revelation to the Old Testament prophet, God was not in the storm or in the whirlwind, but in the still, small voice, that is not to say He is never in the storm. We are to seek for the signs of His presence in all. It was fitting that when the Holy Spirit descended upon the little band of Christians, at the beginning time of the Church, there should be such unmistakable manifestations of God's presence that no one could doubt, and such as would make all the people in that great city marvel.

"And suddenly there came a sound from Heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." They were a small group of people; they were not of the mighty ones of the world; they felt their own weakness; they



were to go out into the great world and meet all its enmities. It was good for them then that the manifestation should be one of power. Their Leader was no longer visibly present, and it was reassuring and encouraging to them that the new gift should come accompanied by signs of might. It was no feeble, silent force that was entering into their work and into their hearts, but a mighty one. As the Spirit came with sound and shaking, so they were to go forth to fill the earth with a message that would be mighty and would shake the world. We are not to confuse noise with spirituality, nor shouting with instruction, but on the other hand we are not to ignore that all great reformations and revolutions, both spiritual and secular, have had outward manifestations quite the reverse of quietude. While we are not to seek mere outward demonstrativeness, on the other hand we should not be too much afraid of this. Certain evils cannot be smitten down and destroyed quietly.

**"And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."** It was an impressive and significant symbol of the Gospel. It is good news to be proclaimed. It is to be made known by human speech, by the tongue. Its message was to shine and glow and burn like fire. "It sat upon each of them." Every one was to be a messenger, a missionary, with a tongue of fire, with a burning message. That which Christianity always needs is the uttered message that enlightens and burns. A church, in any age or place, with the tongue of fire, will win the world for God.

**"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."** God suits His gifts to the needs of the time and place. If the Gospel was to be proclaimed by that group of Christians they needed a supernatural endowment for it. They were to go into foreign lands, among people of many languages. There were already gathered in that city people who spoke numerous strange tongues. What could the Christians have done without some special gift? It is unlikely that any one there was accustomed to speak or understand more than one or possibly two languages. Because of the widespread use of Greek and Latin, it may be that a few of them could speak a little of these tongues, in addition to their native Aramaic. The Christians would have been hampered, and it would have taken

such unscholarly persons a long time to learn in the ordinary manner. But now they were miraculously gifted.

We are often told of the latent powers in nature, latent in steam, latent in coal, latent in electricity. When they are awakened and used, they change the face of the world. We have little conception of the latent power in any congregation. If it could be roused and used, miracles would be accomplished.

Rejoicing in this Divine gift of the Spirit and of tongues, they went out into the city and began to speak. This was noised abroad and "the multitude came together and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." The astonishment was the greater because the Christians were recognized as chiefly from Galilee, a province less in contact with the larger world and where the people mostly spoke but one language. Mention is made in Acts of the many nations represented in the multitude, and the variety of these made it all the more astonishing. Nothing else could have made a greater impression than that this group of representatives of Christ should suddenly have become able to address a cosmopolitan multitude in so many languages.

**The Scoffers.** But such as sought to find a base interpretation, mocked, saying, "These men are full of new wine." Only such could believe this as failed to recognize that the disciples were speaking correctly in several tongues, that to them sounded meaningless, as Chinese would to us. But the foreigners themselves, each recognized his own speech and were amazed.

Peter met this scornful criticism by a common sense answer, the force of which was felt by all, then and there familiar with the customs of that day. It was early in the day and Oriental people do not begin to drink wine at such an hour. Then Peter pressed upon the people the great truth that indeed the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Christians, as God's prophets had foretold, and that the ability to address all men in their own language was one of the signs of His presence. He then proclaimed Christ to them, with great power and with the result that many were converted.

**Practical Truths.** 1. God does not need to supernaturally endow us today with knowledge of foreign tongues, since he has given us means and abilities to learn for ourselves, if called on to go as missionaries. 2. Providence is just as much now in the fact that the Bible has been translated into all the languages of the earth. 3. The Holy Spirit comes as actually to us now as to the disciples of old. As they did, so we must observe the commands of Christ in order to receive the blessing.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



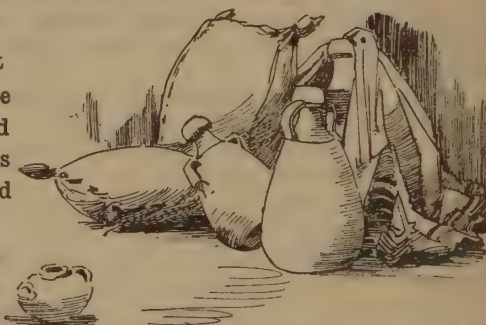
Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles'



And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the



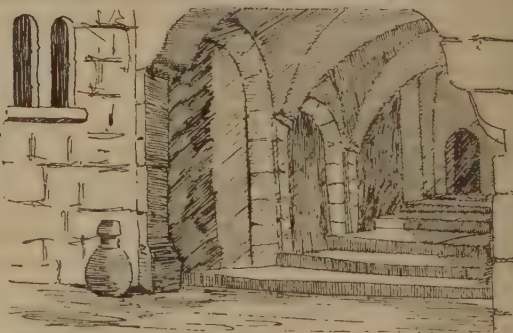
And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and



and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord



and breaking bread from house to



did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the



And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 2:37-41.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for Thy Church established in the world for our guidance, comfort and salvation, and for Thy honor and glory. Help us to reverence Thy house and to appreciate its privileges. In the name of Christ. Amen.

Beyond my highest joy  
I prize her Heavenly ways,  
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, the Apostles, other followers of Christ, and converts.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of the Church. The Church built on faith in Christ, Matt. 16:18. Persecution of, Acts 8:1; 12:1. The local church, Acts 13:1. Local government, Acts 14:23. Received by, Acts 15:4. Officers in, Acts 15:22. Establishing in faith, Acts 15:41. Feeding, Acts 20:28. The name of, 1 Cor. 1:2. Teaching in, 1 Cor. 4:17. Intelligible speech in, 1 Cor. 14:19. Messengers of, 2 Cor. 8:23. Head of, Eph. 1:22; 5:23. Subject to Christ, Eph. 5:24. Loved by Christ, Eph. 5:25. The Body of Christ, Col. 1:24. Preaching in, 2 Tim. 4:2. The corner-stone, Eph. 2:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Apostolic church has always been regarded as the real model for all churches, and it is evident that this should be the case. The various branches of the church do not agree as to what were all the features of the primitive organization of the Kingdom of Christ. But if we take the book of Acts as revealing to any considerable extent what these characteristics were, it is certain that the early church used no elaborate ceremonies. Ceremonies that have been added since the apostolic days may be justified, however, on other grounds than the earliest usage, if they have spiritual meaning.

### THE FIRST ARMY OF CHRIST.

**The Army Forming.** The dawn of a new day was just beginning. A few men and women were being gathered together, with one mind and one heart, that they might make warfare against the darkness of ignorance and sin. They had in their hearts the most beautiful and vital love for Jesus, who had been for years their Companion, Friend and Teacher. He had now gone from their sight, up into Heaven, but He had committed unto them the carrying on of His work. They were undertaking this mission, in spite of many difficulties and their own weakness, because of their great love for Him. They were a little band, but one that was to grow into a vast host, and it was formed not through hatred of others, as armies are often formed, but through a mighty love for the great Invisible Leader and through love for mankind. This was indeed a small company to entertain so ambitious a design as to change the world, but it was inspired by love, the most wonderful and powerful of motives, and it had the greatest of all Leaders, that is Christ. It was also making ready to meet and destroy the most terrible foes of mankind, sin and ignorance.

It was a very valiant band. There never were braver people than they nor any who were readier to meet all odds and suffer all consequences. They had seen their Leader on the cross, had seen Him triumph over death and ascend into Heaven. This experience and their love for and faith in Him had taken away all dread of death; so they were ready to carry His message and do His work without any fear at all. When you have an army with such motives and with such fearlessness, and with such a splendid

cause to do battle for, you may be sure the enemy will be put to rout.

**The Army Recruiting.** The first little band of Christ's followers, which He had gathered about Himself, was commissioned to add to themselves others who were of like disposition and who would give allegiance to their Captain, Jesus Christ. And now the Apostles, the disciples and all the men and women who had become followers of Christ were beginning to recruit their army. They were at first assembled in the city of Jerusalem. There the Holy Spirit came upon them and prepared them with wonderful gifts for what was before them. Their hearts were filled with a great message to other men.

**A Great Victory.** They began the warfare. It was opened by a sermon. We must remember that words are very real things—just as real as bullets—and they reach much farther and accomplish more than bullets do. "Ideas go booming through the world like cannon shot." To the vast multitude that was gathered in Jerusalem at that time, Peter preached. He preached about Christ, who had been crucified in that very city only a brief time before. He told the people that Christ had risen from the dead, that He was the Son of God and the Savior of men. He told them they were sinners and that they could be saved only through Christ, and that it was their first duty to repent of their sins. This onslaught of the little army produced a very great effect. Three thousand people surrendered to Christ and then joined His followers. That surely was a great victory, and was a promising beginning for the first little army of Christ. A full regiment consists of one thousand men. Now Christ's host had gained three regiments in one day.

Nobody had been hurt; no one had been killed. Three regiments had been won over from the enemy and no one was the worse off, except Satan.

**The Onward March.** This was merely a beginning. The Christians shortly afterward started out into all the region round about, and then into all countries, giving battle to every evil thing and spreading light and knowledge and salvation everywhere. The whole world has felt the redeeming power of the Christian army.

**The Officers.** Now every army has an organization of some kind, and the early church had its organization. It is undoubtedly true that the Apostles of Christ were the leaders at that time. Twelve men who had been with Christ during His ministry, who had been witnesses of His resurrection, had in their hands the organization of the Church to a large degree. But it is also true that all the other followers of Christ had some share and part in this founding of the Church. We are to remember that at this time all that pertained to the Church must have been of the simplest kind. The Christians had at first no church buildings of their own, but they met from house to house. There were no learned men among them until Paul was converted. They had no wealth. They met together in private houses, sang hymns, read the Scriptures, prayed, partook of the Lord's Supper, and exhorted one another.

**At Drill.** The converts were received into the company of believers through baptism with water, which rite signifies the washing away of sins. It is recorded that they "continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine," that is the teaching of those who had themselves been taught by Christ. There can be no intelligent religion without instruction, and these people who had just become Christians needed to be taught the simple truths about Christ and the way of life through Him. They also "continued in fellowship." They were received into the company of Christians; they met together in frequent worship; they talked and prayed together, and lived as much as possible with Christians. They "continued in breaking bread," that is in the observance of the Lord's Supper, in memory of His sacrifice. The Early Church undoubtedly observed the Lord's Supper much more frequently than is common now in most of the churches. "They continued in prayer." They communed with God as an ever-present Helper and Friend.

At the funeral of his son, who had died from dissipation, a prosperous business man said to a lifelong friend: "James, you and I have departed from our old relations to the church at the expense of the well-being and safety of our families. Though trained in the church, we have been led away, by prosperity, into pleasure-seeking. Sunday has lost its sacredness for us. We have deserted the house of God. We and our families have spent the Sabbaths in automobiles and in doing whatever we desired. You behold the result in my household. My daughters, who both married reckless men, are divorced, and are themselves thoroughly worldly. A year ago I buried my first son, who was wrecked by self-indulgence. Now I stand by the coffin of my last boy. Both perished through worldliness, too much money and dissipation. Had I kept my family in the church and lived as we used to live, my children might have been spared to me."

**True Comrades.** It is also recorded that the believers had "all things in common." It has at times been argued from this statement that the possession of private property is contrary to Christian ideals, but this is not the case. It is rather to be concluded that the early Christians gave as they could into a common treasury for the necessities of those who had nothing.

Being chiefly Jews at first, the Christians in Jerusalem still continued to follow certain Jewish usages. They went daily to the temple. It was not until later, after Paul had come into prominence, that the Christians separated themselves entirely from Jewish customs.

The early Christian army was characterized by gladness, by joy. "They ate their meat with gladness." After they grew in numbers and came in contact with the pagans, the latter were astonished at their happiness. They found the Christians the sunshiniest, most joyous people they had ever seen. And it was the evident happiness of the followers of Christ that won many a convert.

The first army of Christ was also notable for the fact that it was always winning others to unite with it. "The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The Christians were always enthusiastic, always diligent, always seeking converts and daily gaining some.

The first army of Christ succeeded wonderfully, and it should be an inspiration to us in all our work. It faced vastly greater difficulties than we now have to face. It had all the world against it. But it won by faith and love. It won chiefly because of its great love for its Leader. If we are to fight the battles of Christ successfully we, too, must have that deep and mighty love for the Captain of our salvation which His first followers had.

**Practical Truths.** 1. The Church is established in the world for the advancement of the Kingdom of God. It aims to save individuals and to reclaim the whole world for God. We should, in all our relations to it, keep clearly in mind that for which it exists. 2. Our personal interest in the Church will depend upon the regularity of our attendance at the services, and upon the spirit we bring to the work of organized religion. Irregular attendance is sure to destroy enthusiasm. 3. We should think not so much of what we can get from the church as of what we can bring to it. We should give not only money, but ourselves, our work and enthusiasm.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# THE LAME MAN HEALED.

Now Peter and John went up together

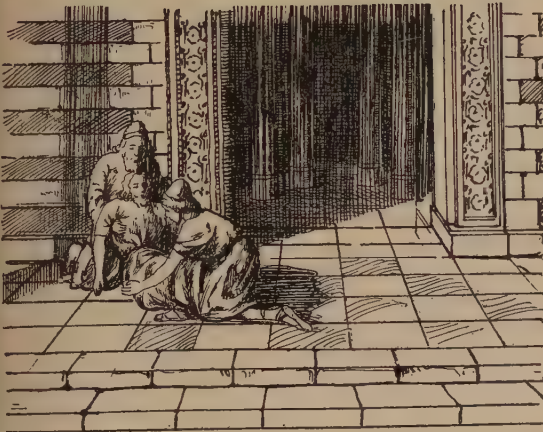


at the  
hour of  
prayer,  
being  
the  
ninth

hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb



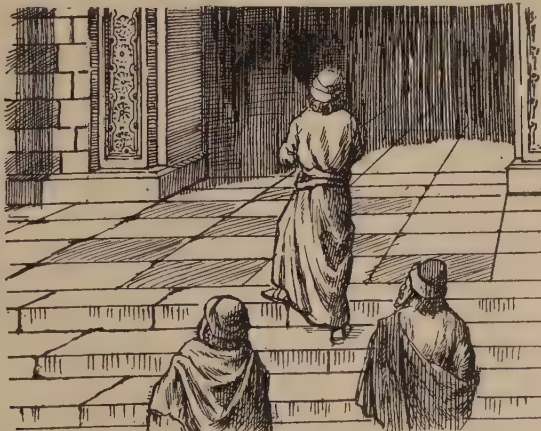
whom



daily  
at  
the



which is called  
Beautiful, to ask alms of



Who seeing Peter  
and John about to go  
into the temple  
asked an alms.

And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 3:1-16.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We also, like the lame man, would wait before Thy Temple and be healed of our infirmities. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"While Thy ministers proclaim  
Peace and pardon in Thy Name,  
Through their voice, by faith, may I  
Hear Thee speaking from the sky!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Peter, John and a lame beggar.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Miracles. Jesus approved by, Acts 2:22. God in, Acts 19:11. A gift of God, 1 Cor. 12:10. Jesus' first, John 2:11. Evidence of Divine mission, John 3:2. Evidence of goodness, John 9:16. Greatest miracle, Rom. 1:4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The greatest gift is spiritual health. We are morally sick by nature. Redemption through Christ restores us to normal condition. The lame man found the temple a good place, for there he was healed. The church is the place where we can most surely find help.

### A BEAUTIFUL DEED.

**A Beautiful Gate.** Beautiful gates, or doors, should lead into beautiful places, where beautiful things happen. And there never was a more beautiful gate than the one so-called that belonged to Herod's temple. There never was any place more beautiful than that temple into which it led. And there never was anything more beautiful happened than one event near that gate. The histories tell us of many wonderful gates of ancient, walled cities. Those of Thebes were very magnificent. Those of Troy and those of Athens were also wonderful. But we know of none more remarkable than those of the later Jewish temple, and of all these the one called Beautiful was the finest.

We have an accurate description of it in the writings of the historian Josephus. He says, mentioning several and then this one, "Now, nine of these gates were on every side covered over with gold and silver, as were the jambs of their doors and their lintels. But there was one gate that was without the inward court of the holy house, which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those that were only covered over with silver and gold." This was the Beautiful Gate. "Each gate had two doors, whose height was severally thirty cubits, and their breadth fifteen. However, they had large spaces within of thirty cubits, and had on each side rooms, and those, both in breadth and in length, built like towers, and their height was above forty cubits. Two pillars did also support these rooms, and were in circumference twelve cubits. Now, the magnitudes of the other gates were equal one to another; but that of the Corinthian gate, which opened on the east, over against the gate of the holy house itself, was much larger; for its height was fifty cubits and its doors were forty cubits; and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other. There were fifteen steps

which led to this greater gate; whereas those that led from the other gates were five steps shorter."

**A Beautiful Habit.** So we see this was a very wonderful gate. But still, with all its gold and silver and brass, it was not as truly beautiful as the event that happened near it, on the occasion of a visit of Peter and John to the temple. These two had gone up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the time of evening sacrifice, the ninth hour or three o'clock in the afternoon. They were still in the habit of observing certain of the Jewish forms of worship, but no doubt with a new view of these. It was a good errand they were upon, but even that was to be outdone by a certain event before they departed from that holy place.

**Helping Others.** What do you think is the most beautiful thing a human being can do? There may be many answers, but surely one of the very most beautiful is to help some one who is in distress. The greater his distress and the deeper his need, the more beautiful is the help. If some one has a hurt finger and you can bring a medicine that quiets that slight pain, that is worth while. But if you find some one in great peril of death and rescue him, that is still more worth while. Near that Beautiful Gate there was a man who was so lame that he had to be carried by others. He could not walk one step alone. More than that, he had been lame all his life. He had never taken one step in his life. While we have the use of our limbs and can walk and run and play, we have little idea what it means to be deprived of this strength and freedom. We take our soundness of limb as a matter of course. But when an accident occurs and we are confined to the house for a few days only, how hard we find it to bear this limitation of our freedom. What must it be to be lame all the time, and never to have known what running and playing mean. It



surely is a sad misfortune. At its worst it forces one to be dependent. The very lame cannot work, or can do only a little. So it is a sorrowful thing to be helplessly lame.

It is said that Galen, the great physician, was converted from atheism by study of the human skeleton. He defied any man in an hundred years to devise a more suitable location for a single member of the human body than Providence has already arranged for.

**Helpless.** Such a man now lay near the Beautiful Gate, whither some friends carried him every day; or perhaps he had to pay some one to do this by giving him a part of the results of his begging. For he was a beggar. What else could he be? What could he do, this helpless man? This added, if he had any natural pride, to his humiliation. For it is a dreadful thing to be a beggar; not to be able to earn your own food and shelter in this world; not to have any relatives, if you are helpless, who are able and willing to provide the common necessities of life. Oh it is sad to have to beg; to lay aside all pride and self-respect and to hold out your hand for the chance offerings of passers-by.

**Hoping.** On this afternoon, this poor man saw two men going by. They were Peter and John, but he did not know who they were. He cried out, no doubt with the whining tone that beggars commonly use, "Sirs, give me an alms. Pity me, a helpless lame man." The two noble followers of Christ stopped just as they were about to enter the temple. A glance of their compassionate eyes revealed the condition of the man. Peter said, apparently in a commanding way, "Look on us." The man's eyes were already upon them, but now he gazed intently, for his expectations had been aroused, since the men had stopped and were noticing him. His thought was, they are about to give me something. And that was true, though he was not to receive what he expected but something vastly better.

There are many beautiful gates in life to higher and better things: The Gate of Hope, the Gate of Love, the Gate of Character, the Gate of Faithfulness, the Gate of Prayer. Jesus Christ is the Beautiful Gate to eternal life.

The temple of religion has a beautiful gate in it; but in one important respect it differs from the beautiful gate of the Jewish temple. On the pillars on either side of that gate were engraved in Greek the words: "Let no stranger pass beyond this, on pain of death." Through the beautiful gate of the Gospel every one is free to enter into the holiest place. And that at all times.—Peloubet.

**Healed.** Then Peter quickly disappointed his expectation of money, saying, "Silver and gold have I none." The beggar's heart must have sunk at that. Why did these

men stop to tell me they have nothing to give? Peter went on, "but such as I have I give thee." Surely the beggar must have stared in astonishment; men without money were talking of giving him something! What could they give? Again Peter speaks, "In ing, but the command must have seemed to him idle. His glance must have fallen on his shrunken limbs and on his helpless feet that had never borne his weight during all the years of his existence. Perhaps he sank back disappointed, wondering if these men were mocking him. But at once the big man beside him reached down his great arms and lifted him to his feet and held him there a moment.

**Rejoicing.** What is this feeling that rushes through him? Some great change is happening in his body. He feels some power entering those crippled limbs. He tries to move his feet and is amazed to find that strength, unknown before, has come into feet and ankles. Why, he can stand alone! He can move his feet! He can take a step! He will see how far this wonder can go; he tries to leap, and he succeeds. Then from his lips breaks forth praise unto God. The two men, who have wrought this wonder in the name of Jesus Christ, are passing onward into the temple. He, too, calling loudly the praises of God, walking and leaping, follows into the house of God to worship.

All God's works are miracles. Luther, in a crisis of the Reformation, when the bravest had grown timid, wrote to a friend: "I have recently witnessed two miracles. This is the first: As I was at my window, I saw the stars and the sky and that vast and glorious firmament in which the Lord has placed them. I could nowhere discover the columns on which the Master has supported His immense vault; and yet the heavens did not fall. And here is the second: I beheld thick clouds hanging above us like a vast sea. I could neither perceive the ground on which they reposed, nor cords by which they were suspended; and yet they did not fall upon us, but saluted us rapidly and fled away."

**Practical Truths:** 1. We can find relief for every trouble in Christ. 2. When one appears to be in the most desperate situation he may at that moment be on the very verge of speedy relief. The friends of the lame man carried him that day to the gate in what seemed a hopeless condition. Before the sun had set he was healed. 3. Miracles, in the ordinary meaning of the word, may not be wrought today, yet it is undoubtedly true that God is constantly working wonders in all realms through the means He puts into our hands. 4. Learn to take every difficulty to Christ. Either the matter will be remedied or you will be made equal to meeting it. 5. The lame man, when healed, burst into praise to God. Let us not forget to render gratitude to the Heavenly Father for all mercies. 6. Beautiful as was the Beautiful Gate, it had no power to help the lame man. Art cannot take the place of religion. In Christ alone is our help.

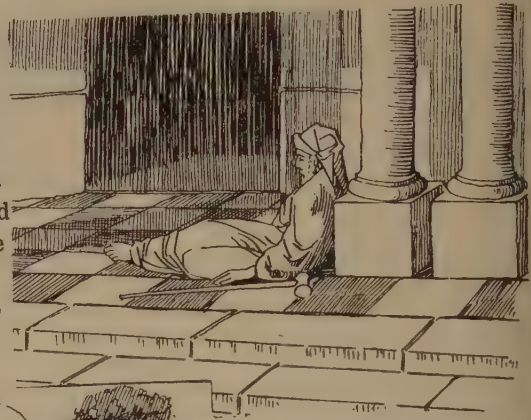
DR. C. D. WILSON.

# PETER AND JOHN BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and



of Israel,  
if we this  
day be  
examined  
of the good  
deed done  
to the  
impotent



by what means he  
is made whole; be  
it known unto you  
all, and to all the



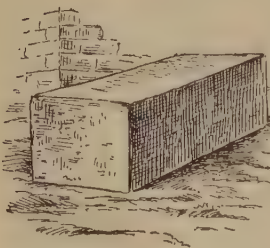
of Israel, that  
by the name  
of Jesus Christ of  
Nazareth, whom ye



whom God



even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the



which  
was set  
at nought  
of you



which is  
become  
the head  
of the



Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ACTS 3:11-25 AND 4:1-31.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we learn from this lesson not to fear what man can do unto us. Help us so to love and trust Thee and Thy Word, that

we may have confidence under all circumstances. May we realize that Thou dost take care of Thy children always. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Peter and John, Annas, and other members of the Jewish Council.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Suffering. Benefits of, Job 5:6, 7, 17; Ps. 94:12. Consolation in, Gen. 21:17. Impenitence in, Lev. 26:23-24. Prayer in, Exod. 17:4; Ps. 3:1. Prayer of afflicted answered, Ps. 22:4-5. Manasseh, 2 Chron. 32:20-23. Hezekiah, 2 Kings 13:4. Daniel, Dan. 2:19-23. Leper, Matt. 8:2-3. Centurion, Matt. 8:5-13. Design of, Deut. 8:2. Deliverance from, Exod. 6:5; Ps. 34:15, 17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The experience of Peter and John before the council suggests the weapons by which Christians, younger or older,

may meet unbelief and antagonism. 1. The weapon of Christ's name—the Apostles made it clear that the power which healed the lame man was of Christ. 2. The weapon of the proved deeds of Christianity—the healed man was a living testimony. 3. The weapon in our own hearts of the Holy Spirit—"then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said." 4. The weapon of a holy boldness is what we know to be the cause of right and truth. 5. The weapon of clear, pointed statements of the sins of those we would convince. 6. The weapon of having been with Jesus and making it undeniably so appear. 7. The weapon of calm confidence in our cause and in the protection of God.

### BRAVE MEN IN THE HANDS OF FOES.

**Gaining Courage.** Courage is always a fine quality, but it is particularly admirable in any one who has been timid and has overcome that feeling. This is so for the reason that into such bravery enters a spiritual quality. Such courage is a victory not merely of the body but of the mind and soul. One may be so strong and hardy in body as scarcely to know what fear means; and bodily hardihood is good and serviceable. But when one knows what fear is and then overcomes it he has achieved something by moral power. So moral courage is regarded as a higher quality than bodily bravery alone. It is not justifiable to say that Peter and John had ever been cowards, though they had done cowardly deeds. Doubtless they, as fishermen, had faced storms of all kinds, severe toil, hardships, dangers by land and water, many times. While in the company of Christ, they had usually been daring enough. But when Jesus was arrested by His foes, these two, with all the other disciples, fled. At the trial, Peter denied Jesus with oaths. But now they had gone far past the stage of fear and were courageous as lions. The boy or girl should not, therefore, become discouraged if occasionally timid, but should realize that by moral and spiritual means this weakness may be overcome.

**Changed Men.** Now we behold Peter and John changed into entirely fearless men. Sometimes people rush into danger without knowing it, but that is not courage; it is blindness. But Peter and John saw the danger clearly and then faced it without a tremor. When the lame man had been healed

at the gate of the temple a great multitude ran to see him. Men and women in that city were just like other people, and certainly if today a man in our community were cured of a serious lameness, which all of us well knew had long afflicted him, everybody would hasten to see him and to find out all about what had happened. So the Bible tells us the people of Jerusalem assembled. It tells us also that they hurried to the place where he was; "the people ran together unto them." When Peter and John saw this multitude gathering they knew perfectly well that before it dispersed they personally would be involved in trouble. They knew that the enmity of the priests to Christ and His cause was as bitter as before the crucifixion, and that a miracle done by His disciples, and the gathering of a crowd on that account, would center this hatred upon them.

**Power from Christ.** But they cared nothing for that fact. They saw something more important; an opportunity to preach to the multitude about Jesus. Then Peter began to speak. If he and John had been ambitious, selfish men, they would have allowed the crowd to make heroes of them and to believe they had done this miracle by their own power. But their conduct is a beautiful example to all who are tempted to grow vain because of what they can do with their talents. Our talents are really gifts from God. Peter turned attention at once from themselves to Christ. He said, "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" Then he preached to them of Christ, saying, "His name through faith in His

name hath made this man strong." He proclaimed that Christ had risen from the dead, and called upon them to repent.

**A False Arrest.** The guard of Levites that kept order in the temple heard the noise of the great crowd. The priests and the Sadducees looked on from afar, asking of any who passed by what had occurred. Some replied, "The lame beggar has been healed." "The disciples of Jesus, whom you put to death, performed the cure." "The people are being told by the disciples of the crucified Man, that He has risen from the dead, that He is the Messiah, and that it was by His power the beggar was cured." So the news came to the foes of Christ. They were startled. Evidently, the multitude was being influenced by what these disciples were saying. Something must be done to interfere. A Sadducee said, they are re-teaching that false doctrine about a resurrection, and should be silenced. Another declared they could not interfere merely on account of a doctrine. "Arrest them, then, for making a tumult in the streets!" cried another. That would serve as an excuse, so the captain of the guards of the temple ordered his men on and on through the crowd, on to where Peter and John stood. "Arrest them!" cried the captain, and his men laid hands on them. Peter and John were not surprised. They made no resistance, for their Master had made none, and they followed His example. Once Peter would have fought, but Jesus had taught him better. They are led away and a prison door opens; they pass in and it shuts behind them. This was the reward they received from men for healing the lame man. But they did not complain; neither had they expected aught else. Their Master had been crucified for teaching the purest truth and for living the best and most loving life conceivable. Moreover they knew that a victory had been won for Christ. The multitude had been reached; and as it proved, five thousand men were led to believe.

The good minister, Dr. Samuel Rutherford, was many years ago put in prison for conscience sake. While he was thus confined he used to date his letters "Christ's Palace, Aberdeen" (Scotland). He wrote to a friend, "The Lord is with me; I care not what man can do. I burden no man. I want nothing. No king is better provided than I am. Sweet and easy is the cross of my Lord. All men I look in the face, of whatsoever rank—nobles and poor. My chains are overgilded with gold. No pen can express to you the loveliness of my only Lord Jesus."

**A Plot.** That night there was much converse among the rulers of the Jews as to

what could be done to get rid of these Christian disciples and to end their influence with the people. Many things were suggested, but it was still not clear what could be done in any effective way. On the next day, the guards brought John and Peter out of their wretched prison and led them to the palace of Annas, the high priest, where were present also Caiaphas, Alexander, John and other relatives of the high priest. Peter and John sat down in the midst of these high officers of the Jewish nation as calmly as they would have done with a group of fishermen by the Lake of Galilee.

**Forbidden to Speak.** When the high priest had seated himself, he said, in his most impressive and dignified way, that would have cowed many a man, "By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" There was no denial that a miracle had been performed. The question was how it had been accomplished.

It might have been expected that, while Peter might address without embarrassment a general crowd, the apostle would feel some timidity and difficulty in speaking before the highest official of his nation. He seemed to be an unlearned fisherman. But he spoke with such ease and fluency that his hearers marveled. He declared the miracle had been done by the power of Christ, who, he said, had risen from the dead, and in whom alone is salvation. The confidence, the faith, the directness of this speech proved that the disciples could not be overawed. Looking around, the priests beheld the man who was healed standing by, so there was no possibility of denying the miracle.

**At Their Wits' End.** Quite at a loss how to deal with such a case, the priests held a private conference. They said among themselves it was plain a miracle had been done, and that it would be useless to deny it. The only method to prevent the influence of this wonder spreading among the people was to forbid the apostles to speak again in the name of Christ. This would have been a simple way if it had been effective. But when Peter and John heard the command not to speak further in the name of Christ, they put their foes to confusion by replying, "We cannot but speak the things we have seen and heard."

**Practical Truths.** 1. God uses courageous people, or He makes the timid brave. 2. A simple, faithful Christian may often disconcert the boldest worldling. 3. The truth cannot be successfully silenced. 4. Unjust imprisonment, for the sake of truth or right, often proves advantageous to the truth and gives it wider hearing and influence.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



# ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his



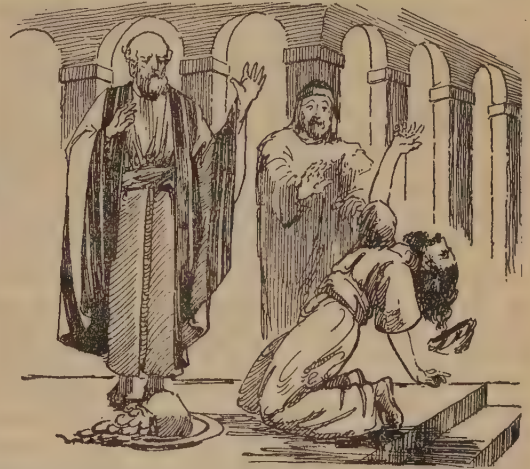
sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and



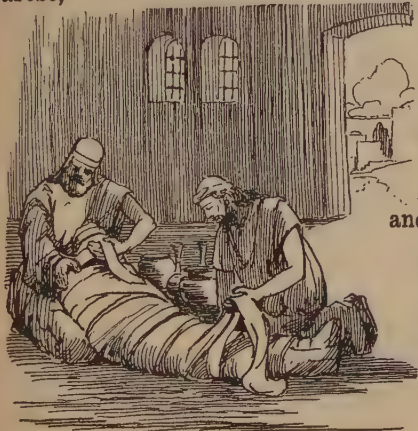
But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto



but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words



and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose,



and



and





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ACTS 4:32 AND 5:1-11.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we learn from this lesson to be sincere and true. Forbid that we should try to deceive men or God. Deliver us from

all hypocrisy. Create in us clean hearts and renew within us right spirits. In the name of Christ. Amen.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Ananias, Sapphira, Peter, other apostles and the congregation of the Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** Study in Lying. The devil, Gen. 3:14; John 8:44. Cain, Gen. 4:9. Sarah, Gen. 18:15. Jacob, Gen. 27:19. Samson, Judges 16:16. Michal, 1 Sam. 19:14. Gehazi, 2 Kings 5:22. Peter, Matt. 27:72. Forbidden, Lev. 19:11; Col. 3:9. Hateful to God, Prov. 6:16-19; 12:22. Hinders prayer, Isa. 59:2-3. Connected with hypocrisy, Isa.

57:4. Will be detected, Prov. 12:5. Punished, Psa. 5:6. Excludes from Heaven, Rev. 21:8, 27.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** This teaches the fatal nature of hypocrisy. 1. The sin brought punishment at once. 2. The consequences vividly emphasized the magnitude of the sin. 3. The exposure was before many witnesses. 4. Peter merely reproved, but the punishment came from God. 5. Peter had no authority or right to take life, but God, who gives it, has the right to make an end of the unworthy.

## STAINED NAMES.

A great poet wrote these words, "One sad losel stains a name for aye." Losel is an old word for scoundrel, and the sentence, put in more prosaic form, means that one scamp, if he is notorious, injures his family name forever. Thousands of good people may have borne it and have made it honorable, while one rascal can render it infamous. It is quite certain that you never knew a boy whose parents had him baptized as Ananias, nor a girl who was called Sapphira. And yet these were both honorable names until two people, of whom we read in the book of Acts, disgraced them. To show what fine names they were before that, we may remind you that Ananias is the Greek form of Hananiah, and it means "Jehovah has graciously given." Sapphira is probably from the Aramaic language and means "beautiful." Was it not too bad that a name which means God's Gift and one that signifies Beautiful should be dragged down into the mire and soiled so that all the ages since have not cleansed them! More than that, several very excellent men are mentioned in the Bible by the name of Ananias and they deserve to be remembered, but the bad Ananias stained the name so that when we mention it we think not of the good men but of the hypocritical one.

**No Boys Now Called Judas.** There are a great many stained names in the world, names which no intelligent parents would ever think of giving to their children. Did you ever know a boy named Judas or Esau or Ishmael? Probably not, and if you did their parents should have known better than to christen them in this manner. But you know many boys called Abraham, John, Matthew, Mark, Peter, David, and their names trace back through the ages to the great, noble men who were so called. You

know many girls named Sarah, Mary, Hannah, and the like, christened after the splendid women of the old times who made these words shine by their fine character.

The story of the disgrace of the names Ananias and Sapphira begins in this way. They had joined the Christian church. Perhaps they had been awakened by the sermons of Peter and had been carried along with the enthusiastic multitudes who joined the church in great numbers at that time. It is probable that to a considerable extent they were sincere. They accepted Christ as the Savior of the world. They enjoyed meeting with the Christians and taking part in their worship. Since men and women are neither wholly good nor wholly bad, we have no reason to assume that these two had no good qualities or aspirations at all.

**Love of Praise and Love of Money.** But there was mixed with whatever of sincerity and goodness they had in them, two dangerous things. These were the excessive love of praise and love of money. Oftentimes there is a very narrow line between a good quality and a bad one. Proper self respect, a just valuation of righteous public opinion, an honorable desire for the good will of our fellow beings, are virtues. But if these virtues begin to be exaggerated they may come very close to vanity, over-much love of praise and a gross egotism. The proper desire for financial independence, honest and just accumulation of goods and right use of money, are virtues. But honest thrift may be perverted into a craze to get money at any cost and in any manner, and there may grow such love for money for its own sake as to make it master of all other desires.

**The Common Treasury.** In the beginnings of the Christian church most of the followers of Christ were poor. Certain Jews who had been fairly



prosperous were cast out by their brethren for becoming Christians and their business was destroyed. So it became necessary that the Christians should care for the needy. To this end they had a treasury to which all who could contributed. In many cases only a little was given. In other instances men and women sold part of their property and added the result to the common fund. In a few cases certain people sold all they had and gave all. There was no uniformity; there was no rule; there was no compulsion. It was a voluntary matter. The principle was that none should be allowed to suffer. It is clear that all did not give their whole property or so much stress would not have been laid upon the exceptional sacrifice of Barnabas, who did give everything he had. There would have been no point in praising his conduct if everyone else had done the same thing.

**The Second Great Crime.** This was the situation when Ananias and his wife Sapphira were misled by the love of money and of praise to commit a great sin. This has been called "the second great crime which stained the profession of Christianity—the treason of Judas having been the first—and which called down a judgment as signal. "Ananias and Sapphira wished to gain distinction among the Christians and they desired to do this without deserving it. They were vain and selfish. Barnabas had given all that he owned to the Apostles and he stood as a shining example of sacrifice and beneficence and unselfishness. Everybody admired him, everybody praised him, his name was on all lips. As the Apostles were the great leaders in organization and in preaching, so Barnabas was the conspicuous man of generosity and philanthropy.

**Man and Wife Plot.** Ananias and his wife talked it all over by themselves. We too will make a name for generosity. We too will be talked about. We too will have the Apostles praising us. We will sell that piece of land; tell nobody what we get for it; put away part of the money and then at a public meeting, when everybody is present, we will go forward and lay down the part of the money, pretend it is all, and so have the praise and still have the rest for our own use. They convinced themselves this was right. It was their money, and they would give what they chose and none would be the wiser. They overlooked what Peter later pointed out as the wrong in their conduct.

**The Sale.** So the sale was made. The money was in the hands of the man and his wife. They counted it out into two piles. They discussed the division time and again. They took the part they decided to keep for themselves and hid it away. There was to be a meeting of the Christians the next day.

The Apostles were to be ready to receive offerings for the general good. Ananias decided on the plan.

**The Bag of Money.** The hour came, and the Christians were assembled. Ananias, with a bag of money, came through the door. He started across the floor. He had a bag of money in his hand. All eyes were upon him. With pompous manner he strode forward, laid down the coins, and announced that he had sold a piece of land, and was happy to contribute the price of it to the common treasury. The people nodded approval at this beneficence. But Peter fixed him with his eyes, and said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."

**Ananias' End.** Unmasked thus publicly; disgraced where he had thought to win praise; seeing clearly that his deception was not only before men but before God, Ananias was overwhelmed. He shuddered, gasped, fell down and died.

Then, in obedience to the command of the Apostles, the young men came forward, wrapped him in sheets and carried him out for burial.

**Sapphira's End.** Three hours later, his wife, not knowing what had taken place meanwhile, came in. Peter at once asked, "Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much?" And she said, "Yes." Then Peter cried, "How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold the feet of them that have buried thy husband are at the door and shall carry thee out." Instantly, Sapphira fell down and died, and the young men wrapped her form in linens and carried her away for burial.

**Practical Truths.** 1. A lie may be acted as well as spoken. It consists in the intention to deceive. 2. Hypocrisy tends to undermine everything good in character. The beginnings of deception are the beginnings of decay of character. Evil grows to a point where it becomes master. 3. We cannot overrate the value of sincerity of speech and act. 4. Sins are not merely against men, but against God. 5. Jugglings with conscience are always perilous. Ananias and his wife perhaps to a certain extent deceived themselves. They reasoned that they were doing a generous act, were giving voluntarily a part of their money. This would have been all right if they had so declared. But they were marning a good act by accompanying it with deception.

DR. C. D. WILSON



Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation, and



and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night



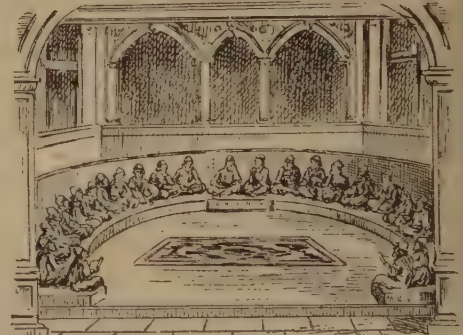
and



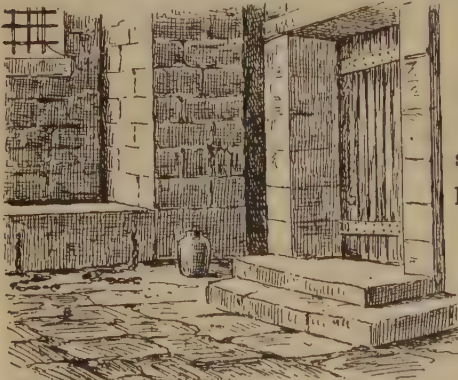
and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered



early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called



together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came, and found them not in



they returned, and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the



but when we had opened, we found no man within.



**THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ACTS 5:12-42.**

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that Thou art the great Deliverer, the same yesterday, today and forever. We thank Thee for the ministry of Thy shining ones. Help us to realize that Thou art

**THE SUBJECT IN**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 30. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Peter, John, the high priest; the Sadducees, Gamaliel, prison guards and people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Persecution. First foretold, Gen. 3:15. Of Jesus foretold, Isa. 53:2-10. Jesus persecuted, Matt. 2:13; Luke 4:28-29; John 5:16; Matt. 26:27. Righteous persecuted, Job 1:12; Jer. 38:6. Three Hebrews, Dan. 3:8-23. The Baptist, Matt. 14:3-12; Apostles, Acts 12:1-4. The Church, Acts 8:1; Paul, 2 Cor. 11:23-33. Others, Heb. 11:25-38. Purpose of, 1 Cor. 4:9-11; Acts 8:4. Rewards of, Matt. 5:10-12; Isa. 43:2. Conduct under Matt. 5:44. Victory in spite of, Rom. 8:17, 35-37.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The righteous are persecuted, while sinners often enjoy popular favor. 1. Goodness is a living reproach to evil-doers and

ever watching over us and that Thy loving care protects us on every side. Make us patient and trustful under life's prison experiences, that we may honor Thee. In the name of Christ. Amen.

**ITS RELATIONS.**

renders them uncomfortable. 2. The unrenewed heart is in natural antagonism to holiness. 3. The summons to repentance involves acknowledgment by word and life that one has been wrong, and this is repugnant to the unregenerate heart. 4. Obedience to God sometimes calls for social changes and losses, and many men rebel against such reformations. They prefer to have present abuses continue rather than submit to the discomforts of an upheaval. 5. The wicked therefore break forth in denunciations, endeavor to make it appear that the righteous are in the wrong, are revolutionists and incendiaries. They strive to silence them by persecution. 6. Every worker for God must count upon the antagonism of evil men. He must be ready to meet it in the strength of his Master.

**FREED BY ANGELS.**

Milton declares that "millions of spiritual creatures walk this earth, both while we sleep and while we wake." The Bible teaches the existence of angels. Would it not seem strange if the Almighty had never made any higher beings than ourselves? Have you ever watched a sunset, with all its marvels of color beyond human description? Does not all that splendor seem that it was made to be appreciated? Does it not suggest a vast host of spectators to enjoy it? Is it not quite unbelievable that the Creator lavishes all that glorious spectacle in the sky simply for occasional glances of heedless men and women, most of whom scarcely cast their eyes toward it? The wondrous beauty of the universe would of itself lead one to conclude that there are hosts of beings everywhere to enjoy the works of the Supreme Artist.

**Higher Beings Than Man.** Then God uses means. He works through causes. Is it not natural to think that He has hosts of messengers whom He sends on His errands? The word angel means "the one who is sent." We see in this world many orders of beings, grading from the lowest creature up to the highest man. It is reasonable to suppose that the gradations continue above man, in rank after rank. The Scriptures teach that the angels are beings of higher rank than man, with finer and more perfect powers.

**Awe in the Church.** Now these higher beings, angels, appear in this story lesson. After the death of Ananias and Sapphira for lying and hypocrisy, great awe came upon all the Christians. They were made very serious. They realized more completely that God requires absolute sincerity

in all His people. This event also made worldly-minded outsiders hesitate to join the church; but there were many conversions among the more earnest persons. Miracles and signs were wrought continually. The people throughout the whole city and region round about heard of the cures that were performed, and they came in great crowds to the vicinity of the temple, where the Apostles daily preached.

**More Miracles.** The sick were brought on beds and couches into the streets, that even the shadow of Peter might fall on them as he passed. And the sick and those who had unclean spirits were all healed. Such a stir had not been known since when a few years before that Jesus had wrought His wonders and the multitude had followed Him. The Jewish authorities who had put Jesus to death and had believed that would be the end of His influence were now amazed and perplexed to find the Apostles were doing as their Master had done, and were leading the multitude away from themselves.

**Plotting.** The leaders of the Jews gathered together and conferred as to what could be done. They agreed that something must be done. If this work of the Apostles continued to grow the whole city would become Christian. The high priest and the Sadducees declared that, whatever came of their action, these men must be silenced. They therefore voted to order their arrest. They said, "Put them behind prison walls." The command went forth to the officers of the guard. The Apostles were taken by force, led away and shut up in the common prison, an ill-smelling, foul, wretched place. "Now," said their foes to each other, "they will not disturb us further. We will keep

them behind stone walls, and if necessary we will have them put to death."

The fathers of the Christian Church taught that every human being, from birth to death, is accompanied by an angel appointed to watch over him.

**In Prison.** But, like all evil-minded men, they forgot God. They forgot that God works differently from men. They forgot that to God stone walls are as the mist that rises and vanishes. Armed men stood day and night before the prison doors, but God is mightier than soldiers. The Apostles within their prison were at perfect peace. They knew they were engaged in Christ's work and that in His own time and way the path would be opened for them.

**A Heavenly Visitor.** They went to sleep as calmly as if in their own home. Outside the doors stood the guards. Around them were stone walls. Windows and doors were shut fast and barred. But suddenly there appeared to the Apostles a Heavenly being. He stood over them and roused them from their sleep. He bade them follow him. And, rising up, he and they passed through doors that opened at their approach. They walked past soldiers, who gave them no more heed than if they had become invisible. The doors swung shut once more. The angel led them on into the street, and said, "Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." Then he vanished. The servants of the Lord were free.

**At the Temple Again.** When morning came the Apostles appeared in the temple as if nothing had happened, and began to teach. At a later hour the high priest called the council together and there assembled with them the senate of Israel, composed of the elders, ready to confer as to further action in regard to the Apostles. They wished the prisoners brought before them, and to that end they sent officers to bring them. But soon the officers came back with the astounding news that the prisoners were not to be found. The doors had been found shut and the keepers were standing guard, but when they had looked within they found no man.

**Their Foes Amazed.** Great was the astonishment of all who heard this report. What could have happened? Where were the prisoners? To what will all this grow? While they were pondering over these troublesome questions a breathless messenger ran in, crying, "The men whom you put in prison are in the temple, preaching as be-

fore." Amazement filled all hearts. But the high priest recovered himself sufficiently to order the guard to bring the Apostles from the temple. Now the captain of the guard saw that the sympathies of the multitude were with the Apostles and that violence on his part might enrage the crowd against himself. So he quietly asked the Apostles to accompany him, which they fearlessly did.

**Refuse to Be Silent.** Once more before the authorities, they were asked, "Did not we command you that you should not teach in the name of Jesus? Behold you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine. You are trying to bring the blood of this man upon us. But Peter and the other Apostles answered, "We ought to obey God rather than man. God has raised up Jesus, whom you slew, and exalted Him as Savior, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins. We are His witnesses."

**Gamaliel.** Cut to the heart, his hearers conferred together what should be done. Most of those present declared that the Apostles should be put to death. But Gamaliel, one of the wisest men of his day and a good man, advised that nothing be done. He declared that more than once agitators had risen and it had seemed as if they would overthrow all things, but in time they and the excitement they stirred up had passed away. He advised to let these men alone; that if their work was of men it would come to nothing, but if it was from God it would be folly to fight against God. His wise counsel prevailed, and it was decided to let them go.

**Rejoicing in Suffering.** The Apostles were recalled into the presence of the council. There they were scourged, as the law permitted. They were forbidden to speak again in the name of Jesus. Then they were permitted to depart. Rejoicing that they were allowed to suffer for Christ, they began again to preach in the temple, as before.

A Christian youth, in the early ages, was very bitterly tormented by his persecutors, in order that he might deny Christ. He endured his pain patiently, and both his foes and his Christian brethren wondered at his courage. When asked by what mighty faith he was enabled to refrain from crying out, he said, "It was, indeed, painful; but an angel stood by me when my anguish was at the worst with his finger pointed to Heaven."

**Practical Truths:** 1. "The Heavenly Friend is friendly at all times. He thinks of us in the night of sorrow and trial." 2. "The sin and folly of fighting against God is manifested." 3. "The duty of being sure that God is with us." 4. "We should not court persecution, neither should we shun it when it comes in the way of duty."



And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the



against  
the  
Hebrews,  
because  
their



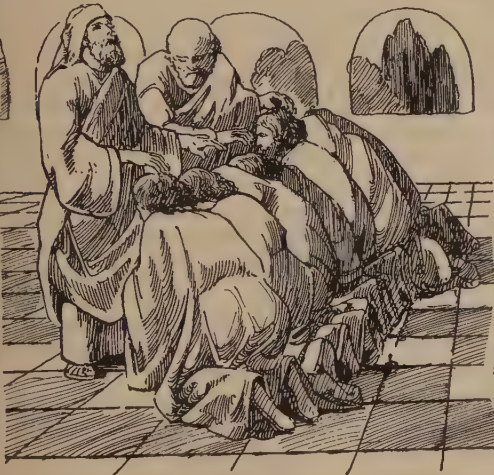
were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and



Wherefore,  
brethren,  
look ye out  
among you



of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they



And the  
word of God  
increased; and  
the number  
of the  
disciples  
multiplied in  
Jerusalem  
greatly; and a  
great company  
of the



were obedient to the faith.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ACTS 6:1-7.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we be willing to take any place and to do any work that Thou dost appoint to us in Thy kingdom. May nothing seem

small or unworthy while it serves to further Thy kingdom in the world. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 31. Place, Jerusalem. **Persons,** the Apostles, the Christian congregation and the seven deacons.

**Scripture Setting:** **Church Officials.** Appointed of Holy Ghost, Acts 20:28. Are foundations, Eph. 2:20. Ordained, Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5. To be honored, 1 Tim. 5:17-19. To be obeyed, Heb. 13:17. Different gifts, 1 Cor. 12:5, 28; Eph. 4:11. Duties, Eph. 4:12; Jas. 5:14; 1 Pet. 5:2-3. To be humble, Matt. 23:11. To be studious, 2 Tim. 2:15. To be peaceable, 2 Tim. 2:24-25. Rewards, 1 Pet. 5:4. Qualifications for bishop, 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:7-9. Qualifications for deacon, 1 Tim. 3:8-13. Faithful deaconesses, Rom. 16:1-4. The presbytery, 1 Tim. 4:14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** These new officials were chosen by the people and not by the Apostles.

### HONOR OF BEING CHURCH OFFICERS.

If when you young people come to years of maturity you have the opportunity to serve God as officers of His church you will be wise to enter this field of service. In whatever denomination you may be, the various official boards of trustees, elders, vestrymen, or whatever they may be called, open paths of usefulness for such as are fitted by talents, uprightness of life and spirit. Such positions should not be sought after through vanity or selfishness. They should not be accepted by such as know themselves unworthy by conduct or lack of ability. But for good people of fair abilities they provide opportunities for much usefulness.

**Workers Needed.** God needs willing workers. Yet it is true today in many churches that it is difficult to induce men to assume the responsibilities of the church offices. They are too busy with other matters. They are not sufficiently interested, to make sacrifices of time and strength. It is much easier to get men to give money to churches than to give themselves. But we would have the young people now growing up take a different view of this situation. We would have them glad and willing to accept and fill such positions in the Christian church as are open to them, and to do this in the spirit of devotion to the Kingdom of Christ.

**Days Not Long Enough.** In the early days of the Christian church all things were on a very simple plan. The Apostles, who had been with Christ for three years and had witnessed all His deeds and heard His words, were in charge of the church. They preached, they worked miracles, they decided all questions. While there was but

### ITS RELATIONS.

1. This is a fine illustration of the democracy of the early church. 2. Without entering into the subjects of controversy between the different branches of the church, it is permissible to emphasize the priesthood of the whole body of believers. 3. Under whatever form of government any church may exist today, it is vital to the fulfillment of its whole mission that the authority which resides in the so-called laity should be fully recognized. 4. All reforms in organized Christianity have been accomplished by return in some degree to the spirit and practices of the first ages of the church, and those times still remain as our exemplar. 5. The choice of the seven deacons demonstrated the ability of the people to select wisely. The people who are trained as followers of Christ can be, and should be, trusted.

a handful of Christians, as it were, this plan was sufficient, but now they were increasing rapidly. Large numbers of poor people belonged to the church and needed to be cared for. The Apostles found that the days were not long enough for them to preach, heal, become acquainted with the needs of all the people and to minister to the sick and the poor personally. They were willing to do everything, but they were not able.

**Some Neglected.** There were two parties in the early church. The one was called the Grecians, or Hellenists, and the other the Hebrews. The term Grecian did not mean what we might expect it to mean—that is, a Greek, or man of Greek blood. In the New Testament it means a Greek-speaking or foreign Jew. A Hebrew meant a Jew speaking a dialect of the Hebrew language. You may know that the conquests of Alexander the Great had spread the use of the Greek language very extensively throughout western Asia. Those Jews who spoke Greek were known in that region as Grecians, though they might be of pure Hebrew blood. Those Jews who spoke Hebrew fancied themselves superior to the others. This jealousy between the two parties was carried into the Christian church, in which there were both Grecians and Hebrews.

**Complaints.** These were the parties whose differences led the Apostles to arrange for a new set of officers in the church. The Grecians complained that their widows were neglected. This means that they felt the widows of the Grecian party received less attention in the distribution of charities than others. There may have been natural reasons for this fact without inten-



tional neglect of any. The Grecian widows may have been strangers to the Apostles. In any case, the Grecians complained. They did not accuse the Apostles, but they complained that the Hebrews slighted the needy of their party. When food was given to the poor their widows were overlooked.

**Organization.** So it seemed necessary that this matter should be undertaken in a systematic way. The church needs organization, just as any other important work done. No business could get along without systematic organization. Young people should remember this fact and not permit certain people later in their lives to persuade them that religion is simply a personal matter and requires no outward organization. Without the church religion would long ago have perished.

So the twelve Apostles called the large company of the Christians together. This is the first time we learn of steps being taken to establish any institution for the government of the church. Jesus had given principles but had arranged no organization. The Apostles declared it was not reasonable that they should turn from preaching the Word of God to distribute food to the poor and widows. Theirs was the spiritual part of the service. Other matters could be attended to by others, and should be.

Thus far all gifts had been brought and laid at the feet of the Apostles. They had distributed according to their best judgment. This was a simple matter at first, but now, on account of increasing numbers, it had become practically impossible for them to deal with both services. They revealed a proper spirit. They had no jealousy that the temporalities, the handling of money and goods, should pass out of their hands. They had never touched such matters except through necessity and now they would gladly be rid of the burden and responsibility. It would be impossible to attribute selfish motives to them in such matters. They cared nothing for money except that by its means the poor of the Church could be cared for.

**Qualifications.** The people were instructed what they should do. "Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word." If you young people look forward to some day taking part in the work of the church, see to it that you keep your lives

clean now and always. Those who serve Christ in the church should be "of honest report." The value of a good reputation cannot be overestimated. Many young men have recklessly thrown away their good name and then have wished to gain respect and standing and found it hard to re-establish themselves in the good opinion of their fellow beings.

Such as serve the church should also be "full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom." No matter how talented men may be, they should be devout in order to serve the church rightly. It is not enough to give money. The church needs consecrated, religious men and women.

**"The Seven."** The suggestion of the Apostles appealed to the judgment of the people. Forthwith they selected from all the members these seven for this special work: Stephen, Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas.

These seven men were brought to the Apostles as the choice of the people. Then the Apostles lifted up their voices unto God in prayer for His blessing upon these men and upon the work in which they were to engage. Then the Apostles laid their hands on their heads, as the sign that they were set apart for a special duty in the church. It was all very simple and all very beautiful, as all religious ceremonies should be. They should be simple, so that all can understand. They should have real meaning. Forms are good only if they have spiritual significance.

**"Doing What the Hand Finds to Do."** Then the "Seven," who today would be called deacons, took up the work of ministering to the poor among the Christians. They were willing to do what was assigned to them at the time. The true Christian is glad to do that which comes in his way for the good cause, however humble it may be. Indeed that is the path to promotion. Certain of those who began as humble deacons became eminent in the service of Christ.

It is told of a former Lord Treasurer of England that when he went from his office to his own home he was accustomed to throw off his gown, which was the emblem of his authority, and say, "Lie there, Lord Treasurer." When we enter the service of Christ it is befitting that we take off the thoughts and desires of the world and say, "Lie there, world; lie there, sinful pleasures—I am going to serve Christ."

**Practical Truths:** 1. The Apostles set a good example to all in the church and outside of it, in their willingness to hear reasonable complaints and in planning to deal justly with all concerned. It is easy to resent a criticism, but it is much wiser and better to weigh the matter fairly and to change where change is needed. 2. The fact that the widows were neglected shows that "to overlook is human. To correct and improve is apostolical and Christian." 3. If the Apostles were censured we can take courage. But, like them, also we should act upon whatever of wisdom is in the adverse opinion. 4. We should not undertake too much, but arrange, when possible, for division of labor. 5. A rearrangement of our work, better methods, may be a simple matter if we can see what should be altered and how to do this.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

And they



calling upon  
God, and  
saying,  
Lord Jesus,  
receive  
my spirit.  
And he



and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell



And  
Saul was  
consenting  
unto his  
death.  
And at  
that time  
there was  
a great



against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of



except the  
apostles.  
And  
devout men



and made great lamentation over him.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 6:8-15; 7:1-60.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Help us to be true witnesses for Thee and for our Savior Jesus Christ. We thank Thee for all the noble company of the martyrs who

have faced death for the sake of the truth. We pray that we and all may have the same spirit. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 37. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Stephen, high priest, Saul of Tarsus, Libertines, members of the Council.

**Scripture Setting:** Christian Heroism. Courage enjoined, Deut. 31:7, 8, 22, 23; Josh. 1:1-9. The Israelites, Lev. 26:6-8; 2 Chron. 32:7, 8. Solomon, 1 Chr. 22:13; 28:20. Asa, 2 Chr. 15:1-7. Against dismay, Ezek. 2:6; 3:9. Be strong, 1 Cor. 16:13. Instance of Abraham, Gen. 12:1-9. Offering of Isaac, Gen. 22:1-14. Ezra on perilous journey, Ezra 8:22, 23. The three Hebrews, Dan. 3:16-18. Daniel, Dan. 6:10. Personal bravery, Joshua and Caleb, Num. 13:30; 14:16-17. Gideon, Judg. 7:7-23. Deborah, Judg. 4. Peter and other disciples, Acts 3:12-26. Paul, Acts 20:22-24; 24:14, 25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Stephen's was the first Christian martyrdom. 1. Gibbon, in giving the five causes which, in his opinion, led to the rapid spread of Christianity, included the Christians' contempt for death and willingness to die for the sake

of Christ; undoubtedly this fact had a profound influence upon the pagan nature. 2. Stephen was the pioneer of that noble host who by their death hastened the spreading of the Kingdom of God. His personal traits and talents, which must have been remarkable, his complete consecration, with the rich endowment of the Holy Spirit, made his death especially poignant and pathetic in the eyes of his fellow believers. 3. His martyrdom made it plain to many that that for which such a man could willingly die must be of extraordinary value and import. 4. The enemies of Christianity, striving to exterminate it, had not counted on the sacrifice of this man as a priceless asset of the struggling church, but so it proved. 5. The vision of Jesus vouchsafed to Stephen in his last moments became the assurance of the immediate presence of Christ with His people in suffering. Thousands thereafter went to death joyfully in the light of that experience.

### STONED FOR CHRIST'S SAKE.

An old saying that is still full of meaning is this: "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Such as have suffered unto death for Christianity have, by their devotion, extended the Kingdom, subdued foes, melted the heart of the world. The finest honor roll on earth is that of the men and women who have died for Christ. It is a glorious record, the story of the best, purest, loftiest-souled of the earth, and is an eternal inspiration to all who love Christ. Its influence should be felt by every boy and girl today and always. The blood of the martyrs should today make you better Christians.

**A Witness.** Stephen was first of the Christian martyrs. The word "Martyr" means a witness, but in the usage of Christian history it has come to mean a witness unto death. The Apostles and all Christians were witnesses for Christ by life and word, and all the Apostles, save John, later suffered death for the cause, but Stephen was the first who was actually killed for Christ's sake. So he has the honorable, noble position at the head of the glorious roll. It is not probable that any of us, unless we go as missionaries to some savage country, will be put to death for our religion. But we can be just as loyal as the martyrs; we can be willing to die if need be for the cause. More than that, a lifelong service of sacrifice has as much value as actual dying.

**One of "The Seven."** Stephen was one of "The Seven," later called deacons, who were appointed to take charge of the charities of the early church. As we learned in a pre-

vious lesson, the Greek-speaking Christians had complained that their poor were neglected in the giving of alms in favor of the Hebrew-speaking Christians. So "The Seven" were set apart to see that justice was done to all. It is worth noting that the names of all "The Seven" are Greek, for this means that men from the complaining party were chosen. It indicates that for the sake of quieting criticism, and making certain of justice, the whole matter of the charities was put into the hands of those who had noted the wrong and complained of it. This was a generous and Christian thing to do, and we should learn from it to be magnanimous, and more, in dealing with such as have grievances.

The new arrangement in the church worked well. It quieted contentions, united all parties, did justice to all, and the Gospel was given a fresh impulse. The deacons were zealous, discharged the special duties well, and several of them grew wonderfully in spiritual power and extended their work beyond charitable service to preaching. Philip became known as "Philip the Evangelist." But Stephen became the leader of them all in faith, in the influence of his preaching, and in the miracles he wrought.

**Stephen's Success.** The wonderful success of Stephen in making converts, and the extraordinary miracles wrought by him, centered the hatred of certain foes of Christianity upon him. His wisdom and power of speech pointed him out as one of the greatest leaders of the Christian movement, and it appeared to his enemies that, unless he were

silenced, he would carry all the people with him into the church. These opponents belonged to "the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia." The Libertines were freedmen, probably Jews, who had been taken prisoners by Roman generals during wars in Syria, enslaved, and then emancipated and returned to their own country. Cyrenians and Alexandrians were from Cyrenia and Alexandria, in Africa. The Asiatics represented those of Western Asia in general, while the Cilicians were from the region from which Saul of Tarsus came. These people all took the stand that Stephen and the Christians were enemies of the law, trying to destroy the temple worship and to supersede the law of Moses.

**False Witnesses.** When in argument with Stephen on the relations of Christianity to the law, his foes were not able to answer him, nor to meet his wisdom and spiritual power in such a way as to convince the people. Angered and dismayed by their defeat, they determined to destroy him by other means. These foes, therefore, sought and found men willing to swear against Stephen. They spread abroad this testimony, making it appear to the public that Stephen was a dangerous man; an enemy of the Jewish nation and customs.

Having created this current of opinion, the Libertines suggested to the scribes and rulers that if Stephen were arrested, information that would condemn him would be supplied. His arrest followed, and he was carried before the council. The usual methods of that court were pursued. The high priest presided and the prisoner was placed on one side, under guard.

**The Trial.** The high priest listened to the charges from certain of the scribes. Then witnesses were called. These men, who had been bribed, stood up, one by one, and swore, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God. This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous words against the temple and the law of Moses. We have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy the temple and change the customs which Moses delivered to us."

These were serious charges, if they had been true, according to the law and customs of the Jews. Every nation has the right to protect its own existence, and if the Christians had been really aiming to overthrow the national institutions of the Jews, the rulers would have had the right to resist them by proper means. But wrong teach-

ings should be met, not by persecution, but by the truth. The Jews may have thought they were right in defending their institutions, but they were wrong in their methods.

During all these accusations, Stephen sat calm and serene, so that all who looked upon him "saw his face as if it had been the face of an angel."

**Stephen's Defense.** When the witnesses had done their worst, the high priest turned to the prisoner and asked, "Are these things so?" Stephen was now permitted to speak for himself, and he made a bold defense. His speech is one of the most remarkable passages in the New Testament. He recounted the history of the Jewish people and the dealings of God with them. His argument inferred that their pretended zeal for the law was hypocrisy; that they had continually broken it and profaned the temple, while blind to the spiritual meaning of both. He declared they had never kept the law themselves. He declared that they had betrayed and murdered Jesus, just as their fathers had slain the prophets. Turning on them with righteous indignation and with shining face, he cried, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. As your fathers did, so do ye."

This change from accused to accuser, and the use of these severe denunciations, were more than his hearers could endure. They gnashed on him with their teeth. But he looked upward and cried, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God."

**Stoned for Christ's Sake.** Infuriated, losing sight of the fact that they had no right to put a man to death, they put their fingers in their ears, that they might hear no more. They shouted aloud. They ran upon him with one accord. They seized him, hurried him outside the gates of the city, and every man hurled stones at him until he fell, bruised and dying. Still they rained upon him the cruel stones. He was able now to struggle to his knees, and pray, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Then he fell asleep, the first Christian martyr.

**Practical Truths:** 1. If Christianity was worth all the blood of all the martyrs it is worth our living for. 2. It should be a joy to make sacrifices on behalf of that which has cost so much. 3. We should aim to be witnesses for the truth and for Christ, just as really and actually as were the martyrs. 4. We are "the heirs of all the ages" and heirs of the martyrs. That which is inherited is to be used and passed on to the next generation.



# THE DISCIPLES SCATTERED.

As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every



and  
haling



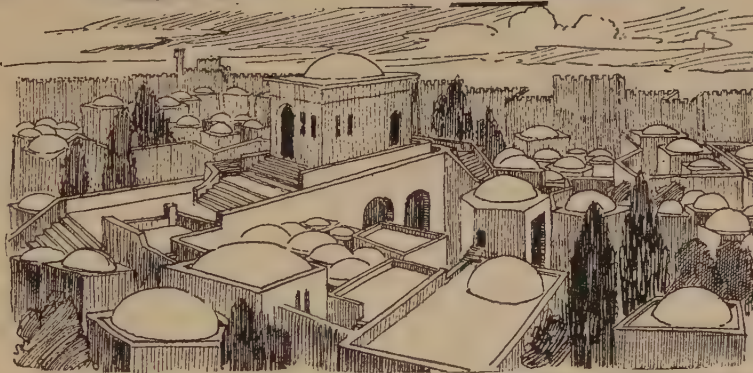
committed them to



Therefore  
they that  
were  
scattered  
abroad  
went  
every-  
where



the word.  
Then  
Philip  
went  
down  
to the



of Samaria, and  
preached Christ  
unto them. And  
the people with  
one accord gave  
heed unto those  
things which  
Philip spake,  
hearing and  
seeing the



which he did.  
For unclean  
spirits, crying  
with loud voice,  
came out of  
many that were  
possessed with  
them: and many  
taken with  
palsies, and  
that were



were healed. And there was great joy in that city.

ACTS VIII: 3-8.



# THE DISCIPLES SCATTERED.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 8:1-25.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we learn that Thy goodness is in those events that seem most trying, as well as in those that are pleasant to our natures. Thy providence is wonderful and great. We be-

hold how Thou didst bring blessing to many when Thy disciples were scattered. May we see Thy providence also in our own day and in our own lives. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 37. Places, Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. Persons, Saul of Tarsus, the disciples, Simon Magus.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Witnessing. Command to witness, 1 Chr. 16:8-9; Psa. 9:11; Psa. 18:49; Luke, 12:8; Rom. 10:9. Men are God's witnesses, Isa. 12:4, 5, 6; Isa. 43:10; Luke 24:48. A figure of, Mark 4:21. Grateful witnesses, Mark 5:16-20; Luke 8:38; John 4:28. Disciples appointed to, John 15:27; Acts 1:8, 22. Love essential to, 1 Cor. 13:1. Paul's witnessing, Phil. 3:7; Acts 26:12-23. Exhortation to, 1 Tim. 6:12. Dangerous to neglect, Heb. 2:3. Resolve to, Psa. 22:22. Perfect expression of, Psa. 23; Psa. 27:1-6. A heathen's, Dan. 4:1-3, 34, 37. The blind man's, John 9:17.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Here note, 1. Saul was at first on the edge of the whirlpool of persecution, "consenting to Stephen's death." Presently he is drawn into the very abyss. 2. The

persecution rages at the then center of the Christian-Church-world—Jerusalem. The city had beheld similar scenes many times. Jesus had characterized it as notorious for its bitter intolerance. 3. Before the force of the storm that now broke the Christians were scattered, but each of the band carried a light unto those in darkness. 4. This event developed the latent talents of many of the Christians. A proper inference is that all who were scattered abroad "went in all directions preaching the word." Times of trouble often loosen the tongue to speak for God. 5. The season of stress brought into action the abilities of Philip and strengthened him for that work which won him the distinction of being known as "The Evangelist." Strong people increase in strength under trial. 6. Good came out of evil, and the Kingdom of Christ was prospered through the very means by which His enemies had sought to destroy it.

### OUT OF THE NEST.

No doubt it is a wonderfully comfortable existence for little birds in their mother's nest. It is nice and warm, and the birdies are together. Mother bird nestles them with her soft feathers. Mother and father birds capture the daintiest worms and flies and sail through the air to the wide open mouths of the little ones to feed them. The nest appears to birdies the finest palace imaginable; the sides seem as high as walls, and as thick as any home need be. The lining is downy and soft. O! it is a nice home, and no parents could be more considerate.

**Outgrowing the Nest.** But the little birds grow, and as they get bigger they crowd each other. Afterwhile the house seems terribly little. Each bird's head is now so high that it peeps over the walls every time it stretches. If one moves, it is in danger of falling out entirely. And then presently there is not by any means room enough. Something has to be done. So they step up on the edge and look around. Then they venture on to a limb. Then perhaps they try to fly, after the manner of mother and father. Perhaps one tumbles clear off the tree, down and down through a great abyss, as it seems, and finds itself on the ground. It learns to run and to flutter and then to fly. Pretty soon the little birds get to hunting for their own food, they go off by themselves, and then later have nests of their own. Where there was one little nest with four or five birdies, now there are four or five other nests, each with a group of little birdies in it. Somehow the first little nestlings could not stay

where they were; they would grow up; and finally they would fly for themselves and have nests of their own. Such is the order of things.

**The Nest in Jerusalem.** Now the Christians in Jerusalem were in some degree like a nest of little birds. They had been all in one place, the home city, the great capital city of the nation. The scenery was all familiar. The place was full of home associations. They had had their troubles, but so far they had been together in one place. Just as God has arranged that birds grow up and leave their nests, so He arranges that men and women to whom truth is given shall be led to take it and give it to other people. Christ had come and lived and died, and had gone to Heaven, and had bidden His disciples carry the Gospel to the world. But the Christians were all staying in Jerusalem. This was necessary at first, while they were growing, to stay in the nest. But now they were strong enough and there were enough of them to start out with the message to the world.

**The First Stirring.** They were stirred out of their nest in this way. The martyrdom of Stephen was the first move. The enemies of Christ found that they had been successful in their first strong effort. They had put a leader of the Christians to death and the Romans had done nothing about it. This may have been because there was no Roman governor in the country at that time. Anyway, the Jews were not punished. They de-



cided to follow up this crime by other persecutions.

**Saul.** When Stephen was being stoned, there was present a certain young man named Saul, who was born and reared in the city of Tarsus in Cilicia. Saul was a very learned young man, very strong in character and very vehement in his faith in the Jewish religion and law. He had heard of these Christians and did not like them. It is presumed that, being in Jerusalem at the time of the trial of Stephen, he was present in the council when Stephen spoke. He was very bitter against him and thought that he should be put to death. He himself did not cast any stones. What he did was to stand by and consent to his death, and when certain men wished to have their arms free so as to throw straighter and harder, he held the long cloaks they cast off for the time. So he took part in the crime, to that extent.

**The City Searched.** When it was all over, Saul got into the full current of the persecution. He was ready to do anything to get rid of these Christians. So he went to the council and got authority from it to hunt out and arrest any followers of Christ whom he could discover. Saul was a very energetic and active man, and whatever he undertook he gave his mind and body to that end fully. So he set about this persecution in a thorough and savage way. As he was armed with legal authority for this purpose, he took a company of men and went from house to house, wherever he had reason to think Christians lived, and he had them dragged out and cast into prison. The whole city was searched as by detectives and the prisons were being filled with Christians.

**The Flight.** This terrible persecution struck terror to the hearts of many. They began to plan for flight. In the twilight and in the dark and in the early mornings there could be seen little companies of men, women and children, slipping down the streets, hiding as much as possible, slipping out of the gates, and hastening away over the hills. The children were asking their mothers as they clung to them, "Where are we going? Why are we leaving home? Are the bad men after us? Won't Christ take care of us?" These were the Christians fleeing from the terrible persecutions of Saul of Tarsus. This was the way the birds were being driven out of the nest.

**The Good of It.** This seemed very pitiful, but vast good was to come of it. It is supposed that only the Apostles were left in Jerusalem of all the large number of Christians who had been there. Now the Christians were scattered throughout Judea and throughout Samaria. Some of them went through Phenicia into Syria as far as Antioch. Some went to the island of Cyprus. Everywhere they went they proclaimed Christ, so that thousands heard of Christ as a result of this scattering abroad.

**Simon Magus.** Philip, who was one of "The Seven" set apart to minister to the widows, went to preach in the city of Samaria, and there he did many wonderful works and cast out unclean spirits. In that place there was a man named Simon Magus, who was a sorcerer, and he had persuaded the Samaritans by his trickeries to think he was a great and supernatural being. He was doing a great deal of harm when Philip came. When he saw the miracles that Philip wrought and heard him tell by whose power he worked miracles, Simon realized that this was a man who did genuine wonders, while his own were mere tricks. So he was much impressed, and he believed that Christ who gave Philip such power must be indeed a Divine being. So Simon was baptized.

A soldier of the Civil War, who had lost his right arm, said to a member of the famous Christian Commission, which did so much during that strife to carry the Gospel to the army, "It seems to me that I cannot be grateful enough for losing my arm. It made me thoughtful and opened the way for your delegates to visit me and ended in my finding Christ."

Word of what was being accomplished in Samaria was sent to the Apostles in Jerusalem, and they came to Samaria to help in the work. The Apostles laid their hands on the converts and they received the Holy Spirit. When this sorcerer Simon saw that such as had the Apostles' hands laid on them received the Holy Spirit, he desired to have power to do the same thing. As he had been a trickster all his life, and had become a nominal Christian only because he thought the ability to work miracles would help him to get rich, he offered Peter money if he would impart to him this power. But Peter repulsed him, saying, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." Peter so denounced the man that he was terrified, repented and asked the Apostle to pray for him.

Then all the Christians continued in the good work of carrying the Gospel into all the region round about. Multitudes were converted. And all this came as a good result from the fact that the Christians were compelled to leave Jerusalem on account of bitter persecution.

**Practical Truths.** 1. We can preach the Gospel by word and life anywhere and under all circumstances. 2. While the miracles of Philip served a purpose, it was the preaching of the Word to which he especially gave himself. We have the same Word, and it can accomplish as much today as it did in any previous time. 3. The Holy Spirit is the gift of God and cannot be purchased. Simon Magus, whose name is perpetuated in the infamous word "simony," was a self-seeking and perhaps self-deluded man who was engaged in deluding others. 4. A pure heart is essential to all good work for God or man. 5. There can be no compromise with selfish worldliness. 6. Religion must not be a cloak for personal ends.

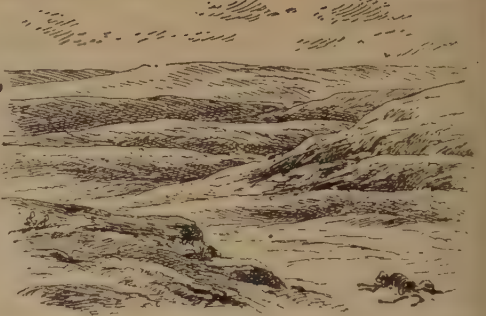
DR. C. D. WILSON.

# PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN.

And the



of the Lord spake  
unto Philip, saying,  
Arise, and go  
toward the south  
unto the way that  
goeth down from  
Jerusalem unto  
Gaza, which is



And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of



an eunuch of  
great authority  
under Candace



of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her



and had  
come to  
Jerusalem  
for to  
worship,  
was  
returning,  
and



read Esaias the prophet.  
Then the Spirit said  
unto Philip, Go near,  
and join thyself to  
this chariot. And Philip



thither to him, and heard him  
read the prophet Esaias, and said  
Understandest thou what thou  
readest? And he said, How can I  
except some man should guide me  
And he desired Philip that he  
would come up, and sit with him



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 8:26-40.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Incline our hearts to follow in the path of duty which Thou dost point out to us. May we know that in that way we shall find good, since Thou dost direct us in it and accompany us. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"Just as thou art, without one trace  
Of love, or joy, or inward grace,  
Or meetness for the Heavenly place,  
O guilty sinner, come!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 37. Place, the desert road from Jerusalem to Gaza. Persons, Philip and the Ethiopian.

**Scripture Setting:** Searching the Scriptures. Sword of the Spirit, Eph. 6:17. Word of Christ, Col. 3:16. To be read publicly, Deut. 31:11-13. Expounded, Neh. 8:8. Searched, Acts 17:11. Testify of Christ, John 5:39; Acts 10:43; 1 Cor. 15:3. Perfect, Psa. 19:7. Cleansing power, Psa. 119:9. Precious, 2 Pet. 1:4. A lamp, Psa. 119:105. Hidden in heart, Psa. 119:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The notable characteristics of this passage are: 1. The Ethiopian was in earnest and in search for light. 2. Though he had accepted Judaism in his own country, had made a long pilgrimage to the Holy City and had

worshiped there, he felt the need of further knowledge. 3. He was making good use of his time by reading the Scriptures even under the disadvantages of his position in a moving chariot. 4. He was ready to acknowledge his own ignorance. 5. He was willing to accept aid from a man who evidently was not of his rank. 6. He was prompt to act upon the truth when it was given him. 7. He was a courtier, and "not many noble are called." 8. Philip was obedient to the leading of the Spirit. 9. He preached Christ to one who might have been an enemy of the Master and of the Christians and have turned upon him as a persecutor. 10. He satisfied himself of the worthiness of the Ethiopian before he baptized him.

### FROM THE LAND OF THE SUNBURNT.

**The Desert Road.** Philip the Evangelist had been preaching in Samaria, and now the Spirit of God bade him go elsewhere on a special mission. He was told to go "toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." There were, and are, three roads from Jerusalem to Gaza. So Philip had to choose between them. If he had been seeking to reach Gaza he could have done so by any one of the three. But as he was to perform a certain duty on the way he had to select a particular road. It is not only arriving that is important, but what happens on the way is also vital. He was bidden to take "the desert way," that is, the one through a deserted region, without villages or cultivated fields. One of the three roads that still leads from Jerusalem to Gaza is such a way.

**The Meeting of Two Men.** On that desert road an event was about to happen that would change the spiritual destiny of one man, send him back to his own country with a message to his countrymen. The story of that event was to find a prominent place in the Bible. In Palestine that day it is quite certain that no one would have said the chief event from sunrise to sunset was to be upon the desert road to Gaza, where an Evangelist, walking through the dust, would greet a foreigner sitting in his chariot. Yet that happening made that day forever memorable.

**Philip's Walk.** Philip went on his way in perfect faith. There were no houses in sight, and there were few marks of travel on the roadway. For a long time Philip did

not catch a glimpse of a single human being. No place could seem more unpromising for a missionary whose business it was to carry the message of salvation to men. But Philip had no doubts. He did not slacken his steps, or look back, but he pressed right on. For a while he did not know what was to happen, but he knew that God's angels make no mistakes and do not send men on useless journeys. He thought of Christ, who had made so many like journeys on foot throughout that land. He thought of the great work that had been accomplished in Samaria. He rejoiced that though the Christians had been scattered by persecution they were enabled to reach souls in many places. His heart was full, and he was ready to speak for Christ to any one he might meet or overtake.

**A Chariot in Sight.** At last Philip saw a cloud of dust far down the road. At first he could not tell whether someone was coming toward him or going from him. But he kept looking with the earnestness of one who was seeking for men to whom to give the Words of Life. Presently it was plain that the chariot, for such it appeared, was going from him. But it was moving very slowly. Whoever was in it was evidently in no haste. So Philip quickened his steps and drew nearer. He could now see that the chariot was evidently that of a man of importance. It was handsomely equipped; he could see the glitter of the gilt upon it. He could see the shining of the metals on the harness of the horses. He could see the driver, holding the lines loosely while he gazed around, letting the steeds advance at a slow walk. He could see a man, arrayed in silks and tur-

baned, bending forward as if nodding from sleep. He could see horsemen riding in advance as if for protection of the important personage who was evidently the owner of the chariot.

**A Man Reading Aloud.** As Philip came still nearer, he could hear the murmur of a voice. It did not sound like conversation, for there was but one voice. Still nearer, Philip recognized that the man who seemed to be nodding from sleep was reading aloud; but this did not surprise him, for the habit of reading aloud to one's self was, and is, general in the Orient. Now "the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near and join thyself to this chariot." Philip ran thither toward it, and now he could hear what the man was reading. The words were from the prophet Isaiah. Evidently this was a religious man, or at least one who was studying religious matters.

Philip was now beside the slow-moving chariot. At sight of the running man the occupant of the chariot looked up. Philip glanced at the manuscript in the stranger's hands, then at his dark face, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The stranger looked seriously into the earnest face beside him, found in it intelligence and sympathy, and replied, "How can I, except some man should guide me?" Then he kindly invited the Evangelist to enter the chariot and sit by him.

**The Ethiopian.** As we may justly infer, the stranger told Philip who he was. He was a man from Ethiopia, the Greek word for which means the land of the sunburnt. His country lay south of Egypt, and of it Nubia and Abyssinia now form a part. He was the treasurer of the queen of that land, where the queens were all called Candace, just as Roman emperors were called Caesar and Egyptian kings were called Pharaohs. Under the influence of Jews living in Ethiopia he had been converted to Judaism. He had come on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was now on his way home.

A soldier said he had "learned in army drills to obey the word of command, 'Right about face.' And when Jesus spoke to him it meant 'Right about face' from where he was before." That was his way of putting the fact of conversion which he had experienced.

**A Courtier Willing to Learn.** We do not know what his name was, but tradition has it that his name was Indich, and this will answer to distinguish him by. Philip doubtless made himself known as a disciple of Jesus, of whom Indich perhaps had heard while in Jerusalem. Indich declared that he was anxious to learn more of the Scriptures and of their meaning, that he had worshiped in Jerusalem, had been reading in the prophets; but now he was puzzled. He

laid his finger on the passage which he had been striving to understand.

"The place of the Scripture which he read was this: He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so He opened not his mouth."

"Tell me, sir," he said, gazing earnestly at the man by his side, "I pray thee, of whom does the prophet speak this? Does he speak it of himself or of some other man? If he speaks of another, who was this man?"

Then Philip instructed him. He said it was a foretelling of Jesus. He told him of Jesus, who He was, what He had done, how He had suffered, died, risen again and ascended to Heaven. He told him what Jesus had commanded: repentance, faith, baptism, obedience.

**A Convert.** Long and earnestly did they talk together. Many were the questions of Indich, but Philip, guided by the Spirit, answered all clearly and plainly and convincingly. The Ethiopian's heart was touched, his mind was satisfied. He longed to take another step toward being a Christian. As they conversed there was a gleam far down the road, as of the sun shining upon water. They drew nearer and there indeed appeared a pool of clear water. Then Indich said in his eagerness, "See, here is water. What doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

At Indich's command the chariot stood still. Philip and Indich went down to the water. There by the wayside of that desert road, reverently and earnestly the stranger from Ethiopia confessed Christ, and Philip solemnly baptized him in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

Then, rejoicing that his pilgrimage from a far land had ended in his soul being flooded with the light of Christ, Indich left Philip behind, while he pursued his homeward journey, and carried to his own people the message of eternal life. Thus had God guided Philip on that desert way to bring to a stranger the blessing of salvation.

**Practical Truths.** 1. We should study earnestly the Word of God. 2. We should be willing to be instructed in the truth. 3. We should act with decision upon what we learn from the Scriptures. 4. We should accept Christ with all our hearts. 5. We will, like the Ethiopian, if we do, go on our way rejoicing. 6. We should, like him, carry the message to our own people.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## SAUL OF TARSUS CONVERTED.

And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the



and  
desired  
of him  
letters to  
Damascus  
to the



that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them



unto  
Jerusalem.  
And  
as he



he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined around about him a



And  
he



and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS IN ACTS 9:1-20.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we too be truly converted from all sin and error. Though a special revelation may not be given to us as to Saul of Tarsus, may we nevertheless be as certain as he was that Jesus is our Savior. May we, in our degree and place, serve Christ as faithfully as he did. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"Askest thou in exultation  
What the cross of Christ has done;  
Ask the splendors of creation  
If they feel the noonday sun;  
Ask reviving vegetation,  
Rushing forth on joyous wing,  
If it feels the inspiration  
Of the breath-enchanted spring."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 37-40. Place, near Damascus. **Persons,** Saul of Tarsus and Jesus.

**Scripture Setting:** Conversion. New creature, Rom. 13:14; 2 Cor. 5:17; Col. 3:9-10; 2 Pet. 1:4. Life from dead, Ezek. 16:6; Rom. 6:1-6; Gal. 2:19; Eph. 2:1. Spiritual light, 2 Cor. 4:6; Eph. 5:8. Repentance, Ezek. 18:30; Hos. 6:1; Acts 3:19; Mark 1:15. Converting a sinner, James 5:20. Law of the Lord, Psa. 19:7. Converting others, Luke 22:32.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** A Jew, a Pharisee, a Greek by birth, a scholar, a Roman citizen, a persecutor was converted. He was changed during a period of relentless persecution. He was arrested by a great light, a voice and a vision. His experience was followed by blindness, then by prayer, then by restored sight. The sinner became a saint, the foe a friend, and the self-righteous Pharisee an humble Christian.

## AN ENEMY BECOMES A FRIEND.

When one is reading, or hearing, a fiction story he likes to have remarkable and unexpected things happen. The more wonderful they are the better, provided it can be made to appear that they really could have occurred. In real life more extraordinary things do come about than any romancer could conjure up in his imagination.

**Too Good to Be True.** If the persecuted Christians, in the early history of the Church, could have found time and inclination to listen to the most remarkable, romantic stories then written, they might have heard them without much enthusiasm, or have considered them less extraordinary than many events they had known or heard of. But if they had been told that the most terrible, cruel, and remorseless persecutor of the Church would soon become a devout, earnest, aggressive follower of Christ and friend of their cause, they would not have believed a word of it. Yet that incredible thing, that most unexpected of events, was about to happen.

**Faith in the Good.** One of the most beautiful facts in the world is that the bad often become good; foes become friends; ignorance is displaced by knowledge; error is overcome by truth. We cannot believe too much in the power of the good and the true. Yet there is an almost universal tendency to feel that evil is the stronger.

There is a tradition that when St. John was on his way from Patmos to Ephesus, thieves laid hold of him. Among them was a young man, who was their captain. To him St. John gave good counsel as to abandoning his sins. The effect of his words was so great that the man was converted and afterward labored with his fellow robbers to give up their wicked ways. Many of them were converted.

**Saul of Tarsus.** We are now face to face

with an extraordinary event that was to change a man's life and to have a tremendous influence upon the future of Christianity. There was a man named Saul, who was a native of the city of Tarsus, in Cilicia. He was by race a pure Jew, but he had grown up in a heathen, Greek-speaking city. He belonged to the sect of the Pharisees and had been educated in Jerusalem. He was a man of pure life, of great earnestness of heart, fearless and determined. He was an enthusiastic believer in the strictest interpretation of the Jewish religion and of obedience thereto. He was proud and strong and self-reliant, and intolerant of opposition. When he first heard that Jesus of Nazareth, who had appeared to be a simple Galileean teacher who had been put to death on the cross, was being proclaimed as the Messiah and as having risen from the dead, and as the Son of God, he considered this blasphemy. When he learned that Stephen was influencing thousands to accept Jesus as the Christ, Saul agreed that he was worthy of death. When Stephen was on trial Saul was one of those who gnashed on him with their teeth and hurried him outside the city to be stoned. Saul aided that deed by holding the garments of those who cast the stones.

**An Enraged Persecutor.** Infuriated now, as a wild beast that has tasted blood, Saul leaped to the forefront of the persecution, and threw himself with all his vast energy into the work of exterminating the Christians. His name became one of terror to all the Christians.

There was an abbot who very much wished to buy a piece of land that lay near his monastery. The man who owned it declined to sell, but said he would rent it. The abbot agreed to this and contracted to sow it with only one crop. He sowed



it with acorns, that lasted three hundred years. So the evil spirit seeks to sow in the young the first crop. Early conversion is the highest wisdom.

**Organizing.** Whatever Saul did he did with his whole heart, mind and body. He organized the persecution into a great campaign to reach wherever there were any Christians and to capture them in one vast net. Like a true leader, he went to the front himself. Learning that many Christians had fled to Damascus, he determined to pursue them thither. To this end he obtained letters from the high priest, directed to the chief of the synagogues in Damascus, authorizing him to make search for Christians and bidding Jewish elders there to help him in his work.

**On the Way.** Thus prepared, he set forth on horseback, with a company of followers. His savage determination is described in the words "breathing out threatenings and slaughter." He was like some fierce creature whose every breath was flame, to burn whatever it touched. Now what will this terrible man do? You say he will hasten to Damascus; he will search every street and every house; he will cruelly bind every Christian; he will return to Jerusalem with a band of prisoners, will deliver them to the high priest, have them cast into dungeons and then put to death. This is what he planned to do, and that is what he would have done, if something most unexpected had not happened.

**A Miracle.** Saul and his company had almost completed their long journey "across the vast level east of the Lake of Tiberias, 'the desert of Damascus.' The earth in its length and breadth, and all the deep universe of the sky, is steeped in light and heat. The towers of the most ancient city in the world are now in full sight."

"Suddenly there shined round about him a light from Heaven." He and all the company were stricken from their horses and fell to the earth. Then Saul saw a vision of the Son of God near him. And he heard a voice calling him by name, "Saul, Saul," and the voice said reproachfully, "Why persecutest thou me?" Saul, amazed, cried, "Who art thou, Lord?" And the voice answered, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Saul, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the Lord bade him arise and go into the city and it should be told him what he must do.

Those with him were as amazed as he, for they heard the voice but saw no one. Saul

arose from the ground, tried to look about, but found he was blinded by the vision, so that the others had to lead him by the hand into Damascus.

**A Changed Man.** Thus the terrible persecutor had in a moment been changed into a helpless man, needing to be led by the hand, while for three days he took neither food nor drink. Then Jesus appeared to a Christian man of the city, bearing the same name as the hypocrite who had lied to the Apostles, but very different in character, one Ananias, and Jesus bade him go to Saul, whom he would find praying. Jesus told him that Saul also has had a revelation of Ananias coming to him. At the mention of a visit to Saul, Ananias shrank, saying, "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints in Jerusalem, and he has come here with authority to bind all that call on Thy name." But Jesus said to him, "Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and the children of Israel."

So Ananias visited Saul, declaring that Jesus, who had appeared to him on the way, had sent him, that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Immediately there fell as it were scales from the eyes of Saul and he received his sight. Soon afterward he was baptized. He remained certain days with the disciples in Damascus.

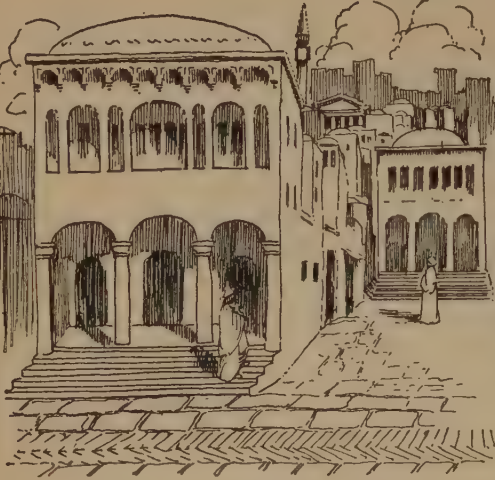
An Indian and a white man attended the same church and were convicted of sin. The Indian soon became joyous in his sense of pardon, while the white man continued much depressed. Meeting the Indian some time afterward, the white man said, "How is it that I do not have the joy you have found?" The Indian replied, "Me tell you. There come along a rich prince. He offer you a new coat. You look at your coat and say, 'I don't know. My coat pretty good. I think it will do.' He then offer me a new coat. I look at my old blanket. I say, 'This good for nothing.' I throw it quick away, and take the beautiful coat. Just so you try to keep your own righteousness. But poor Indian had none. Therefore I glad to receive the righteousness of Christ."

**Practical Truths.** 1. A conversion may be as real as was Saul's without its miraculous accompaniments. We need not question the reality of a change of heart simply because no startling phenomena are manifested. 2. The sinner who has been convicted of sin must be ready to meet the doubts of others as to the reality of the change until demonstrated by a good life. 3. We should believe in the power of Christ to convert the worst sinner. 4. A strong character is likely to be intense in conduct, either good or bad. For Paul there was no half-way place between being a persecutor and an apostle. A very bad man often, when converted, makes a very good one.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And straightway he preached Christ in the



that he is the  
Son of God.  
But all that  
heard him  
were amazed,  
and said; Is  
not this he  
that destroyed  
them which  
called on his  
name in



and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them



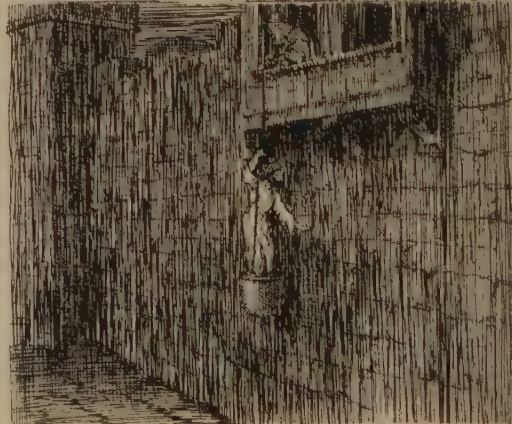
unto the  
chief



But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ. And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel to kill him: But their laying await was known of Saul. And they watched the



day and  
night to  
kill him.  
Then the  
disciples  
took him  
by night,  
and





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 9:20-32.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we learn to be courageous in Thy work. May we turn wholly from error unto truth and live and teach the truth without fear. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"And when these earthly years are past and gone, Temptation's battle fought, the victory won, From Heaven shall gently come this message down, They that have borne the cross shall wear a crown."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 37-43. Places, Damascus, Arabia and Jerusalem. **Persons,** Saul of Tarsus, Jews and Barnabas.

**Scripture Setting:** Preaching. Christ preaching, Matt. 5:1. Jesus in the synagogues, Matt. 9:35. In the temple, Luke 20:1. Preachers as watchmen, Ezek. 3:17. Rule, Jonah 3:2; Matt. 10:7. Morals,

Isa. 58:1. Good preaching, Acts 6:4; Acts 20:27. For conversion, 2 Cor. 5:20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "It was solely the impulse of his own heart to proclaim that Savior, who had graciously manifested Himself to those who knew Him not, that led Paul to speak to the Jews in the synagogues concerning Jesus."

### THE PERSECUTOR A PREACHER.

What do you think a man should teach and preach to others? You will properly reply: That which he believes himself. To be sure. For unless a truth has entered into one's heart and mind deeply, he cannot expect others to be affected by what he says. Well, what had Saul, soon to be called by his Roman name Paul, to preach? An experience. Was he to tell merely that he had seen a light and heard a voice, and had fallen from his horse, had been blind three days and then had received his sight? No, there was more than that. There was a great central fact in his experiences on the road to Damascus. That was, that he had seen Jesus of Nazareth; he had seen Him as the risen Christ, had heard Him speak and had spoken to Him.

**The Basis of Faith.** One of the marks of an Apostle was that he had seen Christ after the resurrection. It is probable that Saul of Tarsus had never beheld Christ during His earthly life. But he saw the risen Christ at the time of his conversion, near Damascus. This experience then qualified him, in that far, to be an Apostle. That personal interview with Jesus also gave him the foundation for all his ministry. We modern Christians have a somewhat different basis for our faith. We do not have special revelations of Christ in person, but we have the proofs of Christ's presence in what His Spirit does in us and in the world. The early Christians did not really have as much proof as we have, for we have the historical wonder of nineteen centuries of Christ's influence in the world. Every life that overcomes sin is a demonstration of Christ's presence. The progress of Christianity in making a better world is a proof of Christ's presence. So we can believe as firmly as Paul did.

**Saul's First Preaching.** Saul, now converted, a changed man, with his heart burning with the wonderful revelation that had

been given to him, began to tell of what he had seen. After he had been with the Christians a few days in Damascus, he began to speak in the synagogues. These were the churches of the Jews. It was to the chief Jews in the synagogues that he had intended to bring letters from the priests in Jerusalem to ask aid in persecuting the Christians. To these very people he now went to tell of Christ.

**The Jews Amazed.** The Jews, who had expected to assemble in the synagogues and to see the famous persecutor enter and fiercely denounce the Christians, now saw the same man rise up and tell them that he had seen Jesus of Nazareth risen from the dead and that he was the Son of God. It appears they were so astonished at first that they did not know what to do. There is no hint that at first they tried to stop him in this preaching. There is record of their complete astonishment. "All that heard him were amazed, and said, Is not this he that in Jerusalem made havoc of them which called on this name? and he had come hither for this intent, that he might bring them bound before the chief priests."

**In Arabia.** Thus Saul at once bore his testimony in spite of the astonishment of his hearers. He could not be silent until he had taken his stand for Christ. And yet, he knew he was not fully equipped for his future work. He doubtless was led by the Spirit to understand that after bearing his testimony there were other preparations for him to make before he should enter further upon the mission of spreading the Gospel. Different scholars are not agreed as to just the point in the narrative of Luke, in the ninth chapter of Acts, where Paul's departure for Arabia should be introduced. But it is reasonably safe to say that Paul preached in the synagogues in Damascus first and then went away to Arabia. Paul himself tells us in one of his epistles that he

retired into Arabia for three years. It has been thought by some that he went into the neighborhood of Mt. Sinai, but we do not know the exact place where he spent those years. His motive was to study, meditate, commune with Christ, and fit himself for his later work.

**Preparation.** All of us may learn from this conduct of Paul that preparation of heart is essential for Christian work. There is an extreme of timidity in Christian work, and there is also an extreme of boldness. The boy and girl should be willing to undergo preparation. We should all make every effort to be ready. Prayer, study of the Bible, meditation, public worship, the Sunday school, reading good books, all are essential to preparation for Christian work. It must have been a wonderful period of communion and meditation for Paul, far away in Arabia. At last he came forth from it fully armed for his wonderful future.

He returned to Damascus, the scene of his conversion, the scene of his first preaching, as the chosen field for his renewed campaign for Christ. Now, he was no longer a new disciple, but he came after three years to proclaim what he had declared before, that Jesus was the Son of God. He came now, after a long course of study in the Scriptures, to show from them that Jesus is the Christ. He came with a humbler spirit, a deeper love, a chastened spirit. He came with matured thought and ordered argument. He came also a stronger man. He was now the blazing Apostle, irresistible and overwhelming, so that it is written "Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt in Damascus, proving that this is the Christ."

**They Try to Kill Saul.** Again the disconcerted Jews brought forth their old argument,—death. "They took counsel to kill him." They could not answer this man, whom they held to be a traitor to their cause, this man who once had been their chief champion,—so they would slay him, if they could. But the plot was discovered. The Jews in turn suspected that news of their conspiracy had reached the man they sought; so they set spies at the gates to note if he went out and to follow him, and kill him. But the Christians also were wide-awake in the crisis. They would protect this precious life. So they did not let him risk passing through the gates. They took him to the top of the wall, unobserved, which was not difficult in a poorly-lighted ancient city, and attaching ropes to a basket, they seated him

in the basket and lowered him to the ground.

It must have been with a deep joy that Paul endured this persecution for Christ's sake. He had come to Damascus the first time as a foe of Christ. Now he was being honored by being driven from the city as a friend of Christ. To his strong and loyal spirit this must have appeared as at least a partial atonement for his misdeeds. He was suffering with and for Christ.

**To Jerusalem.** Full of this joy, his heart burning with love to Christ, he sped away toward Jerusalem. Now he came as a Christian, but the Christians were still fearful of him. They suspected some concealed plot, as if he were a spy in disguise. Paul was a man with such greatness of mind as to recognize that this was just punishment for his former conduct. He did not complain. But he proved his case to Barnabas, who vouched for him to the Apostles. That must have been a most interesting scene when the Apostles listened gravely and silently to the wonderful story of the change of the bitter persecutor into a friend of Jesus. When they heard of the vision by the way, then of the bold preaching in Damascus, then of the peril and flight, their hearts must have told them this was indeed the work of Christ in the nature of Paul. So they welcomed him.

Now from the company in that city Paul goes forth into Jerusalem. How they must have been confounded by this change in one who outside those very walls had stood and held the garments of those who had stoned Stephen! Oh, they hated him and would kill him. But the brethren, taught by many bitter experiences to be on the watch, learned of the danger to Paul. So they took him to Caesarea and sent him on his way to Tarsus.

An artist was employed to paint the Last Supper. It was his object to throw all his art into the figure and countenance of Jesus, but he put on the table, in the foreground, some ornamental cups, the workmanship of which was very beautiful. When his friends came to see the picture on the easel, one said, "What beautiful cups." "Ah," said the painter, "I have made a mistake. These cups have diverted your eyes from the Lord." He blotted the cups from the canvas, that the figure of Christ might be the chief object of attraction.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Saul no longer wished for controversy. He desired only to win men to Christ. Our aim should be to enlighten, rather than to debate. 2. We should undertake only to tell what we know by experience of Christianity. A little of truth passed through the alembic of the heart has more real power than long treatises on deep truths that have not been felt in one's own life. 3. We should be willing to prepare ourselves by study and meditation for Christian work.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to the saints which dwelt at



And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was



of the palsy. And Peter said unto him, Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he



immediately. And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord. Now there was at



a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this



was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was



and died: whom when they had washed, they laid her in an upper



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 9:33-42.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that Thou art mightier than all the illnesses of our flesh, and that Thou rulest over death itself. May we bring all our infirmities unto Thee for remedy. Enable us to bear what Thou dost not see fit to remove. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"There is no death!  
What seems so is transition;  
This life of mortal breath  
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,  
Whose portal we call death."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 36. Places, Lydda and Joppa. **Persons,** Peter, Æneas, Dorcas and other believers.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study in Good Works. Jesus an example of, John 10:32. Remembered of God, Neh. 13:14; Heb. 6:9-10. Evidence of faith, Matt. 25:34-40; Jas. 2:14-20. God honored by, John 15:8. Make us brethren of Christ, Luke 8:21. Relation to eternal life, Luke 10:25-26. What God requires, Micah 6:8. Fruitful in, Col. 1:40. A blessing follows, Jas. 1:25. Parables relating to: the talents and pounds, Luke 19:12-27; the laborers in the vineyard, Matt. 20:11-15; the two sons, Matt. 21:28-31; the barren fig tree, Luke 13:6-9. Salvation not gained by, Rom. 4:2; Rom. 11:6. Blessedness of, Rev. 22:14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The spirit of Christianity awakened a large part of the world to the value and necessity of charitable work. 1. It rebuked and condemned the pagan spirit which lacked sympathy and neglected the weak and the struggling. 2. It pointed out the way to a better and kindlier world through the helpful employment of the opportunities and talents of the least as well as of the greatest. 3. It emphasized the truth that spiritual development comes by the exercise of sympathy and helpfulness toward the unfortunate. 4. It taught that the motives in good deeds are the measure of their value rather than the magnitude of the deeds themselves. 5. It consecrated all kind acts to the unhappy by declaring that the needy are representatives of Christ.

### ÆNEAS AND DORCAS.

The storm of persecution had passed by for the time. There is ebb and flow in human affairs as in the sea. Periods of great excitement are followed by seasons of quiet. After war comes peace. Even persecutors cannot be at white heat all the time.

The foes of Christ no doubt had been much discouraged and weakened by the defection of Paul to the Christians. We read, "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified, and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, was multiplied.

**Peter Visits the Churches.** During this happy period a visitation tour of the churches was made by Peter. It must have been a great joy to him to find so many congregations devoted to his Master now flourishing in the three provinces of the country. So Peter went from village to village, encouraging the Christians, instructing them, preaching and exhorting, and healing the sick. In the course of this tour he came to Lydda. This place is now called Ludd, is nine miles from Jaffa, and is the first town on the northernmost of the two roads between Jaffa and Jerusalem. "The Benjamites occupied, fortified and enlarged it originally, as told of in Chronicles, and re-occupied it after the return from Babylon. The Romans named it Diospolis. It became the seat of a bishopric. Here was buried, and probably born, St. George, England's legendary patron saint and martyr; a church in his honor was erected over his remains, the beautiful ruin of which still stands."

**The Town of Lydda.** Lydda, or Ludd, stands in a part of the great maritime plain which anciently bore the name of Sharon. The water course outside the town is said still to bear the name of Abi-Butrus (Peter), in memory of the Apostle. "It is, for a Mahometan place, busy and prosperous. Buried in palms, and with a large well close to the entrance, it looks from a distance inviting enough, but its interior is very repulsive on account of the extraordinary number of persons, old and young, whom one encounters at every step, either totally blind or afflicted with loathsome diseases of the eyes."

**Æneas.** In Lydda, Peter found a certain man named Æneas, who was so badly paralysed that he had kept his bed for eight years. The Christians desired to have him healed and brought Peter to his side. We are to remember that but a few years had passed since Jesus had worked miracles of healing all through that land, and doubtless many were yet living who had been restored by Him. The gift of healing had been given to the Apostles as well as to certain other disciples, and many extraordinary cures had been wrought by them. Indeed, the Christians of that day considered the healing of diseases and cures of all kinds to be one of the marks of true Christianity. Certain Christians through all the ages since have believed in healing by the power of faith in Christ.

**By the Power of Christ.** We are to note carefully that Peter did not claim to work miracles by his own power, but by the power



of Christ. Peter went to the bedside of the paralytic Aeneas and said unto him, "Jesus Christ healeth thee. Arise and make thy bed." Not Peter, but the Prince of Life achieved the wonder that followed. The man who had not walked for eight long years straightway arose. Aeneas, being well known to all the people in that region, the fame of his cure spread from lip to lip. The town and all the Sharon plain was stirred. Men and women rose up, giving glory to Christ. There was a universal acclaim of Christ as Lord. In a day all in that vicinity who saw the man Aeneas now well and strong gave themselves to Christ. There never was another so speedy and complete conversion of a community as a whole to Christ.

**Joppa.** Nine miles away from Lydda was Joppa, now called Jaffa. It was the seaport of Jerusalem. It was "the fabled scene of Andromeda's exposure to the whale; this legend is a tradition derived from Jonah's history, through the Phenicians. The town is on a high hill, with a harbor difficult of approach, hence not used much except in going to and from Jerusalem. It was by way of Joppa that Hiram sent to Solomon the timber from Lebanon for the temple; also Cyrus for Zerubbabel's temple. Here Jonah embarked for Cilician Tarsus. . . . Joppa has now a soap manufactory. Its oranges, pomegranates and watermelons are noted. It is one of the oldest cities in the world."

**Sorrow of the Christians There.** The disciples in Joppa having learned of Peter's presence in Lydda sent for him to visit them. They had a special reason in addition to the wish to have him include their church in his general visitation among the Christians. They were in sore distress. One of their most beloved and useful members had died. She was one who had won her way into all hearts by good deeds, sympathy and helpfulness. She was called, in the Aramaic language, Tabitha, and in the Greek, Dorcas, her name meaning a gazelle. In the Orient the gazelle is generally associated with the perfection of female beauty, but Dorcas "has become the type of the greater loveliness with which she clothed the poor by the labor of her own hands."

When Sir Philip Sidney, after having been wounded at the battle of Zutphen, was returning to the camp, he was almost overcome by the heat. Calling for a drink of water, a soldier with great difficulty procured one for him. Just as he was raising it to his lips, a poor wounded soldier was carried by, who turned his eyes wistfully toward the cup of water. Instantly, Sidney passed the water to him, saying, "Your necessity is greater than mine."

**Dorcas Raised to Life.** The lamenting Christians received Peter at the house of Dorcas. The pure tenement of her body,

with those hands folded which had done so many good deeds, was prepared for burial and placed in an upper room. When Peter came the disciples took him into this chamber, while the widows, whom she had tenderly helped so often, stood by weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas had made. Sympathizing with their sorrow, Peter determined to bring this grief unto his Master. Bidding all company to leave him alone in that upper room, he knelt down and prayed. What were the words of his prayer we know not, but we know that he asked his Master to once more work that greatest of miracles whereby life is restored unto those who have passed through death. Having prayed thus, Peter stood by and said, "Tabitha, arise." At once the eyes of the woman opened. Then beholding Peter, she sat up. Peter took her by the hand and lifted her up. Calling the disciples and the widows, he presented her unto them alive.

**Great Joy.** Great was their joy and amazement to see their friend, who had been dead, alive again. Never had Joppa been thrilled as now by a sense of the Divine power and goodness. Dorcas was welcomed as if she were an angel from Heaven. And again she went in and out among the needy, doing good works.

Wonderful as was this miracle, we are to remember that the gift of life which all of us have is in itself just as marvellous. Marvellous also is that power which gives spiritual life to the sinner. So we also in our time should praise and magnify the name of the living God and the living Christ who gives us all our mercies.

After the battle of Antietam, a gentleman, who was passing over the field, saw a man washing clothes at a brook. He recognized him as the pastor of one of the largest churches in Philadelphia. He said, "Doctor, what are you doing?" The minister straightened up and pointed across the field, saying, "Over yonder are six hundred wounded men. Most of them are lying in bloody shirts. Our supply of shirts is all gone. We can get no more until tomorrow. I thought I would take a few of the worst and wash and dry them in the sun." The gentleman said, "Doctor, I know God has blessed you in your work in Philadelphia. But I do not think the Master ever looked upon any act of your life with as much pleasure as this."

**Practical Truths.** 1. Opportunities for unselfish service are universally distributed where men and women are to be found, and the humbler forms of usefulness, or those that seem to be such, are frequently the ones that count for most. 2. A warm heart will find chances to do good where an unsympathetic nature complains of lack of opportunity to benefit others. 3. Kind deeds open the way into hearts to which we can bring the message of salvation. 4. Dorcas did the work at hand in the spirit of love, with no thought of herself, and yet the Dorcas societies have perpetuated her name and made her a sort of patron saint of good works. "The path of duty is the way to glory." 5. The Prince of Life who raised up Dorcas and gave her back to her companions will, in due season, give to us all reunion with our friends on the other side.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## PETER'S VISION.

And when the



which  
spake  
unto  
Cornelius  
was  
depart-  
ed, he  
called  
two of  
his  
house  
hold



and a  
devout



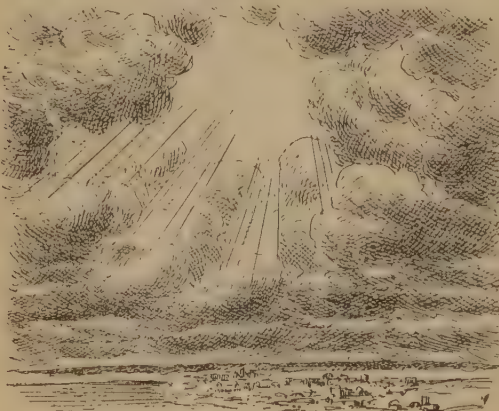
of them that waited on him continually; and when he had declared all these things unto them, he sent them to Joppa. On the morrow, as they went on their



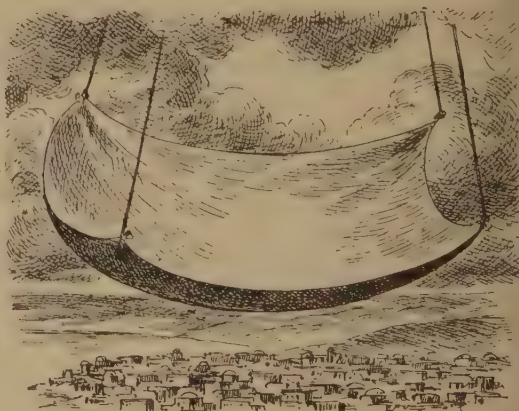
and drew  
nigh unto  
the city,  
Peter  
went up  
upon the



to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw



and a  
certain  
vessel  
descend-  
ing  
unto  
him, as  
it had  
been a



and let down to the earth.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 10:1-20.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Grant unto us, we pray, the vision of our duty in all things. Open our eyes, as Thou didst those of Peter, to see clearly our right relations to our fellow beings. Take from us all narrowness and uncharitableness of heart and prepare us for our work in the spirit of Christ. For His name's sake. Amen.

"The Gospel banner wide unfurled  
Shall wave in triumph o'er the world;  
And every creature, bond and free,  
Shall hail the glorious jubilee."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 36. Place, Joppa. Person, Peter.

**Scripture Setting:** The Gospel for the World. Prophecies of, Isa. 2:3-5; Isa. 4:2-6; Isa. 9:2-7; Isa. 52: 7; Isa. 55:1-5; Isa. 61:1-3; Ezek. 34:23-31; Joel, 2:28-32; Mic. 4:1-7. The New Covenant, Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:6-13; Angelic announcement, Luke 2:10-34. Christ preaching, Matt. 4:23. Proof of Messiahship, Matt. 11:4. To be preached everywhere, Matt. 24:14. Jesus' command to preach, Matt. 28:18-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Christianity is the only religion that aims to bless and save the whole

world. 1. It aims to obliterate caste. 2. In the spiritual realm it ignores differences of race, language and condition. 3. It seeks to destroy local and provincial prejudices, and to bring all men to a mutual understanding of their common ties, duties and relationships. 4. It treats all as sinners who may become saints; as lost who may be found, as children away from home, who may find welcome in the Father's house. 5. Its whole message is open and clear. The Greek philosophers ignored the multitude. The Egyptian esoteric religion was only for the initiated. But the Gospel is for all alike.

### A GREAT SHEET AND WHAT WAS IN IT.

One of the hardest lessons to learn is to treat all others as human beings, as boys and girls, as men and women, without regard to money, position, dress, education, or anything else except character and personal worth. Young people find this just as hard as do older persons, and there is as much feeling of distinctions and differences among young people as among their elders. If a boy or girl has parents with more money, more education or culture than others in the school or on the street, this boy or girl is apt to feel that he or she is superior to the others. While in fact others may have more mind, more talent, more energy, more kindness, better dispositions and may become much more useful men and women than they. We should aim to treat all on the basis of their personal worth.

**Caste.** This sense of superiority and inferiority is found all over the world and in all ages. The Asiatics think they are superior to the Europeans and the Europeans think they are better than the Asiatics, and so on round the world. Each nation prides itself on its strong points and sometimes on its weak ones. This feeling was even more marked in ancient times, when nations knew much less about each other than they do now. The Greeks spoke of all other nations as "barbarians." The Romans considered all peoples outside Italy inferior to themselves. And the Jews had even a more intense national pride than any other people. "The nations," or "The Gentiles" was with the Jews not merely a descriptive term, but one of contempt. The Jew felt himself contaminated by the mere touch of a foreigner and he refused to even eat with a Gentile.

While Christianity at first was given to the Jews, since it arose in their country, and they were to be afforded opportunity to accept it, the Master commissioned His disciples to "preach the Gospel to all nations." Yet it appears that the Apostles did not for a time fully comprehend their mission to the whole world. No effort was made for some time to reach any but Jews. Now a broader outlook was about to be taken.

**The House of Simon the Tanner.** After Peter by the power of Christ had restored Dorcas to life, he continued many days in the town of Joppa, making his home with Simon the tanner. Tradition still points out the house of this man with whom Peter lodged. Whether it be the actual house or not does not matter much; the one that tradition has singled out is a very old dwelling and is visited by multitudes of people from year to year. Doubtless it is very like the real house even if it is not the original one. It stands in full view of the Mediterranean sea and has a flat roof, such as Peter might have visited for his seasons of prayer.

**Peter's Prejudices.** While he lodged with Simon the tanner, Peter was accustomed to ascend at noon to the housetop for solitary prayer. There he communed with his Master. We must remember that Peter had grown up as a strict Jew and had lived his whole life among the Jews, and as a Christian Apostle his work thus far had been among Jews. He had been taught that the Jewish nation was the holy people and that all other nations were unclean and without God. We must not attribute to him our more liberal modern ideas, but try to understand him as he was. While he had followed

Christ for three years and had been a loyal Apostle of the Master since His ascension, he had not yet comprehended the breadth and fulness of Christ's teachings in all respects.

**The Vision.** One day Peter retired to the housetop of Simon's home for prayer, as his custom was. There he prayed earnestly for a long time, until hunger came upon him, and apparently he summoned some member of the household and requested food to be brought him. While this was being prepared for him, Peter fell into a trance and had a vision. It was a vision suitable to a hungry man, but nevertheless certain elements in it were repugnant to a strict Jewish conscience. He saw the heavens opened and a vast sheet descending, let down by four corners upon the earth. Within this sheet were all kinds of four-footed beasts, and creeping things and fowls.

**Clean and Unclean.** The Jewish law clearly and definitely distinguished the forbidden and permitted, the clean and unclean animals, birds and fishes, which a Jew could eat or could not eat. The law forbade the eating of the camel, the coney, the hare and the swine. It forbade the use of anything that comes out of the water that has not scales and fins; this would exclude oysters, clams, and crabs among other things. The Jews could not eat the eagle, the vulture, the kite, the owl, the hawk, the cuckoo, the cormorant, the swan, the pelican, the stork, the heron, the lapwing or the bat. To eat any of these or to touch the dead bodies of them, or to touch anything that had come in contact with them was to violate the law and be rendered ceremonially unclean.

**Reasons for Distinctions.** Doubtless there were good reasons for these prohibitions, especially in hot countries. The flesh of swine and such things as shellfish are today regarded as dangerous food in the tropics. Others of the prohibited kinds are generally considered unfit for human food. While still others are frequently eaten by men in other climates.

The very sight of these unclean creatures in the sheet caused Peter to shrink as from contamination. But the sight was accompanied by a voice which said, "Rise, Peter, kill and eat." Instantly the impulsive Apostle answered, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common and unclean." But the voice came a second time, saying, "What God hath cleansed, call not thou common." But instead of remaining within

his reach, the sheet was now caught up into the air and vanished.

**The Meaning.** But at last his mind's eyes cleared. He caught a glimpse of what God meant to teach him. He saw himself as a narrow Jew. He saw the wrong that had been in his own heart in thinking to treat men who were not of his own race as if the Gospel were not for them. He saw the dividing lines between nations and races growing less and less as he apprehended more of what his Master had meant when he bade him, and the other disciples, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." He felt his heart expand and warm toward mankind. He looked up gratefully toward Heaven to thank his Master that He had taught him this lesson. He there determined to live forever after in the presence of that larger and grander truth.

How blessed a time it will be for the world when all learn this lesson! How much pain will be spared! How much warmer and kindlier will life be! How much more of brotherhood will come!

Let us each one in our own place and condition learn this lesson. Let young people carry this spirit into the school and into the playground and into companionship with all other young persons. It does not follow that there should not be distinctions of good and bad, of honesty and dishonesty, of cleanliness and filth. No! The differences that should be ignored are those foolish ones that have no foundation in character and in deeds.

One of Tamerlane's followers once dug up a gold coin from the earth and brought it to the emperor. Tamerlane gazed at it and saw that it was good gold. Then he looked again and saw that the image stamped upon it was not his own but the face of a Roman ruler. Crying, "It is worthless," he cast it away. Yet it was good gold and would have passed current anywhere in the world. He thought it worthless, though it was minted by a greater power than his own, simply because his own face was not upon it. What narrowness and ignorance. Yet it is common to judge our neighbors and fellowmen in general in no more intelligent way, simply because they do not in all things agree with us.

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp;  
The gold's the man."

**Practical Truths:** 1. We should strive against bigotry as an evil in itself and as the source of many other evils. 2. We should hold every good thing which God has given us as a trust for the benefit of our fellow beings. 3. The brotherhood of man can become a reality only when all alike aim to be just and kind. 4. The law of love and the Golden Rule both are opposed to every form of narrowness and bigotry. 5. We should treat all on the basis of their personal worth.



## PETER AND CORNELIUS.

And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I



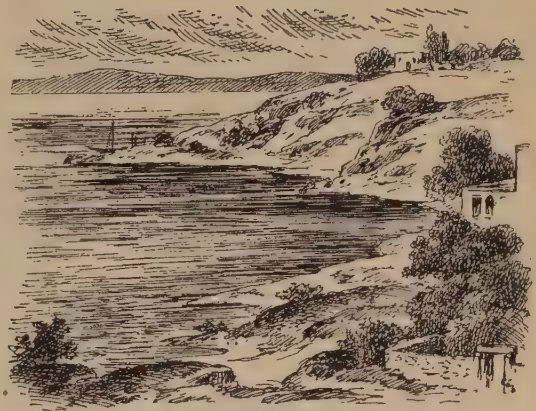
in my  
house,  
and,  
behold,  
a



in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the



of one Simon a



tanner by the

who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God. Then



opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 10:1-48.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We bless Thee that Thy goodness and mercy, revealed in Christ, are for all who are willing to turn unto Thee. May we, like Thy servant Peter, go gladly unto those who need the Gospel, no matter what their condition or race may be. May the Gospel reach all men everywhere for their salvation. In the name of Christ, Amen.

Then let us pray that come it may,  
As come it will for a' that,  
That sense an' worth, o'er all the earth,  
Shall bear the gree an' a' that.  
It's comin' yet, for a' that  
That man to man the world o'er  
Shall brothers be for a' that.

—Burns.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 36. Places, Joppa and Caesarea. **Persons,** Peter, Cornelius, angel, soldier and servants, Christian brethren, kinsmen and friends of Cornelius.

**Scripture Setting:** Relations to Roman Empire and Rome. Empire ruled by Augustus, Luke 2:1. By Tiberius, Luke 3:1. By Claudius, Acts 18:2. By Nero, Phil. 4:22. Citizenship in, by nativity, Acts 22:28. By purchase, Acts 22:28. Rights of citizens, Acts 16:37; 22:25-29. Right of trial, Acts 25:16. Right of appeal, Acts 25:10-21. Abominations in, Rom. 1:18-32. Paul's visit to, Acts 28:11-16. Visit of Onesiphorus, 2 Tim. 1:16-17. Paul preaches in, Rom. 1:15. Christians in, Rom. 16:5-17. Phil. 1:12-18; 4:22; 2 Tim. 4:21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. In the very seat of Roman paganism in Palestine is found a man ready for the Gospel. 2. This man, who is of the class deemed the least susceptible to re-

ligious influences is deeply yearning for the message of salvation. 3. He is an officer, by family of one of the most illustrious of the Roman clans, the Cornelii, and by tradition of the most tenacious adherents to ancestral forms of worship. 4. A Roman of broad sympathies, who included in his charities the despised and subject Jews. He had gained their good opinion in spite of their dislike to his nation. 5. He was the first pagan who was brought directly into the Christian church, for it is doubtful if he was a "proselyte of the gate." 6. Cornelius' prayers had "come up as a memorial before God." The Divine will reveals itself to him who earnestly seeks it. 7. Neither the centurion nor the Apostle questioned concerning the outcome of God's command. 8. God in answering the centurion's prayer opened the new church to the Gentile world. The prayer of a devout man availeth much.

### PAGANS AND CHRISTIANS UNITED.

A Roman soldier was for centuries the synonym of conquest and power. The Jews disliked the Romans with especial bitterness, for they meant to the Jew loss of independence and of ancient glory.

**One Roman Soldier.** This dislike of the Romans by the Jews remained unchanged when Peter was in Joppa. Further up the coast of the Mediterranean stood the city of Caesarea, the stronghold of Roman power in that land, and there was stationed the body guard of the procurator, in addition to other troops. Of the Roman legions in Palestine, there was one distinctively known as the Italian band, or regiment. This was composed of men from Rome or its vicinity. A cohort usually consisted of 555 infantry and 66 cavalry. A centurion was the commander of approximately one hundred men. We are interested especially in a certain centurion named Cornelius. As a Roman soldier and citizen, as a representative of the hated foreign rule, he was the last man with whom a Jew would ordinarily wish to have dealings.

**Special Revelation Needed.** Peter was in Joppa, Cornelius in Caesarea, and God wished these two men to meet. That seems a simple matter, but in fact, it required two visions from Heaven to accomplish this end.

Cornelius was already a devout man but it is doubtful if he was a Jewish proselyte, as certain commentators declare. He was a Roman pagan who had learned, possibly

through living in the land of the Jews, a true conception of God and he had trained his household in the worship of Jehovah. He was, likewise, charitable, giving much alms to the people. He was a man of prayer, and was always seeking for more light that he might have a fuller understanding of God's will.

God was now moving to accomplish his ends in regard to this man. He was preparing his heart. One afternoon at about three o'clock Cornelius was at prayer. While in this reverent spirit, he saw a bright presence, which he knew was not that of man and this Heavenly visitant called him by name. The angel had come from above with a mission to one man. At the call "Cornelius," the brave man who had often faced death on the battlefield was awed, overcome, afraid, and he said, "What is it, Lord?" The angel answered, "Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do." Then the angel vanished, leaving the centurion alone with the wondrous thought that God had spoken to him through a special messenger.

Being a soldier, Cornelius acted promptly. He summoned two of his household servants, and a soldier whom he could trust, and he





## ECCE HOMO

BY ANTONIO CISERI

Ciseri was an Italian painter of the last century. Naturally his painting shows much study of Roman, that is, classical art, with all its grace, carefully arranged draperies and artificial attitudes. It is beautiful work and highly finished. The scene is the balcony of Pilate's palace, from which the governor looks down on the multitude below, pointing to Jesus, still arrayed in His mock-royal purple and wearing the tormenting crown on His head. Pilate cries out to them, "Behold the man." Christ feels the insults heaped upon Him, but endures them patiently. Pilate's chair with the leopard skin stands on the left, and by it is the half-naked keeper of the prisoner, holding the reed scepter with which they had beaten Christ, while with his left hand he holds firmly the bonds which retain the Saviour. Beyond are soldiers and attendants. There are sorrowful women on the right and the lawyer with his scroll. Pilate hopes to excite the pity of the multitude as he presents the thorn-crowned and scarred Christ and exclaims, "Behold the man." But there is no pity in the clamoring crowd seen through the balcony railing.

As a painting it is beautifully executed, and the feeling of light, falling on all the figures, has been admirably attended to.

—JAMES WILLIAM PATTISON





ECCE HOMO

Antonia (Soy)

## ANTONIO CISERI. 1821-1891.

In a little village, near Ascona, upon the famous Lago Maggiore, and in the Swiss canton of Ticino, in 1821 was born Antonio Ciseri. Round about, across the water, up the water, and up the valley, lie the Lepontine Alps, peak after peak, range after range, their snows flaming in rose and gold at day-break, their soaring aguilles at evening violet and purple silhouettes against the redly darkening western sky. And at their feet always was their own reflection in a water, darkly, deeply blue as the daylight skies above. Small wonder that in such surroundings Antonio, inspired with the beauty about him, in such ways as were possible to a small farmer's son in Northern Italy, sought to express in some measure the loveliness that filled his soul.

Artists grow in Italy as do soldiers and patriots. But the little village among the hills was no place for one to develop in. Thence, as elsewhere, must the student find his way to the recognized gathering places of the masters of his craft. There was a good harvest, and the father's goats had been liberal with their milk and kids that spring. So upon a day, the youth Antonio, counseled and commended by the priest, admonished by father, reminded by mother of certain items of personal comfort he must not forget, kissed and hugged by brothers and sisters, with gay farewell, took his place in the stage, bound southward. Through Lombardy, by famed Milan and Pavia, by Piacenza and Parma, crossing the Etruscan Appenines, he worked his way to Florence. At every turn of the highway across the plains of Lombardy had been disclosed some spot of historic interest, some fresh prospect of natural beauty. In Florence were gathered all these things, and amid her towers and palaces, the memory of all those great in the world of art who before him had walked by the Arno, or across its famous bridge. The birthplace of Dante, Florence was the residence of Boccaccio, the great writer, and the scene of the mighty labors of Cimabue, Giotto, Taddeo

Gaddi, Aretino, Brunelleschi, Lucca della Robbia, Ghiberti, Donatello, Fra Lippo Lippi, Ghirlandajo, Fra Angelico, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Andrea del Sarto, to name but a few of the great artists, architects and sculptors whose names and that of Florence mean the same thing: the great and splendid age of the Renaissance (the new birth of the classic tradition in art and letters) in Italy, the age which saw the invention of printing, the discovery of America and the rounding of Africa.

A student in the atelier of Bezzuoli, Ciseri became saturated with the beauty of the renaissance ideal. Unlike other men of his time, unlike his master, his capacity for fresh sight, for original expression was not extinguished by the renaissance tradition, that in its decay, beginning toward the end of the sixteenth century, had in the sixteen, seventeen and early eighteen hundreds, become merely a manner of painting, an accepted style, in which subjects were assembled on the canvas according to rule and precept, and colored almost by recipe.

At the same time in England and at Rome, in a small band of German artists working there, was growing to a head a revolt against the merely cut and dried modes of composition and representation into which the once glorious renaissance spirit had sunk. By all this was Ciseri affected, and his resultant works therefore show a freshness of conception, a strength, and a distinctive viewpoint that marks him among the painters of his time.

His most noted pictures are "The Unbelief of Thomas," painted for the Church of the Saviour in Jerusalem, the "Ecce Homo" (behold the man) in the Gallery of National Art, Rome, and "Christ Borne to the Tomb," said to be in the church of Santa Maria del Sasso, at Locarno, near his birthplace. Honored and respected among the painters of Florence for many years, his life ended there in 1891.

JAMES BEALINGS.



bade them go to Joppa, thirty-five miles away, find Peter, and invite him to visit him in Caesarea.

**God Preparing Peter.** The messengers of Cornelius protected by a soldier left Caesarea that evening, for the rough, slow journey which would take until noon of the next day. At that very noon hour Peter also was being enlightened by a vision. God was teaching him by means of a sheet let down from Heaven, containing all manner of beasts and birds and creeping things, not to call common or unclean that which He had cleansed. The meaning of this vision was beginning to dawn upon the mind of Peter who had been brought up in all the prejudices of the Jew. He was seeing that God meant him to carry the Gospel to other men than Jews. But perhaps it may be that he was not entirely prepared to be sent to a Roman soldier.

**Messengers Arrive.** There was a knocking at the door of the house of Simon the tanner. The door opened from within. Perhaps the soldier, the protector of the servants, was spokesman. Perhaps a gruff military voice asked, "Is this the house of Simon the tanner?" A member of the household replied, "It is." "Is a man named Simon Peter here?" "He is."

Above, on the housetop, the Spirit said to Peter, "Behold three men seek thee. Arise, therefore, and get thee down and go with them doubting nothing: for I have sent them." Obedient to this leading, Peter went down to the men who were sent to him from Cornelius. "Behold I am he whom ye seek," said Peter; "What is the cause wherefore ye are come?" The reply was: "Cornelius, the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee." This Peter could well believe after his own vision, so with the deep realization that God was in this matter he bade the men enter and lodge for the night. The next day, the third after Cornelius had seen the angel, Peter, accompanied by brethren from Joppa set off for Caesarea with the messengers of Cornelius.

**The Apostle Under a Roman's Roof.** Cornelius, awed by the manner in which God had visited him, was eagerly waiting to hear that truth which he had so often longed and prayed for, and he had invited kinsmen and near friends to be present at this divinely-arranged meeting. As Peter entered

his house, Cornelius, true to his Roman blood and customs, cast himself down at his feet as if worshipping him, for there still remained in this man something of the pagan conception that gods appear as men. No Jew would have so acted, and Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man."

Profound indeed must have been the interest with which these men looked upon each other, knowing that God had so miraculously brought them together. When they had joined the company, Peter, now shorn of all his prejudices, said, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore came I unto you without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me?" Cornelius reverently rehearsed his experience and concluded, "Now, therefore, are we all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

**The Gospel for All.** Then before that little company of Romans and Jews Peter uttered some of the grandest words that ever fell from human lips; words that are as the Magna Charta of a world religion; words that embrace all humanity in one vast family. God was no longer to be conceived of as the God of the Jew only; the Gospel was for mankind. For the Roman also Christ died.

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons," said Peter; "but in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." Wonderful truths to fall from the lips of a Jew who but four days before had been bound by his old and inbred prejudices!

Before the Apostle had ended telling of Christ, the Holy Spirit fell upon that company. Then the Roman centurion and his friends were baptized in the name of Jesus. Forgetting the Roman soldier in the man, Peter welcomed his national enemy into that glorious assembly where all are friends.

**Illustration.** A father wishing to make plain to his children the influence of the Holy Spirit, said, "Here is a needle that has received an electric shock and here is one that has not. They look alike, yet one has hidden qualities which the other lacks. The one needle is a magnet and when properly balanced it will enable man to find his way across the trackless ocean. So the soul which has received the electric shock of the Holy Spirit may point wanderers to Heaven."

**Practical Truths.** 1. God is ready to shape the affairs of our lives if we are ready to co-operate with Him. He knows each one of us as individuals. 2. God uses men as well as angels for His work. Peter was necessary to complete that for which the angel made preparation. 3. The prayers and alms of sincere souls have a high value, but it is not enough simply to rest in these. 4. God desires to remove from our minds and hearts injurious scruples and prejudices that hinder the best and most far-reaching work for Him. 5. The "respect of persons" is fatal to Christian progress. Nothing is common that God has cleansed.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

Now they which were



abroad  
upon  
the



that arose about Stephen travelled as far as



preaching  
the word  
to none  
but unto  
the Jews  
only.  
And some  
of them  
were  
men of  
Cyprus  
and



which, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in



and they  
sent forth  
Barnabas,  
that he  
should go as  
far as  
Antioch.  
Then  
departed  
Barnabas to



for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 11:1-30.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We rejoice in the great Captain of salvation whose love and grace are mightier than armies; mightier than intellects; mightier than the sins and ignorance of earth. Blessed are we to have such a Leader. May we with unconquerable faith go forward in loyal service until the whole world shall be brought to the feet of our Lord. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"I may not stay to see the day  
When the great Saviour shall hold sway.  
And earth shall glitter in the ray  
That cometh from above,  
But come it fast or come it slow,  
'Twill come at last I surely know.  
And Heaven and earth shall feel the glow  
And men shall call it Love."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 42. Place, Antioch in Syria, Jerusalem. **Persons,** Barnabas, Saul, disciples in Antioch and in Jerusalem.

**Scripture Setting:** Study in Names for Followers of Christ. Disciples of Jesus, Matt. 10:1; 20:17. Acts 9:26; 14:20. Twelve called Apostles, Matt. 10:2-4. Barnabas called Apostle, Acts 14:14. Those of the way, Acts 9:2. Nazarenes, Acts 24:5. Galileans, Acts 2:7. Saints, Eph. 2:19. Brethren, Acts 11:1, 12. Christians, Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The first Gentile church founded. 1. Through persecution. Persecution extended Christianity beyond the bounda-

ries of Israel. 2. It was accomplished not by the Apostles, but by ordinary Christians and church members. 3. The presence of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of the heathen were the Apostle's authority for founding the church. 4. Barnabas, the special messenger of the Jerusalem church, set his approval on the workings of the church at Antioch. 5. This church demonstrated its essential unity with other Christians and the reality of its practical religion by ministering to the needs of the brethren in Judea. 6. Antioch, a Greek-speaking city, hit upon the one fitting and immortal name for followers of Christ—"Christians."

### FIRST CALLED "CHRISTIANS."

The scene now changes to another very famous city, Antioch. It was known at that time as the "Capital of the East," and it had been the capital of the Greek kings before the Roman power arose. Antioch was one of the Greek colonies which owed its existence to the conquests of Alexander and his followers in the Orient. The Greek culture and language were predominant there, though the masses of the people were Syrians.

**The Greatest Conqueror.** Antioch had seen the conquering hosts of Alexander the Great; it had heard the iron tread of the Romans; now it was to feel the mighty influence and soul-conquering power of Christ. Henceforth its importance in human history was to be due not to soldiers but to the redeeming grace of Christ. The writer of the book of Acts glances back a moment to the martyrdom of Stephen. He tells of those who were scattered abroad at that time. Some of these had gone into Phoenicia, the narrow strip of land on the Syro-Palestinian coasts; others had fled to the neighboring island of Cyprus; while still others had proceeded to Antioch, the capital of Syria. Some of these Christians began to preach to the Jews only. But among the scattered Christians were natives of the island of Cyprus, and of Cyrene in North Africa, known as "Grecians;" that is, men of Jewish blood but born in Greek-speaking regions and speaking Greek. The men from Cyprus and Cyrene began to preach not only to Jews and to Greek-speaking Hebrews, but to the heathen Greeks.

Even that which appeared adverse, and humanly speaking, destructive of the welfare of the church proved to be advantageous and helped to extend the Kingdom. Those who were persecuted were united in faith and love, and were more firmly banded in one brotherhood by reason of their common sufferings. Wherever they went, they carried the Gospel.

**A Church in Antioch.** Shortly after the conversion of Cornelius, there were many converts in Antioch, both Jews and Greeks. A heathen city had been stormed and taken for Christ. The results were marvellous. Greek culture and Greek mythology were not able to completely resist the truth in Christ. Of the work of these disciples it is written that "the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord."

**Illustration.** One day during a siege as Charles the Twelfth of Sweden was dictating a letter a bombshell from the enemy fell upon the house, broke through the roof and burst near his apartment. The secretary was alarmed and his pen fell from his hand. "What's the matter?" asked the king; "why do you not continue writing?" "Most gracious sire," said the secretary, "the bombshell!" "Well!" said the king, "what has the bombshell to do with the letter? Go on with the writing." So should the Christian keep on with his duties amid all perils and confusion.

When the brethren in Judea had heard that Peter baptized Cornelius and his fellow Romans and ate with them they had criticized him harshly. But when Peter rehearsed his vision, they had swiftly changed their minds and glorified God, saying, "Then hath

God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Being in a changed state of heart toward the Gentiles, the Christians at Jerusalem received with joy the news of the spiritual work at Antioch. They conferred together and decided to send one of their number to Antioch to aid the disciples there.

**Barnabas.** For this mission they appointed Barnabas, a man of the tribe of Levi, who had lived in Cyprus. He had generously contributed all his possessions to the treasury of the Christians. It was he who vouched for Saul's sincerity when Saul had visited Jerusalem after his conversion and the other disciples had feared him as a possible spy.

What Barnabas saw in Antioch gave him great joy. Evidently the work there was accomplished by the Spirit of God. Barnabas encouraged the disciples to be steadfast in the faith and to cleave unto the Lord. His coming strengthened the believers, and they entered with still more vigor into winning souls to Christ. Large numbers of converts were gained.

**Help Needed.** The work grew from day to day, and the church flourished. But Barnabas found that he was not equal to his share of the labor. Perhaps he felt that in spite of the wonderful success of Christ's cause there, an especially strong man—a leader and a scholar—was required. He knew Saul of Tarsus to be such a man. We are not informed how Barnabas knew so much about Saul, but it is known that his home island, Cyprus, was usually annexed to the province of Cilicia, which was Saul's country, so that Saul and Barnabas were compatriots. The two might have been educated together in Tarsus, or Barnabas may have known Saul while he was a student in Jerusalem. Saul was at this time in Tarsus, and there Barnabas went to seek him.

**Saul in Antioch.** The Lord had told Ananias that Saul was a chosen vessel to bear the Gospel to the Gentiles. So Saul went to Antioch and there for a whole year he and Barnabas labored for Christ. There Saul brought his great mind and heart, filled with love to Christ, to bear upon the people of that heathen city. That was a ripe field and under the labors of Paul and Barnabas there grew a church whose light and influence extended throughout that whole region.

Indeed, the grain of mustard seed of which Christ had spoken was becoming a great tree. The Gospel which had at first been heard by only a few among the Jews now came to multitudes with its life-giving power.

Christianity, which at first had seemed to

many as but a sect of Judaism, was revealing itself more and more as the church of Christ, a new and vaster power.

**Illustration.** A man said to a boy who was scratching on a pane of glass with a diamond, "Do not write there." "Why?" "Because it will not rub off." Yet Christ is able to rub out even diamond marks from a heathen's or a sinner's heart and put a better writing in their place.

**The First Gentile Church.** So greatly did the church in Antioch grow, that in the history of the diffusion of Christianity it occupies a place even more conspicuous than in Jerusalem itself. It became not only large in numbers but wide in influence, and a center for the spreading of the Gospel into all the East.

Believers in Christ were first called "Christians" in Antioch. The followers of Christ had styled themselves "the disciples" or "learners," "the saints," "the believers," "the brethren," "those of the Way," while the Jews called them "the Galileans," or "the Nazarenes." In Antioch the title was given which is most significant and appropriate, and which has lasted through all the ages since.

**Christian Sympathy.** This strong and growing church, which had sprung up in a heathen city, now demonstrated its sympathy with other Christians. A terrible famine came upon Judea, and the Christians there were threatened with starvation. The church in Antioch contributed, every man according to his ability, and sent money and food by Saul and Barnabas to the elders in Judea. Thus Saul, who a few years before had spread terror among the Christians in that region, now comes as a brother, bearing the means to minister to the needs of his suffering fellow Christians.

What a happy errand it must have been for him! What a demonstration it was that Christianity knits men of all nations and races together, when he came with the gifts of the first Gentile church to the mother church in the land of the Jews.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Persecution and misfortune often prove blessings in disguise. However loyal we may be to our own church, yet we should rejoice above all in the name "Christian." 2. We should recognize all followers of Christ as Christians, without prejudice or bigotry. 3. When Peter recounted to the Jewish Christians his experience with Cornelius they gave up their old point of view gladly in the light of better knowledge. 4. We should be so evidently devoted to Christ that others may instinctively recall Him and name us for Him. 5. True brotherhood began with the churches. 6. Charity, according to means, is one of the most beautiful flowers of true religion.



# PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON.

And the angel said unto him,



thyself,  
and



And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he



and followed him;

and  
wist  
not  
that  
it was  
true  
which



was done by the

but thought he saw a vision. When they were past the first and second ward, they came unto the iron



that leadeth unto the city; which  
opened  
to them  
of his  
own  
accord:  
and they  
went out,  
and  
passed  
on

through one street; and forthwith the



from him.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 12:1-25.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that chains and prisons cannot bind and confine Thy truth. We thank Thee that Thou dost overrule the plots of kings and mighty foes! We bless Thee that Thine angels have charge over Thy people. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"The seraph's wing  
Outspread in parting flight. With snowy trace  
Awhile it hovered, then like radiant star  
From it's orbit loosed, went soaring up,  
High o'er the arch of night. Then Peter knew."  
—Lydia Sigourney.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 44. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Peter, Herod Agrippa I, angel, soldiers, Rhoda the maid, and disciples.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Angels. Guard tree of life, Gen. 3:24. Law given by, Acts 7:53. Medium of revelation, 2 Kings 1:15. Announce birth of Samson, Judges 13:3. Announce birth of Baptist, Luke 1:11-20. Of Jesus, Matt. 1:20-21. Minister to Jesus after temptation, Matt. 4:11. During passion, Luke 22:43. At tomb of Jesus, Matt. 28:2-6. At the ascension, Acts 1:10, 11. At second coming, Matt. 25:31. At judgment, Matt. 13:39, 41. Minister to righteous, Gen. 24:7. Ex. 23:20. Psa. 91:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Herod, an ambitious, unscrupulous king, is willing to court popularity by crimes against innocent people. 2. His

inconsistency is shown in forbidding trials and executions during a religious feast and making a spectacle of human suffering on the day after. He was both an interested patron of heathen games and a strict observer of Jewish rites. 3. Neither imprisonment nor death can affect the vitality of pure religion. That Peter could sleep in prison bound to guards is proof that God keeps in perfect peace the mind that is staid on Him. 4. Deliverance came through Peter's unquestioning obedience. 5. Prison doors and walls are no barriers to the accomplishment of God's purposes. 6. Inevitable suffering comes to those, who, like the soldier guards, have even a formal part in the persecution of the righteous. 7. The Word of God grew and multiplied in spite of persecutions. God will protect His church.

### PRISON DOORS OPENED BY AN ANGEL.

A sudden blow aimed at two of the strongest leaders of the church was about to fall upon the Christians in Judea. James, an apostle and brother of John, one of the two "Sons of Thunder," was to be taken. "Peter, the Rockman," was also plotted against. If these men should fall, the church would be greatly weakened, so it has been decided by the foe that they must perish.

**To Please the Jews.** Herod Agrippa the First, grandson of Herod the Great, was now a local king, subject to the Roman Emperor. He was of the Jewish faith, and, since the Emperor Claudius had given him control over Judea, he usually resided in Jerusalem. Not only was he a strict Jew, observing rigidly the ceremonial law, but he was a demagogue as well, and aimed to please the people in every possible way.

This king was capable of doing any evil thing if he thought it would make him more popular with the Jewish people. The Christians had been increasing in numbers and influence and the Jews looked upon them with growing enmity. Herod, the political trickster, saw that it would be a popular stroke for him to open a campaign of persecution. At the first hint of this proposal, the Jews rejoiced, and Herod knowing that the multitude would be on his side, laid hands on certain Christians.

**The First Martyred Apostle.** Herod's policy was to cripple the church by crushing its strongest leaders, so he had his soldiers arrest James the brother of John and the leader of the church, and condemn him to

death. The Jewish law decreed that such as led men to a strange worship should die. If they were few, they were to be stoned. If they were many, they were to be beheaded. The fact that James was beheaded might indicate, therefore, that Herod considered the number of the Christians great enough to bring them under the latter class. So James, the first of the Apostles to suffer martyrdom, was slain.

**Shouts of Approval.** Great was the rejoicing among the Jews. The king was on their side, the leaders of Christianity were falling; the church would soon be destroyed. Leaders of the Jews praised Herod, or congratulated him in person. The crowds shouted approval as he passed in his chariot. Herod saw that the tide was with him and he decided to go further in persecuting the Christians.

**Peter Arrested.** The other great outstanding figure among the Christians in Jerusalem was Peter. It was the Passover season, and Peter, too, was present for the feast. Herod's men were sent out to find him. He was located and the soldiers took him and carried him off to prison. Orders were given to keep him fast. Four companies of soldiers, consisting of four men to each company, were set to guard him. Four men kept watch at a time, a watch of three hours. Two stood at the door, while two were chained to Peter in the cell.

The trial of Peter could not take place, according to the Jewish rule, during a feast. Herod, who was fond of spectacular exhibi-



tions, planned that at the end of the Passover week the trial of Peter and his execution should be a show for the amusement of the populace. Meanwhile, the Christians, though sorrowful on account of the death of James and the imprisonment of Peter, prayed without ceasing for his deliverance.

**Illustration.** When the Marquis of Montrose was sentenced to death the judge ordered that his head and limbs should be severed from his body and hanged in the Tolbooth in Edinburgh and in other towns of the kingdom. The marquis heard the sentence with a grim smile and cried in defiance, "I wish I had flesh enough to be sent to every city in Christendom, as a testimony to the cause in which I suffer."

**The King of Kings Interferes.** On the evening of the last night of the Passover, Herod had given his orders concerning Peter. All was ready for a spectacular trial and execution the next day. The Jews were exulting. The worse elements of the people were looking forward with morbid curiosity to the excitement of it all. Herod was pleased at the prospect, foreseeing that the city would be filled with applauding multitudes. The Christians were continuing earnestly in prayer for the beloved Apostle. Peter lay in his cell in the gloomy prison, chained between two soldiers. Outside the locked and barred doors the sentries paced back and forth, but trusting his case to God, whether he might live or die, Peter slept just as he would have slept if he had been back on the shores of Galilee.

Suddenly there shone into the prison a great light, and in the glow of that light stood an angel. This being, to whom walls and locks were no obstacles, stood by Peter. Then he smote him on the side and, grasping him by the arm lifted him up, saying, "Arise up quickly." Peter, now awake, stood up and as he beheld the light and the angelic figure the chains fell from his hands. While the soldiers still slept on, the angel bade Peter array himself in the garments he had laid aside for the night. Fastening his girdle about him, binding on his sandals, and wrapping himself in his cloak, Peter obeyed, scarcely knowing what he did. Then the angel said, "Follow me."

Walking behind the angel, Peter passed beyond the door of his cell as if in a dream. The two passed the first and the second guard; then they reached the iron gate, which opened of itself, and they entered the street. Along this they walked a little way, Peter still doubting if it were not a vision. Suddenly the angel departed from him. Finding himself alone, Peter said, "Now I know

of a surety that the Lord hath sent His angel and hath delivered me."

**Friends Amazed.** Realizing now what had happened, he considered what to do, and decided to visit a Christian home and relieve the household of their apprehension about him. He passed along the dark streets and finally arrived at the home of Mary the mother of John-Mark. In response to his knock, the maid-servant Rhoda came, asking who was without, and recognizing Peter's voice, she was so filled with joy that instead of opening to him she ran to tell the family that Peter was at the door. This seemed incredible, and all declared that she was mad. She reasserted her statement, and they in turn declared it must be his angel.

But the knocking continued, and several members of the household went together to learn the truth. When they had opened the door, they saw Peter indeed. He motioned for silence, as their exclamations might have brought the watch, and then he related what had happened to him. Without entering the house, he bade them tell James, the Lord's brother, and the other brethren of his deliverance. He declared he was about to leave the city. He and they could understand that the Lord had not rescued him from prison in order that he might needlessly expose himself further to danger. Then he departed from his astonished friends.

**Fate of Soldiers and Herod.** The escape of Peter brought consternation to the soldiers. Herod wrecked his wrath and disappointment upon the unfortunate guards and they were put to death. Shortly afterward Herod himself, clad in royal purple, was addressing certain men from Tyre, and Sidon and his speech so stirred them that they ascribed to him Divine honors, as if he were a god speaking. Receiving blasphemously these tributes as if he were worthy of them, he was smitten to death by an angel.

**Christ's Cause Prospers.** In spite of all this persecution the word of God grew and multiplied. Barnabas and Saul returned to Antioch, taking with them John-Mark. Encouraged by the deliverance of Peter, the followers of Christ went forward in their work.

**Illustration.** Count Ziska, the brave Bohemian captain, commanded that after his death his body should be flayed and the skin made into drum heads to send dismay to the hearts of their enemies when his followers went out to battle for the faith.

**Practical Truths.** 1. The prayer of faith, even when men can see no way to its answer, is certain to find an extraordinary answer. 2. Often we exercise a general faith in God but still doubt His willingness if not ability to grant us an answer in particular instances. 3. The realization that others are praying for us in trials in a source of strength and we should let our friends know that we thus remember them. 4. Injustice should be endured patiently and with confidence that God will in due time set things right. 5. Peter slept peacefully in his prison. 6. God can deliver from the prisons of sin. 7. The strong side is that on which God is. 8. The angel smote both Peter and Herod. Like the sun on a flower bud and a carcass, it brought liberty to one and decay to the other.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

Now there were in the church that was at



certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of



and Manaen, which had been brought up with



the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and



they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto



and from thence they



to



And when they were at



they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also John to their minister.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 13:1-12.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee for the noble and fearless men who left their homes and carried the Gospel into other parts of the world. We thank Thee that messengers came unto our fathers, and that we have received the truth. Help us in our time to spread the good news abroad until all men shall know Thee. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"For sadder sight than eye can know,  
Than proud bark lost, or seaman's woe,  
Or battle fire, or tempest cloud,  
Or preybird's shriek, or ocean shroud—  
The shipwreck of a soul."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 46. Places, Antioch and Cyprus. Persons, Paul, Barnabas, John-Mark, Sergius Paulus, Elymas the sorcerer.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Conviction of Sin. Cain, Gen. 4:13. Job, Job 40:4, 5. David, Psa. 51:1-17. Isaiah, Isa. 6:5. Peter, Luke 5:8. Saul, Acts 9:1-10. Adam and Eve, Gen. 3:8-10. Joseph's brethren, Gen. 42:21, 22. Pharaoh, Ex. 9:27, 28. The Israelites, Ex. 33:4. King Saul, 1 Sam. 15:24. Belshazzar, Dan. 5:6. Judas, Matt. 27:3-5. Felix, Acts 24:25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Paul's apostolate really begins at this time. He is now sent forth. 2. The long preliminary period had been one of

preparation for his real work. 3. The order of names was at first "Barnabas and Saul," but it soon comes to be "Saul and Barnabas." 4. The name Saul is now displaced by Paul, as the new work overshadowed his past. 5. The missionaries were called and sent by the Holy Ghost rather than by the church. 6. It was through a man that the Holy Ghost spoke, but by which one of those persons named we do not know. 7. The church likewise was an agent in sending them on their mission. 8. The conviction that they were sent was the source of the strength and joy of the missionaries.

### BLESSING THE WORLD AND BLINDING AN ENEMY.

"Sent by the Holy Spirit." Christianity was too great a force to be contained within Palestine or Syria. It had grown to the point where, as if by a law of progress, it must widen its boundaries. This great out-reaching movement was now to spread; not from the mother church at Jerusalem, where Jewish narrowness was but slowly overcome, but from the First Gentile church; that in Antioch in Syria. Christianity, transplanted to that city, had taken on a clear vision and a large outlook, and was surveying the world for the best ways along which to extend the spiritual empire of Christ.

The movement originated not with man but with God. We are told that in the church at Antioch were certain prophets and teachers, as Barnabas, Simeon Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, and Saul. The New Testament prophets were considered the immediate organs of the Holy Spirit; what they uttered came directly from God; that is, they were inspired. The teachers were more directly guided by their own judgment, after due meditation, and furnished instruction to others. We do not know which of the five men mentioned were considered prophets and which were teachers. We have no reason to suppose that these five acted alone, but that, rather, what was done was the action of the whole church at Antioch. As these Antioch Christians prayed and fasted, the Holy Spirit came upon them. The Divine command was uttered to people prepared and waiting to obey. The Spirit said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." With fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands,

doubtless by the people as well as by the officers of the church, the first missionaries were sent away.

**A Famous Voyage.** Many men have set forth by sea or by land on journeys that have been memorable in history. But none of their achievements so vitally concerned mankind as the setting forth from Antioch in Syria of three Jews, who passed down the Orontes to the seaport Seleucia and took passage on a trading ship for the island of Cyprus. There was the beginning of the "Christian Odyssey." Then began that movement which "snatched Christianity from the hands of a local faction and turned it to a universal faith whose powerful word shook all the gods from Cyprus to Gibraltar, and turned the tide of history and thought."

**The First Mission Field.** Barnabas and Saul, with John-Mark, chose the isles of the Gentiles for the beginning of their mission. Pompey had suppressed piracy and rendered the Mediterranean safe. The Greek language was widely extended, and Roman law afforded protection. So these men spoke a language which could be used almost everywhere. They were free from the peril of pirates, and they were protected by law. Cyprus may have been chosen, since it was the native place of Barnabas and in it they would find numerous Jewish synagogues. For a hundred miles the travelers passed over the blue sea and then came in sight of the famous island of Cyprus, one hundred and forty-eight miles long and about forty miles broad.

The missionaries landed at the city of Salamis. There they entered the Jewish

synagogues and "continued preaching the word of God." How long they stayed there we do not know; but presently they began to traverse the whole island, and at last came to Paphos on the western coast.

**Idolatry and Superstition.** In that age, the faith of the Romans and the Greeks had declined into an almost universal scepticism, and immorality was at its worst. While external forms of worship still existed among these nations, few really believed in the national gods. Accompanying this decline there had been a general lapse into immorality. On the other hand, superstitions had in many cases taken the place of religion. Feeling the need of some connection with the unseen world, men resorted to sorcerers and quacks. Augurs, astrologers, fortune tellers, interpreters of dreams, found access to many minds that were empty of real faith. Pliny tells us that in Paphos there were two schools of soothsayers. Doubtless to one of these schools belonged the Elymas, or Bar-jesus, told of in this narrative.

Sergius Paulus, the Roman proconsul at Paphos, had come under the influence of Elymas, and, indeed, had given him a place in the residence he himself occupied. In his belief in this sorcerer he did not differ from many another Roman. But it appears that he wished also to hear the new teachers who were proclaiming the Gospel and attracting much attention. Saul and Barnabas, being called before him, preached the Word of God.

Evidently the preaching produced an impression upon Sergius Paulus, for at once Elymas entered into controversy with the missionaries. He undertook with great vehemence to show to Sergius that this teaching, which Paul taught, was false.

**Meeting Opposition.** Saul, who now for the first time is called Paul, perceiving that the sorcerer was combating the Gospel for selfish reasons, as he feared Sergius would accept the truth and thus get from under his power, turned upon Elymas, denouncing him unsparingly.

To meet one who claimed to perform wonders, with a real miracle, would be the best way of convincing him as well as of defeating him and influencing Sergius. Doubtless, Elymas, who knew his own works to be frauds, had no faith that Paul's denunciation would have any effect. Great must have been his horror as he felt a mist and a darkness coming over his eyes. He shuddered. He, indeed, was stricken blind. His hands were stretched out in front of him to feel his way. He rolled his now sightless

eyes hither and thither. Horror fell upon all who were present. Men stared at Paul, and stood watching, as if here was a supernatural being. Sergius looked on amazed. Then some one came forward, took Elymas by the hand, and led him out of the room.

The struggle for the soul of Sergius Paulus had been a long and severe one. There was the influence of his training and environment to be overcome, and it is always difficult to uproot deep prejudices. There were both the personality and the popularity of the sorcerer, who apparently for a considerable time had had great influence with Sergius and with the multitude.

**First Results.** Sergius evidently was not to be brought into the light by any ordinary means—the Spirit of God was striving with him. Paul had prayed for him and had instructed him. He had also been prepared to employ miraculous power in order to deliver this soul from the bondage of darkness and evil, for the destiny of an immortal soul was at stake.

The astonished proconsul saw his favorite sorcerer, who so often duped him with tricks, now being led away helpless, while before him still stood the preacher who had been telling him of Jesus. In answer to his questionings, Paul made known to Sergius that it was not by his own power but by the power of Christ that this miracle was accomplished. Teaching him further, from time to time, of the things of the Gospel, Paul led the proconsul to accept Christ.

**Illustration.** Richard the First of England on his way to the Holy Land was taken captive and thrown into a dungeon. His favorite minstrel, Blondel, knew that his king was imprisoned somewhere in a castle dungeon. So he went from one castle to another, playing well-known airs before the dungeon bars, until at last he was answered by the voice of the king from within. This led to the escape of Richard and his restoration to his throne. So the spirit of man answers to the Divine music.

**Practical Truths.** 1. The Lord prepares and sends laborers for His harvest. 2. God as really calls us now to our work as He called men in the days of Paul. Our calling is usually indicated by circumstances, but circumstances may also be Divinely arranged. 3. Not to be interested in missions is to neglect one of the chief duties of the Christian life. 4. We should realize that our modern civilization is one of the results of missions and that we ourselves are their direct beneficiaries. 5. The spirit in a consecrated man, such as Paul was, detects the unreality and falseness of fraudulent persons such as was Elymas. 6. The result of wilful opposition to truth is blindness. 7. All sin tends toward public exposure and shame. 8. A fraudulent business ends in wreck. 9. The giving up of a true faith is very commonly followed by becoming a victim to superstitions. 10. An honest occupation is the only one that is worth while.



# PAUL AT ANTIOCH.

And the next sabbath day came almost the whole



together  
to hear  
the  
word  
of God.  
But  
when  
the  
Jews  
saw the

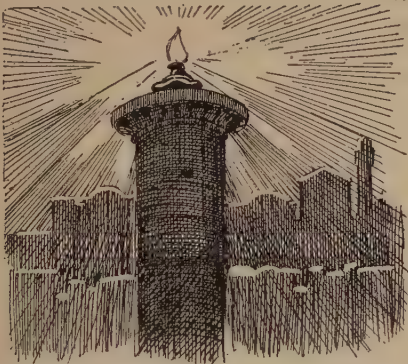


they were filled with envy, and spake  
against those things which were spoken  
by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.  
Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold,  
and said, It was necessary that the

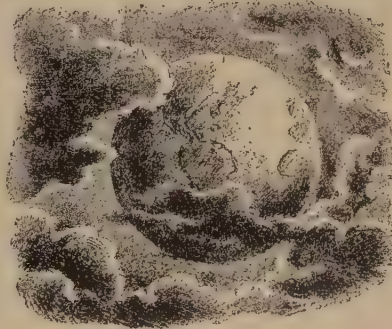


should first have been spoken to  
you: but seeing ye put it from you,  
and judge yourselves unworthy of  
everlasting life, lo, we turn to the  
Gentiles. For so hath the Lord  
commanded us, saying, I have set

thee  
to  
be a



of the  
Gentiles,  
that thou  
shouldest  
be for  
salvation  
unto  
the ends  
of the



And  
when  
the

Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained  
to eternal life believed. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all the region. But the  
Jews stirred up the devout and honourable



and the  
chief men  
of the  
city, and  
raised



against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.

ACTS XIII: 44-50.



THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 13:13-52.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Help us to be loyal to the work which we undertake. May we not put our hand to the plow and then look back. May we trust Thee to help us in all difficulties. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"Labor is sweet, for Thou hast toil'd  
And care is light, for Thou hast cared:  
Let not our works with self be soil'd,  
Nor in unsimple ways ensnared;  
Thro' life's long day and death's dark night,  
O gentle Jesus, be our light!"

—Faber.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 46. Places, Perga in Pamphylia and Antioch in Pisidia. Persons, Paul, Barnabas, John-Mark, Jews, Proselytes and Gentiles in Antioch.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Opportunity for Repentance. Refused, Prov. 1:24-33. Past, Jer. 8:20. Used, delivers, Ezek. 3:19. Neglected, dooms, Matt. 10:14, 15. Not appreciated, Matt. 11:20-24. Should be anticipated, Matt. 24:1-13. Used and unused, Matt. 25:14-30. Brings responsibility, Luke 12:47.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The instability

of Mark's course was a misfortune to his companions, to himself and to the cause. 2. The synagogues, while frequently centers of opposition to Christ, often proved a vantage ground from which to get a hearing for the Gospel. 3. Paul's sermon at Antioch is a model as showing the value of choosing a common ground for yourself and those you would convince. 4. Paul and Barnabas failed with one class of people, but succeeded with another class that seemed hopeless. 5. The work flourished after those who had laid the foundations departed.

IN ASIA MINOR.

**To the Mainland.** Paul, Barnabas and John-Mark now prepared to leave Paphos in the island of Cyprus. They took a trading boat for Perga in Pamphylia in Asia Minor. Travellers in those days ordinarily were compelled to take what boats they could and make for the port nearest the place to which they wished to go. No doubt the fact that a boat was ready to set forth for Perga had something to do with the Apostles' going to that particular place at that time. Their general object was to reach the mainland. Perga was a Greek city, and was celebrated for its temple of Artemis.

**Mark Goes Back.** At Perga, John-Mark announced his purpose of returning to Jerusalem. This apparent desertion displeased the Apostle, but Barnabas, who was Mark's cousin, does not appear to have been critical toward the young man. John-Mark was young; his mother was living in Jerusalem, and he was much attached to Peter, who was living at the Jewish capital. He had found hardships on the journey thus far, and still greater ones were in view.

Paul and Barnabas were not discouraged when others forsook them. One of the trials of all earnest workers is to find those fail on whom perhaps they have most counted, and for whom they have had most affection. It was a long time before Paul was able to overlook Mark's desertion and come to an appreciation of the young man's good qualities.

**Perga.** On this visit to Perga there is no record that the missionaries preached. It has been surmised that since the season was the middle of spring, the population, according to custom there, had removed inland to escape the malaria and the heat. Caravans

now passing into the interior provided the missionaries protection. Doubtless they joined themselves to one of these, and so passed on with the people.

While it is true that the whole world is the field, and that the Gospel is to be taken to all men, we need not be discouraged when we find that we are not successful with all. After about a week of journeying they arrived at Antioch in Pisidia. This city occupied a central position, having roads that communicated in all directions and was a great commercial center.

**Paul's Trade.** Among the ancient Jews, it was the rule to teach their sons a trade. This was to assure them a livelihood in any case. Paul was a tent-maker, having learned to make tents of goat's hair. We know that it was Paul's custom on his missionary journeys to work at his trade sufficiently to prevent his being chargeable to the people. During such work he could meditate, and doubtless, talk with those who gathered about him.

**Illustration.** Daniel Webster was once asked, "What is the greatest thought you ever entertained?" He replied, "The most important thought I have ever had was that of my personal accountability to a personal God."

**In the Synagogue.** The Jews, who were scattered everywhere in search of business, had their synagogues in almost every town and city. It was the custom of the Apostles, according to the Divine command, to offer the Gospel first to the Jews. The synagogue gave them the best opportunity to this end.

On the Sabbath day Paul and Barnabas went into the synagogue and took their seats among the worshippers. The prayers began, being read in Greek by the "angel of the



synagogue." The first lesson was read from the Law in Hebrew and translated by the interpreter. The book used was a roll kept in a chest, or ark, and was handed to the reader by the clerk. The second lesson was from the Prophets. Then came the sermon, or explanation of the Scripture.

**Paul Preaching.** The sermon in the synagogue was not delivered always by the same man. It was customary to invite any stranger who might be thought able to speak profitably. Probably it was already known that Paul and Barnabas were teachers of some new doctrine. The clerk was sent to invite them to speak. Paul arose in his place, and raising his hand for silence began his address. Doubtless he had founded it upon the two passages of Scripture that had been read.

Paul began most courteously. He referred to God's goodness to Israel, outlining several main points in their history and thus standing with them on common ground. He stated that from David's descendants God was to raise up the Messiah. He declared that this Messiah had come, and that He was Jesus. The rulers in Jerusalem had put Him to death, but God had raised Him from the dead. He himself was a witness to that fact. He showed from prophecy that this event had been foretold. He argued that only through this Jesus could come remission of sins.

Now everything seemed to promise well for a favorable hearing of the Gospel. The great Apostle had before him many who had been trained from childhood in the religion of his fathers and theirs. He and they had the bonds of the same blood and the same inheritance. He brought them the message which was the fulfillment of their own hopes if they would but receive it.

With his whole heart Paul strove to win them. He swept the strings of their souls by recounting that which he and they believed in common in regard to God's dealings with their nation. And then he led them on to listen to the truth as it was fulfilled in Christ.

**The Effect.** The sermon made a deep impression. As the people left the synagogue all asked that they might hear more of this subject. Jews and proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas to ask questions. The Gentiles also were interested and begged that on the next Sabbath they, too, might hear of these things. A vast crowd gathered at that time, but the great popularity of these strangers, and the fact that the Gentiles

were included, excited the envy of the Jews. Therefore, on this second Sabbath, Paul met with antagonism from many hearers, who spake against what Paul had taught, contradicting and blaspheming. The excitement was so intense that Paul could not proceed. He, therefore, cried out to the Jews that he had fulfilled his duty to them in the offer of salvation, but since they had proved themselves unworthy of eternal life, he would turn to the Gentiles. He declared that God had "set him for a light to the Gentiles, that he might be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."

Opposed by the Jews, Paul found favor for the Gospel with the Gentiles. Gladly did many welcome the message that told of the grace of God offered to them. On the heels of failure came success, and Paul's heart rejoiced. God does not permit final failures in His work. Some reject, but some accept; some are hardened, but some are won.

**Illustration.** A legend says that a potter of Burmah became envious of the success of a washerman, and, that he might be lord of the white elephant, he persuaded the king to order the washerman to wash one of his black elephants white. The washerman replied that by the rules of his business he must have a vessel large enough to wash the animal in. The king ordered the potter to make such a vessel. When finished it was crushed by the elephant's first step in it. Many trials failed and the potter was ruined by the plan he devised for the destruction of his enemy.

**Rejoicing of the Gentiles.** Hearing this message flung in the faces of the haughty Jews, and learning that they themselves were included in the salvation proclaimed, the Gentiles rejoiced. They flocked about Paul and his companion. Paul preached to them and taught them, and large numbers accepted Christ.

Now opposition leaped forth, but Paul was used to that. He knew the human heart and the evils from which antagonisms to the truth arise. Christ has not promised anyone freedom from opposition in His work; on the contrary he has warned us to expect it as something sure to come. Our experience probably will not be like those which came to Paul. We meet unbelief, worldliness, indifference, more often than open hatred and persecution. But whatever comes, we must stand firm in the faith, and work on undiscouraged.

**Enemies Successful.** In Antioch were many rich women of high rank who were Jewish proselytes. These had great influence with the Roman rulers of the city. The Romans tolerated most forms of religion, but they disliked the excitements that arose from religious differences. As the town had been quiet until the Apostles came, and now was rent with dissensions, the Romans, under the influence of these rich and powerful women, expelled the Apostles from the city, but the church they had planted thrived, and they left many hearts filled with the joy of the Gospel message.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

# PAUL AT LYSTRA.

And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a



from his mother's womb,  
who never had walked:  
The same heard Paul  
speak: who stedfastly  
beholding him, and  
perceiving that he had  
faith to be healed, Said  
with a loud voice,  
Stand upright on  
thy feet. And he



and walked. And when the



saw  
what



had done, they  
lifted up their  
voices, saying  
in the speech  
of Lycaonia, The



are come down to us  
in the likeness of men.  
And they called Barnabas,  
Jupiter; and Paul,  
Mercurius, because  
he was the chief  
speaker. Then the



of  
Jupiter,  
which  
was  
before  
their  
city,  
brought



unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people:



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 14:1-28.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We worship Thee as the sole Author of all good and as the Maker of all things. We would lift up our hearts far above the good and great men who have wrought wonders in Thy name, unto Thyself who gave them this power. In the name of Christ. Amen.

## THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 47. Places, Southern Galatia, including Iconium, Derbe and Lystra. **Persons,** Paul, Barnabas; the lame man, the priest of Jupiter, the people.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Superstition. In Israel, I. Sam. 4:3, 10, 11. Philistines, I. Sam. 5:5. Syrians, I. Kings 20:23. Jews, Jer. 44:17-19. Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 4:8-9. Sailors, Jonah 1:4-16. Disciples, Matt. 14:26. Herod, Mark 6:14-16. Gadarenes, Matt. 8:34. Disciples, Acts 12:14, 15. Ephesians, Acts 19:13-19. People of Melita, Acts 28:6.

## FAITHFUL THROUGH PERSECUTION.

When one undertakes the service of God, he must be prepared beforehand to endure much and without complaint. The Apostles had counted the cost, and were ready to die, if need be, for Christ. What they endured is almost incredible, but they rejoiced in their sufferings, since they were for Christ's sake.

Having been driven out of Antioch in Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas followed a well-beaten road over plains where grazed wild asses and innumerable herds of sheep. After sixty miles of travel, they came to the oasis on which was the city of Iconium, in the district of Lycaonia, now known as Konieh. This place was besieged, during the Crusades, by Godfrey of Bouillon.

**Making Enemies.** Here, as in other cities, the missionaries sought lodgings in the Jewish neighborhood, and found occupation by which they could earn a livelihood. As was their custom, they entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and accepted the invitation to address the congregation. From Sabbath to Sabbath they spoke with such effect that a great multitude of Jews and Greeks were converted. Once more the Jews who did not believe grew envious of the success of the messengers of the Cross. They sought out the Gentiles, conversed with them and poisoned their minds against Paul and Barnabas. The two Christian leaders stood firm against the storm of opposition, preached boldly, and wrought miracles. But antagonism grew, until the multitude was divided, part holding with the Jews and part with the Apostles. With the numerous Gentiles they had won to their side, the Jews planned to put Paul and Barnabas to death by stoning, but faithful friends warned them of this conspiracy, and again they fled for their lives.

"Before Jehovah's awful throne  
Ye nations bow with sacred joy;  
Know that the Lord is God alone,  
He can create and He destroy."

## ITS RELATIONS.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The Jews had fostered distrust and divided Iconium into two parties. 2. On this account it was the part of wisdom in the Apostles to flee, and this accorded with the command of Christ. 3. Though the Apostles changed their place, they did not change their purpose. 4. They came into an atmosphere of pagan legends, such as produced misunderstanding of present events. 5. The living God presented by Paul was in marked distinction to the gods whom the people of Lystra conceived the Apostles to be. 6. One day the multitude was ready to worship, and another day to stone.

**A Cripple.** Making their way some forty miles on the main road, they came to Lystra. In that town and in the region round about, for some time they preached with success. Then occurred an event that involved the missionaries of Christ in a singular series of circumstances. On one occasion, while Paul was speaking he noted a man who had been crippled in his feet from birth, listening with great intentness. This man's heart burned with hope as he heard of the mighty Christ who had wrought miracles while He was in the flesh, and who had risen from the dead. This was the message that he needed. Visions of what this Christ might do on his behalf rose before him.

It was the lame man's attitude of mind that proved important. His expectation of assistance prepared the way. This faith came to him by the hearing of the Gospel. His faith was founded on Christ, although that which he immediately desired was for the body rather than for the spirit. Salvation reaches from the spirit to the body, and so salvation may begin with the body and extend to the spirit. If the cripple had not heard this Gospel and had not been aroused to a degree of faith that he would be saved, nothing would have happened.

**A Cripple Healed.** Paul, ever ready to recognize the signs of faith, and ever ready to minister to those in need, paused in his discourse and turned toward the lame man. Then he said with a loud voice, "Stand up on thy feet!" Feeling a Divine power thrill his being and his soul kindle with a great hope, the lame man struggled to obey. In a moment he, who never before had walked, stood up, walked, and leaped.

**Illustration.** President Lincoln was one day walking with his secretary when he stopped and peered into a bush. Then he stooped and felt among the twigs. His secretary asked, "What do you find there, Mr. Lincoln?" "Why," said he,

"here is a little bird fallen from its nest, and I am trying to put it back again."

**The Effect of the Miracle** As this miracle probably occurred in the open air, and not in a synagogue, a vast mixed crowd was present, many of whom were native pagans and worshippers of the heathen gods, Jupiter, Mercury, and the others. These people, beholding the wonderful cure of one they well knew as having been lame all his life, leaped to the conclusion that the Apostles were themselves gods in human form. They shouted in their native dialect, which Paul and Barnabas did not understand, "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men!"

Staring in awe at the two Apostles, noting the majestic appearance of Barnabas and the fiery eloquence of Paul, the people declared that Barnabas was Jupiter and Paul was Mercury.

**Oxen and Garlands.** Swiftly the word spread that the gods had appeared as men. The people had been taught the legends of Greece and Rome, and had been told that such events had occurred in other days. Apparently this had come to pass once more. The rumor reached the priests of the gods, who either believed that it might be so or else wished to take advantage of the superstition of the people to turn the tide from the new teaching back to their own form of worship. They may have thought that Paul and Barnabas would accept the proffered honors, pretend to be gods, and then aid the priests in their own deceptions. In this case, the new impulse given to pagan worship would accrue to the benefit of the priests of the gods.

From whatever motives, the priest of Jupiter prepared to render the Apostles pagan honors. He gathered his followers and bade them prepare for sacrifices. Oxen were wreathed with garlands, ready for the offering before the gates. Fires were kindled on the altars. The people were shouting praises to the gods. Someone who understood the dialect of the people, and at the same time understood the views of the Christian missionaries, ran to the Apostles, crying, "The people take you for gods. The priest of Jupiter is at the altar about to offer sacrifices to you as to Jupiter and Mercury."

**Stopping the Sacrifice.** Without a thought of the flattery thus proffered to human pride, but stricken with horror at the unintentional blasphemy of the ignorant pagans, Barnabas and Paul rent their clothes as a sign of their grief, and ran to the gates. Then they sped in among the people and to the altar, cry-

ing out, "Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made Heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."

The crowd fell back a moment. Some did not understand the language in which the Apostles spoke. Some could not understand how men who were able to do such wonders could be mere men. It was with great difficulty that the Apostles turned the priest and his followers from their intent to sacrifice the oxen unto them as gods.

**Foes on Their Track.** Having disposed of this trouble for the time, another was soon to overtake them. Certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, coming to Lystra either on business or following the Apostles with intent to do them harm, set about exciting the people against them. The people, ever ready to go to extremes, and disappointed that these men were not gods, now turned against them. They began to hurl stones at him whom they so recently had hailed as Mercury. Perhaps the priest of Jupiter joined in this attack, being disappointed that the Apostles had not fallen in with his scheme. Fortunately, the stoning which Paul now received was not at the hands of the Jews, for when the Jews stoned a man, they did it with good aim and sustained the attack until the man was dead. These pagans, however, seem to have made their assault without method. Paul, though dragged outside the gates as dead, was merely unconscious, and while the disciples he had gained in that city stood around about him mourning, he rose up and re-entered the town.

The next day the Apostles departed to Derbe. There they preached for a time. Then they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch in Pisidia. Doubtless they re-entered these towns secretly and with a view to safety, since they now desired chiefly to strengthen the disciples and to exhort them to continue in the faith. They ordained elders in each church, praying and fasting and commending them to the Lord. Passing through Pisidia they came to Pamphylia, preaching in Perga, and going into Attalia. Thence they set sail for Antioch in Syria, having completed the first missionary journey.

**Practical Truths.** 1. No amount of persecution should be allowed to stop us or to sway us in the course of duty. 2. We can greatly admire good men without unduly exalting them. 3. Let us beware of fickleness in all things, especially in religion. It is contemptible to be one thing to-day and another thing to-morrow. 4. Make no gods, but worship the true God. Idolatry of money, pleasure, self, is as common in civilized lands to-day as is the worship of idols in heathen countries. 5. Be not ambitious to be thought what you are not, but aim to be what you would have others think you are.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM.

Then all the



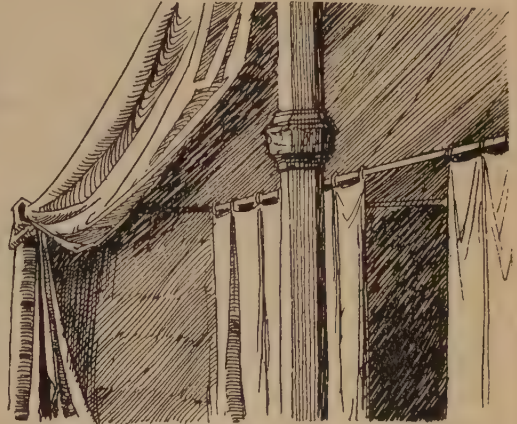
kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, declaring what



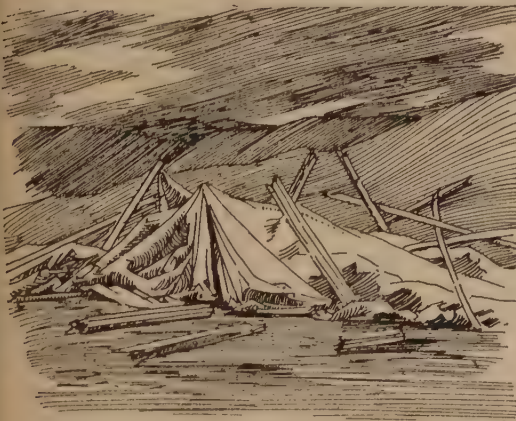
and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. And after they had held their peace, James answered, saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me: Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the



as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the



of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the



thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of



might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world. Wherefore my sentence is, that we trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 15:1-35.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that Thou hast freed Christians from the burden of the old ceremonial law, and that the simpler way of salvation through Christ is given unto us. We bless Thee that we may carry a free Gospel of faith unto all the nations. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"In a service which Thy will appoints  
There are no bonds for me;  
For my inmost heart is taught the Truth  
That makes Thy children free;  
And a life of self-renouncing love  
Is a life of liberty."

—Anna L. Waring.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 48<sup>50</sup>. Places, Antioch in Syria, Phoenicia, Samaria, Jerusalem. **Persons,** Paul, Barnabas, Peter, James, John, Judas Barsabas, Silas, Judaizers, and the people.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Ceremonial Law. Until Messiah come, Gal. 3:19. Temporary, Jer. 3:16; Dan. 9:27; Matt. 5:17-45; Luke 16:16, 17. Fulfilled in Christ, John 1:17; 4:20. Faith-fulfillment, Acts 13:39. Advantages of Jews, Rom. 3:1, 2. Dead to law by Christ, Rom. 7:1-4. Christ greater than law, Rom. 8:3. Freedom of Christians, Gal. 4:30. Ministration of Spirit, II. Cor. 3:7-14. A shadow of things to come, Col. 2:14-23. Ineffectual, Heb. 10:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Paul declared that God, and not man, opened the door to the Gentiles. 2. The plan of the Judaizers was to obstruct a work already successful. This was the blindness of bigotry. 3. An extreme literalism is always

the foe of progress. 4. Paul and Barnabas wisely took the course that was most likely to adjust the matter to the profit of the church, and they did not insist on their personal decisions being accepted as final. 5. The fruits among the Gentiles were accepted as demonstrations of the righteous methods pursued. 6. The principle involved—that of the liberty of the Gospel—was settled on the side of the Gospel as against the literalism of the law. 7. The decision of the Jerusalem Conference affected all the future of Christianity.

"Free discussion in a loving Christian spirit, and examination of the facts with minds open to the Holy Spirit of truth, will lead to peace, to clearer views of truth, to broader vision, to more perfect harmony. Christian discussion is a sign of life. To refuse discussion is like sitting on the safety valve of a steam boiler: it will result in explosion and destruction."

—Peloubet.

### AN IMPORTANT DECISION.

It must have been stirring, indeed, for the Antioch Christians to greet and to hear the very first returned Christian missionaries. A general wave of excitement must have passed through the households of that church when the word came that Paul and Barnabas actually had arrived after the perils and varied experiences of the long tour they had made in foreign lands as emissaries of the Cross.

**Their Report.** On the Sabbath the church was filled with eager listeners. What a story those people heard that day—of the encounter with Elymas the sorcerer; the conversion of Sergius Paulus the proconsul; of being driven out of the other Antioch; of the healing of the lame man at Lystra, and the inclination of the pagans there to offer sacrifices to them as gods; of Paul's being stoned and left for dead; of storm, and hunger, and thirst, and all that these faithful ones had endured. With thrilling hearts the people must have listened, as they were told of converts among Jews and Gentiles, of the little churches that had been founded, and of the devotion and faith of the followers they had gained for Christ. All rejoiced at the news that confirmed them in their hopes, for "God had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles."

**Trouble Makers.** Paul and Barnabas now were permitted opportunity to rest and recover their strength after their hardships. These had been so severe that years after-

wards Paul several times referred to them in his letters. When persecutions and bodily injuries were added to the necessary hardships of such a primitive journey as theirs, we can understand that these men needed a season of rest. But as soon as they had recovered strength they once more began work in Antioch, preaching and winning new converts.

The Christian's times of rest should be preparation for more and better service for the Master. These are not for self-indulgence but for renewal of strength.

While Paul and Barnabas had been absent, certain men had come from Judea and had unsettled the minds of the Christians in Antioch. These were converts from Judaism, but they had certain old Jewish ideas, and they held that the Christians were still bound by the old Jewish law. These men had not been sent by the church at Jerusalem, but had come of their own accord, having learned that Gentiles were admitted into the Antioch church without being circumcised. They claimed that circumcision was still binding upon all Christians and thus a great stir was made in the church. Some argued for and some against the necessity of this old rite. When Paul and Barnabas came back they found the church agitated over this matter. Paul asserted that the old law had been fulfilled in Christ, that salvation was by Christ alone, and that it was wrong to impose the



old ceremonies of the Jews upon the Gentile Christians. Some agreed with him, and some differed.

**Illustration.** When cranes are at peace they are hard to capture and are wary of approaching foes, but when they fall out among themselves they fight so fiercely that they beat one another down, and so are easily captured as they fight.

**The Conference in Jerusalem.** Since this question was making so much disturbance in Antioch, Paul received a revelation urging him to bring the matter before the church at Jerusalem. The Antioch brethren also were moved to send messengers thither to ask what should be done. The congregation met and appointed Paul and Barnabas, with others, to visit the brethren at Jerusalem. These men set out on their journey, and on their way they visited the churches in Phoenicia and Samaria, relating their experiences in Cyprus and Asia Minor and the conversion of the Gentiles. The brethren received the messages with profound joy. Arriving in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church, the Apostles, and the elders. To them also they recounted the marvels of God's grace, as shown on their missionary tour. The Christians in Jerusalem were greatly moved by the wonderful story.

**Private Conferences.** Paul conferred privately with James, Peter, and John, telling them the Gospel he had preached and what he had done. The Apostles recognized that God had committed to Paul and Barnabas "the Gospel of uncircumcision," and that miracles and the Spirit had confirmed this teaching, while "the Gospel of circumcision" had been committed to Peter. They gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, as the sign of agreement that the two should go to the Gentiles and they themselves to the Jews.

**Public Discussion.** But this was a matter for the church as well as for its officers, therefore a public meeting was called. Among the converts in Jerusalem were certain men who had been Pharisees, hence were strict observers of the law. Before the assembled multitude these men said, "It is necessary to circumcise the Gentile converts and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." They argued that while Christianity was added to the old law, it did not do away with the law, and that if circumcision was necessary for the Jew, it also was required of the Christian.

**Convincing Proof.** Then Peter arose. He declared that the principle had been settled already; that he had been sent to Cornelius, and that God had given the Spirit

to the believing Gentiles just as to the Jews. He affirmed that the new dispensation relates to the inner life—that God "had purified their hearts by faith." As they believed that salvation came to all alike through the grace of Christ, it was tempting God to add a yoke to the Gentiles.

Now Paul and Barnabas addressed the people, declaring what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them. If God had confirmed their work by miracles and by the Spirit without their having observed the details of the Jewish law, that should be accepted as proof that circumcision was not necessary.

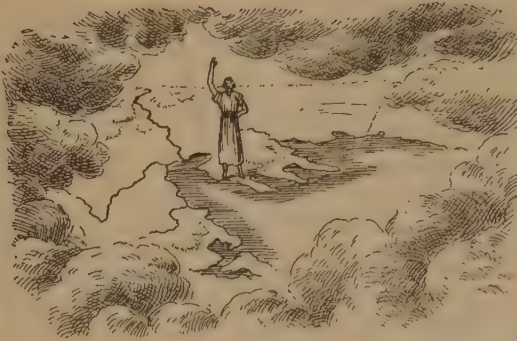
James, the brother of the Lord, spoke next. He reminded his listeners that Peter had told them of the Divine intimations that led to the call of the Gentiles. Quoting a prophecy to show that this was in line with the Divine plan, he declared that the Gentiles never would accept the whole of the Mosaic law, and gave his judgment that they should release the Gentiles from all restrictions except four. The hearing of the law in the synagogues would remind Gentile converts that it is binding for them only so far as charity to the Jew requires; and the Jews would learn that Christians had no wish to do away with the law for them.

**The Decision.** The conclusion arrived at was that circumcision was not necessary for Gentile converts. Judas Barsabas and Silas were chosen to accompany Paul and Barnabas to Antioch and to confirm the written letter which they carried. The epistle stated, "We have commissioned Judas and Silas, who themselves shall tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay no greater burden upon you than these necessary things; that ye abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from all uncleanness."

With this message, all returned to Antioch. Thus the church in Antioch was authorized to do as before—to receive Gentiles without forcing them to accept Jewish rites. A great point in the liberty of the Christian church had been gained. The wall of separation between Israel and the nations had been broken down. Thus by kindly brotherly counsel together, one of the difficulties of the early church was, at least, lessened. Without this conference the two parties would have grown farther apart, to the injury of the cause.

**Practical Truths.** 1. We should beware of making trouble in the churches of which we may be members. It is a wrong thing to do, and usually the troublemaker comes to grief. 2. We should not insist overmuch on our own opinions, but should consider that there are other points of view. 3. In a general discussion, we should kindly and gently state the matter as it seems to us, but remain open to new light and to conviction. 4. We should not bind upon ourselves nor upon others as essential anything that the Gospel does not plainly teach. 5. We should, above all, seek the help of the Holy Spirit in deciding all questions.

And a



appeared  
to Paul  
in the  
night;  
There  
stood a



and prayed  
him, saying,  
Come over into  
Macedonia, and  
help us. And  
on the sabbath  
we went out  
of the city by a



where prayer  
was wont to be  
made; and we  
sat down, and  
spake unto the  
women which  
resorted thither.  
And a certain



named  
Lydia,  
a seller  
of purple,  
of the



of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her



she  
besought  
us, saying,  
If ye have  
judged  
me to be  
faithful to  
the Lord,  
come  
into my



and abide there. And she constrained us,



THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS IN ACTS 15:36-41; 16:1-15.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We praise Thee that the Gospel came to Lydia by the riverside. We praise Thee that it may come to men and women under the simplest conditions, at work, or at prayer, and that it is not confined to costly temples. In the name of Christ. Amen.

For we must share if we would keep,  
That good thing from above;  
Ceasing to give, we cease to have,  
Such is the law of Love.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 51-54. Places, Syria, Cilicia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Galatia, Troas, Macedonia. **Persons,** Paul, Silas, Timothy, Eunice, Lois, Luke, Lydia.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Conversion. Ruth, Ruth 1:16. Sailors with Jonah, Jonah 1:5-9, 16. Ninevites, Jonah 3. Gadarenes, Luke 8:35-39. Samaritans, John 4:28-42. Thief on the cross, Luke 23:39-43. At Pentecost, Acts 2:41. The Ethiopian, Acts 8:35-38. Saul of Tarsus, Acts 9:3-18. Sergius Paulus, Acts 13:7-12. Cornelius, Acts 10. Jews and Greeks at Antioch, Acts 13:43. Jailer, Acts 16:27-34. Greeks, Acts 17:4, 12. Andrew, John 1:40, 41. Man possessed with demons, Luke 8:39. Blind man, Matt. 9:28-31. Dumb man, Mark 7:32-36.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The zeal of Paul

is one of the most wonderful facts in all history, secular or sacred. 2. A ministry at home would have given him a comparatively easy life. 3. His great love for his converts is constantly manifest. 4. He was the pioneer of foreign missions because he followed the will of God as made known to him. 5. Paul was prevented from preaching the word in Asia because he was more needed in Macedonia. 6. Responding to this call gained for Christianity an entrance into Europe. 7. He counted no sacrifice too great if only he might win souls. 8. Paul's heroic labors were a triumph of the spirit, for apparently he was not physically strong. 9. Paul gave to the humble worshippers at the river side the same high ministry that he bestowed upon his most important churches.

FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST.

Paul, having tasted the joys of the missionary, said to Barnabas, "Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do."

**Paul and Barnabas Separate.** Barnabas responded with enthusiasm. He was ready to go, but he declared that he wished as a companion John-Mark, who had begun the first journey with them and had then left them. Paul, still feeling keenly that desertion, and aware of the perils of this new enterprise, feared that John-Mark would again shrink from hardships, and he refused to consider that young man as one of the party. Barnabas insisted, and they decided to separate. Barnabas took Mark with him and set off for Cyprus. Paul chose Silas as his companion and began a visitation of the churches in Syria and Cilicia.

**Visiting the Churches.** Paul first wished to strengthen the churches he had already established. To this end he and Silas visited those of Syria and Cilicia. This brought them to Tarsus, Paul's own home. Thence they probably chose the most traveled road through the Cilician Gates, the one through which centuries afterward the Crusaders passed.

Again Paul came to Derbe, but this time he arrived from the opposite direction. Before, Barnabas had been with him; before, he had come with the wounds of the stoning to preach to the people for the first time the faith of Christ. Great must have been the joy of the Christians to behold him now coming unannounced, but full of love toward

them. Paul was happy to find his disciples loyally following in the way he had taught them.

**Lystra Again.** Undismayed by his previous experience in Lystra, where he had been stoned, and anxious to learn how the Christians there were persevering in the faith, Paul and Silas came into that town. Several years had passed, and the church had grown in numbers and in faith. Great was Paul's joy at what he found.

In Lystra dwelt a Jewess called Lois and her daughter Eunice, who had married a Greek. Eunice and her Greek husband had a son named Timothy. During his former visit Paul had converted Timothy, and then or later his mother and grandmother had accepted the Christian faith. It is probable that Timothy's father had died while he was a child, and we know that he had been taught the Scriptures from early years, by his grandmother and his mother.

**Timothy Chosen.** It is probable that Paul and Silas were the guests of Lois and Eunice during this visit. They were treated as intimate friends. Timothy had become a man and was of "good report." It is likely that for some time he had been active in Christian work. Paul now expressed the desire that Timothy should join him on his missionary journey. The heart of Timothy responded to the invitation. Eunice was willing to make the sacrifice, and this youth, of whom Paul afterwards spoke always with affection, was set apart for this great work. Paul, now accompanied by Timothy as well

as by Silas, pushed on through Phrygia and Galatia, and passing by Mysia came to Troas.

**Illustration.** At the battle of Shiloh, an officer rode furiously up to General Grant and touching his cap, said, "General, I want to make one report. Schwartz's battery is took." "Ah," said the General, "how was that?" "Well, you see, General, the secessionists come up in front of us, and the secessionists flanked us, and the secessionists come in the rear of us. And Schwartz's battery was took." "Well," said the General, "you, of course, spiked the guns." "What," exclaimed the Dutchman, "spike them new guns? No, it would spoil them." "Well," said the General sharply, "What did you do?" "Do? Why, we took them back again." Paul was engaged in again capturing for God the world, which sin had alienated.

**On Classic Ground.** Now Paul and his companions were at the scene of the Trojan war—every foot of ground rendered poetic by Homer. At Troas Paul was joined by Luke, the writer of the third Gospel and of the book of Acts, a man of culture and a physician. He afterward accompanied Paul on many of his journeys.

Near the scenes of Homer's tale; near where Alexander had crossed from Europe into Asia, Paul beheld in a vision "a man of Macedonia," uttering the cry of the western world, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." It had been Macedonia that sent Alexander to the conquest of Asia. Now Macedonia invites conquest by the spiritual force whose cradle was in Asia. Luke says, "after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them."

They, therefore, set sail from Troas, coming with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next day to Neapolis. From there by road way they passed to Philippi, a city of Macedonia, and a Roman colony, the very scene of the defeat of Brutus and Cassius. The few Jews there were without a synagogue, but they had an "oratory" outside the city, where they met for prayer. At such a place wandering traders would gather, not being allowed within the walls. These traders dealt, among other things, in dyed stuffs, brought from Asia Minor.

**The First European Convert.** Among these traders was a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira. She had been converted to Judaism, and was accustomed to meet with other women at the "oratory." Thus, not in a splendid

temple or church, but by the river side, was won the first European convert to Christianity. On the Sabbath, Paul and his companions went out to the place where these people were accustomed to meet for prayer. There they sat down and spoke to the women who had gathered and the Lord opened the heart of Lydia "that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." She and her household were converted and baptized, and her house became the home of the Apostle and his companions while they were at Philippi.

From this conversion of one woman, began a movement that was to affect the whole great continent of Europe and the future of European civilization everywhere. But like many other revolutions the vast changes could not be measured by their source. How beautiful it was to see the great Paul devoting himself to the enlightenment and saving of Lydia, with the same zeal that he would have given to the richest or noblest in the land. Thus, in this simple way, did Christianity come to Europe, and a beginning was made of that wonderful spiritual conquest by which the name of Christ has been placed supreme above all kings and nobles in the western world.

From Lydia's conversion dates, so far as Europe is concerned, the vast work of women in the church. What the church and the world owes to the devotion of Christian women, cannot be estimated. A very large part of the success of Christianity has been, and is, due to that devotion. And Lydia, humble and unknown, was the first of all that glorious company in Europe.

**Illustration.** A well-known physician once lost much money from investments. A friend, meeting him soon afterward, expressed his sympathy. "I had rather you had not reminded me of it," the physician said. "Thank God I have gotten over it." "How have you managed that?" was the question. "Well, I was unable to forget it, thought of it day and night, till my mind wandered and my family were sad and fearful. I felt that this must not continue. So I took refuge in the Almighty. I hurried to my room, shut the door, and fell on my knees to pray with my whole heart. Then I felt as if God appeared to me and said, 'Have I not the key of all the treasures? And can I not far more than replace thy loss? Be of good courage'. And now I have got over it. I am once more happy in God. Prayer has done all this."

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. We can do infinitely more than we think we can, if we are possessed by a God-given motive. 2. The great source of energy is faith in Christ. 3. We should not underrate small beginnings, but consider the wonderful things that may grow out of them. 4. Hardships seldom kill, but rather they become sources of increased strength. 5. It is better to be a pioneer in good works; to find new fields and new methods, than merely to build on others' foundations. 6. The one who wishes to serve Christ will be shown the best way. 7. To love and imitate Christ is to do good work.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



## PAUL AND SILAS IN PRISON.

And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the



were shaken:  
and immediately  
all the doors  
were opened,  
and every-  
one's bands  
were loosed.  
And the



awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the



he



and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. Then he called for a



and



and  
came  
trem-  
bling  
and



before Paul and Silas. And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 16:16-40.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We, too, would rejoice in the midnights and sing Thy praises in the prisons. We bless Thee that Thou dost sustain the spirit of Thy people under all trials and give them great joy in all troubles. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 51-54. Place, Philippi. Persons, Paul, Barnabas, the girl possessed by an evil spirit, her owners, the magistrates, jailer and his family.

**Scripture Setting: Study of Songs of Praise.** Song of Moses, Ex. 15:1-9. Of Miriam, Ex. 15:21. Of Deborah, Judges 5. Of Hannah, 1 Sam. 2:1-10. Of David, 2 Sam. 22. Bringing Ark to Zion, 1 Chron. 16:8-36. David at end of reign, 1 Chron. 29:10-19. For God's goodness to Israel, Psa. 46; 48; 65; 66; 68; 76. For God's goodness to righteous men, Psa. 23; 34; 36; 91; 100; 103; 107. At the Passover, Matt. 26:30. Of Moses and the Lamb, Rev. 15:3, 4. Spiritual singing enjoined, Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16. Of redemption, Rev. 5:9, 10. Of the redeemed, Rev. 14:2-4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. For money-profit men degrade their own souls and the souls of others. 2. The slaves of sin are the slaves of other sinners. 3. Even degraded souls divine the

### THE LOVE OF MONEY.

After the conversion of Lydia and her household, Paul and his friends continued for some time as guests in the family. They preached frequently wherever they could find hearers, and in addition they went daily to the river side to the open-air place of prayer.

**The Pythoness.** In the city there was a poor slave girl who was possessed by a spirit of divination. To what extent she had any real ability to foretell events we do not know, but the record attributes such strange powers as she had to the presence of an inner evil spirit. This poor girl appears to have been especially successful in gratifying the superstitious tastes of the people. Doubtless she had hit upon incidents and facts often enough to give her a reputation with the crowd. The weak and the silly were accustomed to seek her out, to listen with awe to her predictions, and to report what seemed to be her marvellous powers.

Being, no doubt, of an excitable, nervous temperament, singular, and unable to care for herself, she had fallen into the clutches of conscienceless men, who held her in practical slavery and made her prophecies and fortune-telling the means of livelihood to themselves. Noting that the crowds followed Paul, this girl also joined the throng going toward the river side. In the manner of one speaking under some mysterious inspiration, she cried out, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto

There are briars besetting every path,  
That call for patient care;  
There is a cross in every lot,  
And an earnest need for prayer;  
But a lowly heart that leans on Thee,  
Is happy anywhere.

### ITS RELATIONS.

superior power of good men. 4. Paul was unwilling to have the Gospel brought into disrepute by the irresponsible zeal of the demoniac. 5. He saw in the slave girl the ruin of a soul, while her masters saw in her only the means of gain. 6. Such as profit by evil are the only real disturbers among men. 7. Paul for the first time is persecuted by money-greed, rather than by Jewish religious enmity. 8. Paul maintained the fitting dignity of a Christian and asserted the right of himself and of Silas to be publicly cleared of wrong conduct. 9. Paul's imprisonment is a glorious example of the power of the Gospel: dauntless courage of the apostle; prison doors opened; jailer converted; prisoner released by magistrates. 10. The contrast between worldly and Heavenly power. 11. The jailer's "What must I do to be saved?" has become the cry of all mankind. Paul's "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ": is the WAY of salvation for all. 12. The impulse of service is the first that comes to the converted soul.

us the way of salvation." She continued these cries day after day, her wild, excited manner attracting the notice of all passers.

**Casting Out the Spirit.** Paul, troubled that a human soul should be thus under control of an evil spirit, and grieved that the people in regarding this poor girl as an inspired being would confound the Gospel with soothsaying, turned and said to the spirit, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." From that time she became a normal human being, perfectly sane and natural.

The evil men who had profited by the poor girl's condition, instead of rejoicing at her restoration to health of body and mind, thought only of the loss to their pockets. They looked with disappointment upon the cured girl, and with fury upon the man who had healed her. After conferring together, they determined to arraign these strangers as disturbers of the peace. They recognized them as Jews, and it was well known that the Roman rulers had much trouble everywhere with Jews. Springing forward through the crowd, they seized Paul and Silas, and dragged them along the roadway through the gates into the city and to the market place.

**The Accused.** There before the rulers these infuriated men cried out, "These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. As Philippi was a Roman colony, the lan-



guage of the accusation was doubtless Latin, and it is probable that Paul and Silas knew little of Latin. They may not have understood clearly the accusation against them. The magistrates, ready to please the people, and looking upon these Jews as forlorn and friendless strangers, commanded that their clothes be rent from them and that they be tied to posts and cruelly flogged. The multitude was pleased by this brutal treatment; and when the backs of Paul and Silas were bleeding from many stripes the magistrates ordered the missionaries to be cast into prison and kept safely.

**In Prison.** The instrument of punishment, the pillory, then in common use, had five places for feet, wrists and neck, but in this case the jailer fastened only their feet in the stocks. Although bruised, bleeding, shut up in a foul cell, and unable to move their feet, Paul and Silas were, nevertheless, not cast down. The consciousness that they were suffering for Christ's sake sustained their spirits. The dark midnight could not shut out Christ. Instead of groans there were heard prayers and hymns of praise to God. One can imagine that they sang some of the great Psalms which have been the consolation of multitudes throughout the ages. This was a wonderful triumph of the spirit over the flesh; of faith over circumstances. No better proof could be given than this.

**Illustration.** John Bunyan lay in the jail of Bedford for twelve years, but out of that prison came the immortal allegory, "Pilgrim's Progress", which has cheered, comforted and guided more souls than any other single book the Bible excepted.

**A Jailer Converted.** Suddenly there was a great earthquake, which shook the prison to its foundation. The doors flew open, and the stocks were loosed. The jailer, roused from sleep and beholding the doors ajar, thought his prisoners had fled, and terrified at the thought of having to face the rulers under such circumstances he drew his sword and was about to fall upon it when Paul cried out, "Do thyself no harm; for we are all here." Relieved by the sound of a prisoner's voice, the jailer called for a light, sprang into the dungeon and fell down with awe before the untterrified Paul and Silas, who, though freed from the stocks, had not fled through the open doors. Then he brought them out and cried, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" There in the prison Paul declared to the trembling jailer the great truth, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house."

And now "the prison is converted into a

church." The jailer did not wait for morning or for a more convenient season. He must have light now; he must find the way of life that selfsame hour. Earnestly, with passionate eagerness, he forgets all else to inquire about Christ. The burden of sin concerns him more than does his personal safety. God's Spirit leads him to the feet of the appointed teachers of Christ. Blessed moment when he utters his cry of faith and receives the truth.

When the jailer had led them into his house and assembled his family, Paul taught him and them concerning Christ. They all believed, and were baptized. Now, changed from the unfeeling keeper to a Christian brother the jailer washed their wounds and set food before them.

**Release.** Perhaps the magistrates were frightened by the earthquake. Perhaps on reflection they repented their haste. In any case, when the day dawned, they sent officers to the jail to bid the jailer, "Let those men go." Their keeper was overjoyed, and he gladly carried the message to Paul, bidding him depart in peace. But Paul felt that he and Silas had been outraged as Roman citizens so he bade the messengers return and tell the rulers that as they had publicly beaten and without trial, two Roman citizens, and had cast them into prison they would not accept a secret deliverance. "Let them come themselves and fetch us out," he said.

When these words were reported to the magistrates they were terrified. They had not suspected that these Jews were also Roman citizens. They knew that if Paul and Silas made public complaint of the treatment they had received the authorities at Rome would deprive them of their offices. Very meekly, therefore, the magistrates came into the jail, made due apologies, explanations and excuses and led the men away from the prison, thus acknowledging before the people that a wrong had been committed.

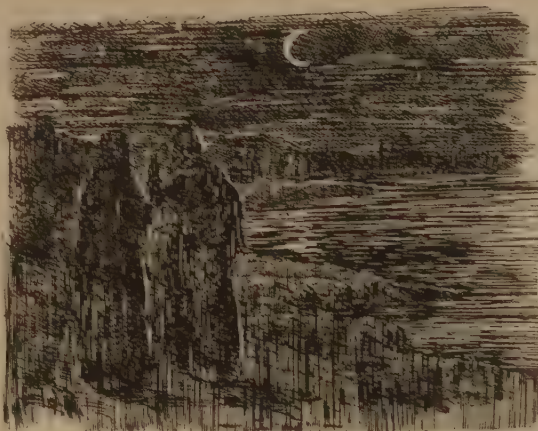
To avoid further trouble, the rulers urged Paul and Silas to depart from the city. Unwilling, however, to go without seeing the brethren and giving them parting words of exhortation, they first visited the house of Lydia; then called together their disciples and delivered to them their counsels. Then they departed leaving Luke in Philippi.

**Practical Truths.** 1. The greatest of questions is "What must I do to be saved?" Do not let another hour pass without accepting salvation in Christ. 2. Be poor rather than enrich yourselves with the blood-money of other souls. 3. Sing praise to God in your greatest trials. 4. Seek not only your own salvation but that of your household. 5. There is something to be thankful for in every condition. 6. We can bring the power of the Gospel to bear against all evil spirits, forces, dispositions, and works.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by



unto  
Berea:  
who  
coming  
thither  
went  
into the



of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with a readiness of mind, and



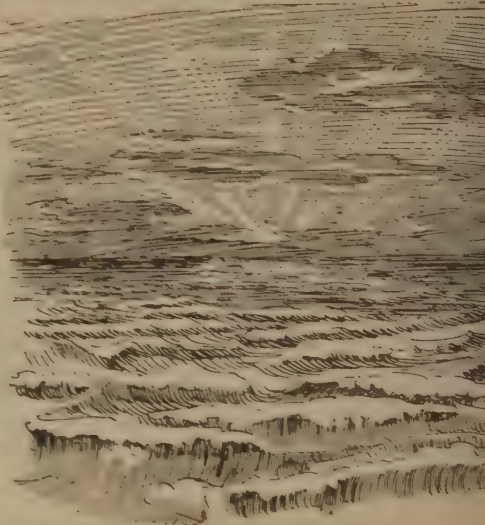
daily,  
whether  
those  
things  
were so.  
Therefore  
many of  
them  
believed;  
also of  
honourable



which were Greeks, and of men, not a few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came thither also, and stirred up the



And  
then  
imme-  
diately  
the  
brethren  
sent  
away  
Paul  
to go  
as it  
were  
to the



but Silas and Timotheus abode there still.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 17:1-15.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We thank Thee that Thy servants of old endured hardships that the Gospel might be given to the world. We pray for strength that we may bear the lesser burdens given unto us. Grant unto us the same spirit of devotion that was vouchsafed to them. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"We need not bid, for cloister'd cell,  
Our neighbor and our work farewell,  
The trivial round, the common task,  
Will furnish all we ought to ask;  
Room to deny ourselves—a road  
To bring us, daily, nearer God."

—Kemble.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 51-54. Places, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea. Persons, Paul, Silas, Timothy, Jews, Greeks, Jason, converts and brethren.

**Scripture Setting: Study of Reasoning.** With God, Job 13:3, 17-28. God reasons with men, Ex. 4:11; 20:5, 11. Isa. 1:18; 5:3, 4; 43:26; Hos. 4:1. Mic. 6:2. Natural understanding, Dan. 4:36. To be applied to religion, 1 Cor. 10:15; 1 Pet. 3:15. Not a sufficient guide, Deut. 12:8; Prov. 3:5; 14:12. Of the Pharisees, Luke 5:21, 22; 20:5. Of Paul from Scriptures, Acts 18:4, 19; 24:25. The Gospel cannot be explained by, 1 Cor. 1:18-28; 2:1-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The Thessalonians were emotional converts, not students of the Scrip-

tures. Being not well-grounded they were but half-defenders of Paul and Christianity during the disturbance by the rabble. 2. The Bereans were thoughtful students of the Scriptures. Daily research in their Bibles convinced them of the truth of Paul's teaching. To search the Scriptures with an open mind and an open heart is to accept Christ. 3. In his clear arguments that Christ was the expected Messiah Paul's ultimate appeal in all cases was to the Scriptures. 4. Jealousy of temporal power and established custom creates enmity toward Christ. 5. The church is now, and always will be subject to the teachings of the Bible. 6. Traditions are not to be exalted to a place beside the Bible. 7. Daily Bible study is essential to the best results in Christian life and work.

## TURNING THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN.

Having left Philippi, Paul, Silas and Timothy took the main road, known as the Via Ignatia, for the city of Amphipolis, about thirty-three miles distant. Paul found no synagogue at that place so he passed on the next day toward Apollonia, thirty miles further. Staying there but a night, they pushed forward forty miles more to Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia, and a great commercial center, also the seat of the Roman proconsul. It is now a seaport of Macedonia, known as Saloniki.

**In the Synagogue.** The chain of synagogues that reached to the towns and cities where Jews of the dispersion were numerous, had a link in Thessalonica. After finding lodging and opportunity to earn his livelihood, it was Paul's custom always to seek out the Jewish place of worship and address his countrymen. For three Sabbaths Paul "reasoned with them from the Scriptures." As the word "reasoned" is literally "dialogued," this meant that Paul asked and answered questions. Any one in the congregation was privileged to make inquiries. We are not to think of him as giving only regular addresses, but as determined to satisfy the minds of the people assembled, listening to their queries, objections and difficulties. The basis of Paul's teachings was the Old Testament Scriptures, which they and he accepted as the Word of God. He had been trained from childhood in the knowledge of the Old Testament, and for years had studied in Jerusalem at the feet of Gamaliel, one of the greatest and best of the

rabbis. Since his conversion, he had spent many years in investigating what the Old Testament says about Christ. Every Jewish congregation also was instructed in the prophecies about the Messiah. Paul and his hearers could, therefore, agree as to the fact that the Messiah had been foretold, and they could agree as to many passages that had a bearing on the coming of the Messiah.

**The Messiah Is Jesus.** Paul's special task with these people, then, was to show that the Messiah was not foretold as a temporal king but as a spiritual Savior; that He was to suffer, to be put to death, and to rise from the dead. By calling attention to the passages of Scripture that foretold these things, Paul could convince many minds that their old conception of a temporal Messiah was an error. When they had agreed that the Messiah was to come as a spiritual Savior, even to be put to death and to rise from the dead, Paul had the further task of making it clear that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ foretold. He could present the commonly accepted facts of the life of Jesus: that he had been born in Bethlehem; had grown up in Nazareth; had gathered disciples and taught for several years; had wrought miracles; had been arraigned at the instance of the Jewish rulers and priests before the Roman authorities; and had been crucified. It could also be made clear that His disciples asserted He had risen from the dead and that they had seen and talked with Him after His resurrection. At this point, Paul could add the weight of his own experience; could relate how he had

been notoriously a persecutor of the Christians; had undergone a sudden conversion, and had seen for himself the risen Christ. "This Jesus," he said, "whom I preach unto you is Christ."

**Thessalonian Converts.** A few Jews were converted, but the majority of the Hebrews refused to believe in a crucified Redeemer. Many Greeks and many women of the higher ranks, however, accepted Paul's personal testimony as to the risen Christ, but they failed to study the Scriptures and to confirm his teachings by the Word of God. Thus their grasp of the truth was much slighter than it would have been after diligent study. As Greeks, they were, of course, without that knowledge of the Scriptures which was common among Jews, nevertheless those who professed themselves to be converted were numerous.

**Jealous Enemies.** The conversion of such great numbers to a crucified Messiah whom they rejected; the success of Paul and his companions, awakened the jealousy of the Jews. Perhaps, meanwhile, there had come reports as to what Paul and his companions had done elsewhere, for the synagogues were in close communication with one another. It is certain that the Jewish opponents of Christianity in each place visited, sent scandalous messages to other towns in regard to Paul and the other gospel messengers, warning the Jews against them. The Jews in Thessalonica, therefore, began to spread abroad tales that Paul, Silas and Timothy, as well as Christian workers in Palestine, Syria, and elsewhere, were engaged in fostering a general revolution throughout the world. They incited the mob, and having gone far enough to realize that they had sympathizers they led the rabble to the house of Jason, where the missionaries were being entertained. They assaulted the house, and, not finding Paul or the other leaders, they dragged Jason and certain brethren before the rulers of the city.

"These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also," they cried out. They accused Jason of having received them and declared him to be one of them, adding, "these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying, that there is another king; one Jesus." It was the old cry of the enemies of Christ; the accusation of being foes of the established order of things. Doubtless the Jews knew that Christ's followers had no intention of antagonizing the government of Cæsar, and that the Kingdom of the Lord was spiritual. But for their purposes it

suitied well to claim that these Christians were enemies of the Roman power. The rulers in Thessalonica, however, proved to be less susceptible to influence from the mob than had those in Philippi. Apparently they saw that Jason and his friends did not look like men who could disturb the throne of Cæsar. They demanded only that they give security to keep the peace, and then they let them go.

**In Berea.** Finding further successful work at that place impossible just then, Paul and Silas set out for Berea, leaving Timothy behind. Probably Jason and others had been forced to pledge their goods that no further disturbance would arise, and Paul would consider the welfare of these brethren and deem it best to depart. They took a little-frequented road and came to an unimportant town, where for a time they could have refuge. Once more they sought a synagogue. The congregation proving to be "more noble" in spirit than the Jews in Thessalonica. When Paul argued from the Psalms, from Isaiah, and from Habakkuk, of the Messiah who was to suffer, die, and rise from the dead, these "received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." Grounding their faith in such daily study of the Scriptures, many were converted, including many Greek women of rank.

But foes were on the scent. The Jews at Thessalonica learned of the whereabouts of Paul; heard of the effect his teaching was having, and with the tirelessness of hate, pursued him into his refuge. There they stirred up and troubled the multitude. The brethren, therefore, appointed certain men to take Paul to the sea and accompany him to Athens.

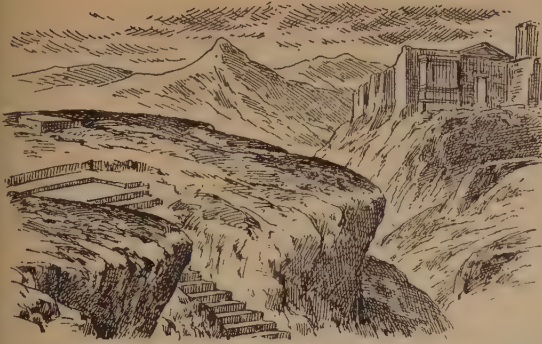
**Illustration:** A great many people, young and old, are woefully ignorant of the Bible. A little boy, when asked what was his favorite text in the Bible, repeated the stirring order of General Dix when he was Secretary of War: "If any man hauls down the American flag, shoot him on the spot."

**Practical Truths.** 1. It should be our fixed custom to attend public worship. 2. It is essential that emotion enter into our religion, but it is vital that we have also a thoughtful grasp of the truth. 3. We must expect religion to make such changes in our natures, in our lives and in society at large, as to be in a real sense a "turning of the world upside down." 4. It is true nobility to have the mind ready to receive truth. 5. We are not called upon to blindly accept any teaching, even from an Apostle. We should daily search the Scriptures. 6. The study of the Scriptures is a great privilege, as well as a sacred duty. 7. We should oppose in ourselves and in others a fanatical spirit. 8. There is no excuse for a negative Christian.



# PAUL AT ATHENS.

Then Paul stood in the midst of



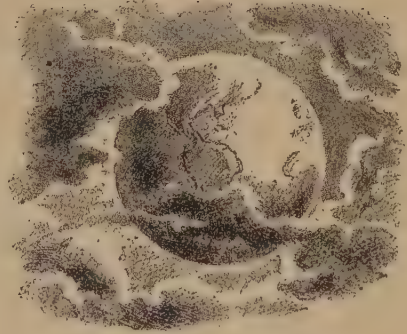
and  
said,  
Ye  
men  
of



I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription,



Whom therefore  
ye ignorantly  
worship, him  
declare I unto  
you. God  
that made the



and all things  
therein, seeing  
that he is Lord  
of heaven and  
earth, dwelleth  
not in



made with hands;  
neither is worshipped  
with men's hands, as  
though he needed  
anything, seeing  
he giveth to all



and  
breath,  
and  
all  
things;  
and  
hath  
made  
of one  
blood  
all



of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation: that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us.



# THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 17:15-34.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We adore Thee as the maker of Heaven and earth. In Thee we live and move and have our being. Keep up from unworthy thoughts of Thee. As we are Thy offspring, may we be lifted above idolatry of the things that are made. In the name of Christ. Amen.

## THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 51-54. Place, Athens. Persons, Paul, Stoics, Epicureans, and people.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Idols and Idolatry. Manufacture of, Acts 19:24, 25. Manufacture, forbidden, Ex. 20:4. Made of gold, Ex. 32:3, 4. Isa. 2:20. Of silver, Isa. 30:22. Wood and stone, Lev. 26:1; Ezek. 20:32. Prayer to unanswered, 1 Kings 18:25-29. Sun, moon and stars, Deut. 4:19. Images of angels, Col. 2:18. Animals, Rom. 1:23. Gods of Egypt, Ex. 12:12. Golden calf, Ex. 32:4. Pictures on walls, Ezek. 8:10. Earrings, Gen. 35:4. Worshippers not enter Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6:9. Idolaters lost, Rev. 21:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Man must have a God. 2. He knows the true God only through revelation. 3. The Athenian philosophers could

"Fear not to build thine eyrie in the heights,  
Bright with celestial day,  
And trust thyself unto thine inmost soul  
In simple faith, alway;  
And God shall make Divinely real  
The highest forms of thy ideal."

## ITS RELATIONS.

mock but could not find God. There is no enduring strength in a philosophy of culture that does not include Christ. 4. The wisdom of Athens did not satisfy the conscience. 5. Doubt and the absence of hope, together with vice, helped to pull down Athenian greatness. Although Paul adapted himself to his learned audience in a city where intellect was worshipped rather than goodness, the converts were few. 7. The spirit of novelty-seeking leads few to the truth. 8. The aspirations of men prove God, but Christian tact and courtesy seldom fail to gain a hearing. 9. Even so great a man as Paul could not be certain of immediate results. The Athenians in not accepting Christ, rejected Him. 10. Christianity alone makes known the true God.

## AMONG MARBLE DEITIES.

Paul had come to Athens, the city most famous for intellect, art, and poetry. When he was hurried away from Berea by friends, he left Silas and Timothy behind for a time, that they might establish the disciples in the faith, but he sent word by those who accompanied him to Athens to bid Silas and Timothy follow him speedily. During the days that he was alone in the beautiful Greek city, he seemed to have divided his time between walking about beholding the temples and statues, and reasoning with the few Jews in their synagogue. Nothing is related of what he said to them, save that "he disputed in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons." We are not told that he made any converts among these people.

**In the Market Place.** In Athens, there are four hills, and in the valley between them was the Agora; the market place—a public resort. It was on this spot where Socrates had discoursed five hundred years before, that Paul now began daily to reason with the people.

During his walks about the city he had been most impressed by the great multitude of statues. In Athens there were more statues than in all Greece besides. Certain of these were figures of heroic men, but a large number were representations of gods and goddesses. The most famous of all was that of Athene by Phidias. To Paul, any material representation of a divinity was an idol. We today look upon those wonderful Greek statues merely as works of art, and the sculptors themselves may have considered them as such only; nevertheless, they were representations

of divinity, and the masses of the people considered them objects of worship.

**Illustration:** Socrates visited the shops of the sculptors, and observing them at their work, he said, "How careful these men are and how industrious in making stones look like men, while men in the meantime, turn themselves into very blocks and stones."

**The Man and The Fact.** The Greeks in general believed, or had believed, in the gods and goddesses of Olympus. They were polytheists, that is, worshippers of many gods. The patron goddess of their chief city was Athene. A widespread doubt and scepticism had come over the pagan world, and many of the Athenians had ceased to believe in their own gods. Nearly all their philosophers were, indeed, sceptics. Paul had come to a city of art and intellect; a city supposed to be loyal to the gods of Olympus; while, in fact, there was little real faith in anything.

To this confused and sceptical multitude Paul preached two great certainties: a Man and a Fact—Jesus and the Resurrection. Here he told that Jesus, who had lived and died in Palestine, was the Son of God and the Savior of the world; that He had taught the true way of life; had wrought miracles; had risen from the dead and had ascended into Heaven. He testified that he himself had seen the risen Lord and had been commissioned by Him to go and speak to the nations the Gospel of Christ.

**Epicureans and Stoics.**—In Paul's audience there were certain philosophers and their followers. Two schools of philosophy especially seemed to have been represented. The Epicureans, followers of Epicurus, were materialists, that is, they did not believe in the spirit, but only in matter. They



taught that the body is all there is of man; that the best way to live is to get as much pleasure as possible, as death is the end of life. The Epicureans, therefore, denied what Paul preached, and considered the resurrection was impossible and unbelievable. The Stoics, on the other hand, taught that a stern morality should be cultivated, but that man had nothing to expect or to hope from the gods; that fate was over all, and that man's duty was simply to bear the ills of life without complaint or hope. The Stoics argued against Paul's teaching, declaring that Jesus could not be the Son of God; that God takes no interest in men.

**A Sower of Words.** The light-hearted novelty-seeking crowd of Athenians in general stood by smiling and mocking. Some said, "What will this babbler say?" Others, only half-listening, as if attention were not worth while, caught a few words and jumped at a conclusion. "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods."

**To The Areopagus.** The writer of Acts does not indicate that Paul was seriously arraigned before judges. The chapter seems rather to suggest that these jesting people surrounded him and pushed him along up the hill called, in Greek, the Hill of Ares, and in Latin, Mar's Hill, to the place where the city judges often sat. There, when he was further elevated above the crowd than was possible in the valley, they cried, "May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears: we would know, therefore, what these things mean." The statement of Luke that "all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing," conveys the impression that their present conduct toward Paul was a whim of novelty-seekers rather than an arraignment before judges.

**Paul's Great Sermon.** Before that jesting crowd, Paul stood and uttered those mighty truths which have outlived in influence the words of Greek orator and poet. It is believed that he did not call them "superstitious," as we read in the King James version. He cried out, "Athenians, I observe you to be in all things eminently religious." As an example of this, Paul turns from all their temples and statues to one altar which bears the inscription, "To the Unknown God." Paul, an orator who had been called Mercury by pagan islanders; who addressed this audience after the manner of their own orators as "Athenians"; who, instead of denouncing them, compliments them as religious; who chooses an inscription from one of their altars as his theme; this wonderful man seizes their attention in spite of themselves. He declares he is about to tell them not of strange gods, but of One whose altar they themselves had erected. "Whom, therefore,

ye ignorantly worship; Him declare I unto you." Grandly he tells them of "God that made the world and all things therein." "The Lord of Heaven and earth"; "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth." He appeals to their own poets, "For we are also His offspring." From God's fatherhood, Paul argues the folly of idolatry. "Being then the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone." Facing the Parthenon, he cried, "The Lord of Heaven and earth dwelleth not in temples made with hands." He declared that God had been forbearing with men in times of ignorance, but "now commandeth men everywhere to repent." He told them how God has appointed a day of judgment, and has ordained a Judge; "whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead."

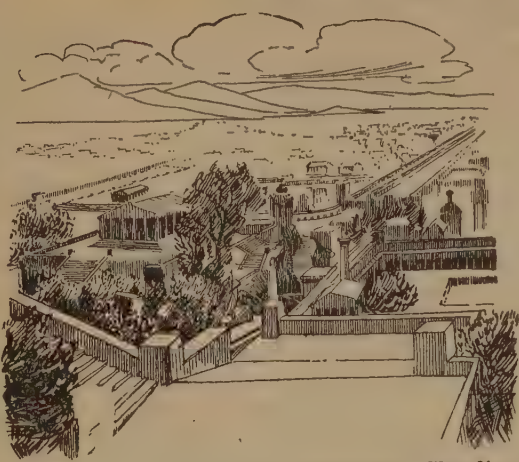
**The Mocking Athenians.** His hearers could not help being impressed by much of what Paul said. They must have felt its universal truth. But when he announced the resurrection of the dead, he lost their sympathy. Before him rose a sound of derision. Here was a novelty for Athenians, but it was one beyond their conception. Yet, beside the mocking voices were others that said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." Even in that audience were some souls that were impressed. So in mocking, intellectual, novelty-seeking Athens, a beginning had been made for the work of Christ. Today in the city that was the greatest intellectual center of the ancient world, Christ is honored and adored, while the gods and goddesses have become myths.

**Illustration:** It is told of Michael Angelo that one day as he was walking with some friends in an obscure street of Florence he saw a fine block of marble lying neglected in a yard, and half covered with rubbish. Although not dressed for rough work, Angelo at once fell to clearing away the debris and strove to lift the block from the mire in which it lay. His companions in astonishment asked him what he was doing and what he wanted with that worthless piece of rock. "Oh," said he, "there's an angel in the stone, and I must get it out." So Paul was engaged in getting the angel out of the rough blocks of sinful and ignorant people.

**Practical Truths.** 1. We should be stirred in spirit by the presence of sin and error. 2. Our personal observation of life should be used to stimulate our zeal. 3. The higher our truth and the finer the life and actions, the more surely will we arouse mockery in certain minds. 4. The mere seeking for novelty is an unworthy aim. Art has a higher purpose, but it is capable of ignoble use. 5. Anything that leads away from God is sin. 6. A positive faith is necessary to draw believers to Christ. 7. The Gospel wins where arguments fail. 8. As Christ was the turning point of history, so should He be the turning point in every life.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

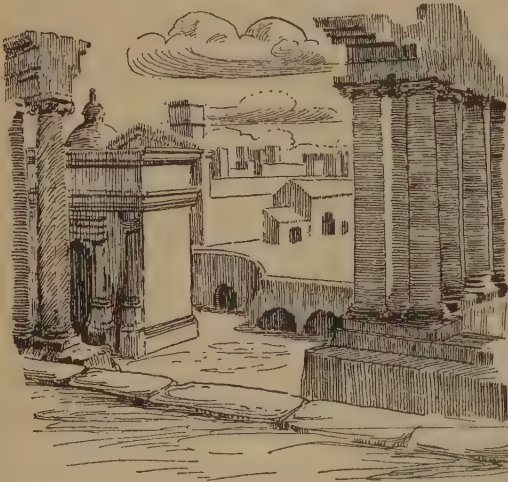
After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to



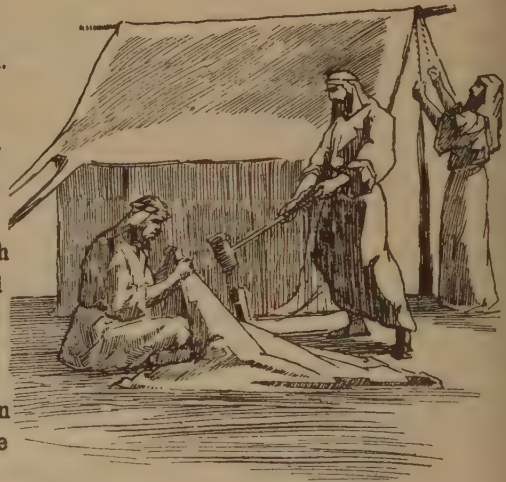
and found  
a certain  
Jew named  
Aquila, born  
in Pontus,  
lately come  
from Italy  
with his



Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from



and came  
unto them.  
And  
because  
he was of  
the same  
craft, he  
abode with  
them, and  
wrought:  
for by  
their  
occupation  
they were



And he reasoned in the



every sabbath,  
and persuaded  
the Jews and  
the Greeks. And  
when Silas and  
Timotheus were  
come from  
Macedonia,



was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 18:1-17.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Thou dost send Thy light and truth into the midst of darkness and sin. Thou art not content to have the children of men continue in evil ways and afar from Thyself. We

thank Thee for Thy changeless, loving desire to draw men unto Thyself. Make us glad and willing to be bearers of Thy light unto sinners. In the name of Christ. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 52-54. Place, Corinth. Persons, Paul, Silas, Timothy, Aquila, Priscilla, Crispus Justus, Gallio, Sosthenes, Jews, and Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of the Cross. Preaching the cross, 1 Cor. 1:17, 18. The law not sufficient, Gal. 5:11. Glorifying in, Gal. 6:14. Enemies of, Phil. 3:18. Bearing, Matt. 16:24. The reproach of, Gal. 3:13. The flesh crucified, Gal. 5:16, 17, 24. Loss for Christ, Phil. 3:7-9. For sake of the weaker, 1 Cor. 8:10-13. As Christ suffered, 1 Pet. 4:1.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Friendship with Paul means acquaintance with Christ. 1. Aquila,

Priscilla and Paul working at their trade and planning for the spreading of the Kingdom of Christ, show admirably how the material and spiritual can be nobly combined. 2. The Scriptures tell us of the trade of Paul, while secular history tells of the importance of that trade in his native land, giving us another of the many points at which the learning of the world confirms the sacred narrative. 3. Paul declaring Christ to be the Jewish Messiah is driven from the synagogue only to find that Justus, a Roman colonist, has opened his house to the preaching of the Gospel. 4. Vice-degraded, commercial Corinth afforded a glorious field for preaching the truth.

### WHERE COMMERCE REIGNED.

Leaving Athens, Paul set out for Corinth. It is probable that Paul went by water to within a few miles of Corinth. The distance by land is forty miles, while a sail of five hours would bring him to Cenchreæ and leave a walk of only eight miles to the city. In Paul's day, Corinth was the Roman capital of Achaia. The old Greek city had been ruined, and a new city had been rebuilt by Julius Cæsar and peopled by Roman veterans and freedmen. It speedily had become a rich and famous center. Jews had come as merchantmen. Greeks had flocked thither, attracted by the fame of the place, and by the Isthmian games. Stately buildings arose. The luxuries of the world poured into this capital. Corinth of that period had been called "the Vanity Fair of the Roman Empire." The population was a mixture of Romans, Greeks, Jews, Phœnicians, and slaves.

**Its Immorality.** Corinth was perhaps the most immoral city of that day. This condition arose partly from its vast numbers of slaves and partly from the presence of hosts of sailors. The religion of the people was celebrated with scenes of wildest debauchery. Drunkenness was almost universal. The chief entertainments of the people were fights of wild beasts, impure theaters, and athletic contests. Trickery, cheating and fraud were very general in the trade of the place.

**Paul Finds Friends.** Into this brilliant, beautiful, evil city Paul came to preach Christ. Its very wickedness must have seemed a pitiful appeal for a Divine Redeemer. Coming thither alone (for Silas and Timothy were for the time left behind), he must have felt deeply his solitude, until, look-

ing for opportunity to labor at his trade, he discovered that a converted Jew and his wife had their temporary home in Corinth. Aquila and Priscilla were of Jewish stock, but it is entirely probable that they had become Christians before they met Paul. They had been living in Rome when the Emperor Claudius issued a decree expelling all Jews from that city. For two hundred years Christians were confounded by the Romans with the Jews, and were looked upon merely as a sect of the Jewish religion. Aquila and Priscilla were tent-makers by trade, and it may have been while in search of work at this occupation that Paul met these persons, who were thereafter to be his close friends and helpers. With them he now joined in tentmaking and here in Corinth he dwelt and preached for a long time.

**Preaching to The Jews.** Paul began at once to speak in the synagogue on the Sabbath, seeking to persuade Jews and Greeks. In Athens he had attempted to convince the Athenians by polished address and by interpreting their religion as having a common natural basis with the true one. Now in Corinth he determined to use no "enticing words of man's wisdom," but to ignore philosophy, and to preach only "Christ and Him crucified." When Silas and Timothy rejoined him, he redoubled his efforts to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. But the people of the synagogue rose up against him, railing at him and his doctrine. So violent were their demonstrations that it was evident it was useless to attempt further to convince them. So Paul, standing before the congregation shook his raiment, after the Jewish manner, saying, "Your blood be upon

your own heads. I am clean (that is, from further responsibility for you): from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles."

**The Church in a House.** Leaving the synagogue, Paul and his followers went into the house of a man named Titus Justus, whose home was near the Jewish church. This man, probably, had been a Jewish proselyte, and he was converted by Paul. Wonderful to relate also, in spite of the state of mind of the Jews in general, the chief ruler of the synagogue, Crispus, was converted with his whole family, and these were baptized by Paul. Stephanas and his household were added from the Gentiles. Then, for several months Paul continued to preach in a room of the house of Justus. Many of the converts were of lowly rank, yet among them were certain of the richer people, as Gaius, Chloe, and Erastus, the chamberlain of Corinth. During the two years in which they remained in Corinth, Paul and his companions extended their work into the towns round about. They founded a little church at Cenchreae, and there were Christians in many of the villages of that region.

**Illustration:** A gentleman once took an acquaintance to the upper porches of his house to show him his estate. Waving his hand around he said, "This is all mine." His friend said, "Do you see that little village yonder? Well, there lives a poor woman in that village who can say more than you." "Why, what can she say?" "She can say, 'Christ is mine!'"

**Before Gallio.** Now that Paul had finally broken away from the Jews and had established a church near them, they excommunicated him, denounced him and his followers, and strove in every way to interfere with his work. But Paul was comforted by a vision in which the Lord appeared to him and said, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee; and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this city."

The hatred and antagonism of the Jews finally came to a crisis when the new proconsul Gallio, a brother of Seneca, was appointed.

The Jews thought they could influence this mild-mannered person and make what tumult they chose. They, therefore, seized Paul and brought him before the proconsul's judgment seat, but the Roman looked upon the excited throng and the prisoner and awaited developments. The spokesman of the Jews cried out, "This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law." In spite of the fact that the Emperor had expelled

Jews from Rome, the Jewish religion was rated as a legalized religion in the Empire. Under the Roman rule, some religions were "legalized" and some "unlegalized." These Jews attempted to make clear to Gallio that while he might think that Judaism and Christianity were the same thing, this was not really the case. They declared that Paul was preaching what was not legalized Judaism at all. Paul was about to speak, but Gallio ignored him; interrupted the Jews, and said in substance, "Had this been a matter of legal injury or a moral offence it would be reasonable that I listen to you. But if you come before me with questions about words and names and your own law, I am not called upon to be a judge of such things."

Gallio discerned that Paul was brought before him by the hatred of the Jews and not because he had done anything wrong. He, therefore, ordered these men to be driven from before his judgment seat. The pagans who were present, seeing that Gallio was indifferent and that the Jews were being hurried out by the officials, joined in and laid hold of the ruler of the synagogue who had succeeded Crispus, one by name Sosthenes, and flogged him before the judgment seat. Gallio, who was familiar with the fanaticism of the Jews, perhaps thought that it was well for them to have a lesson. So he did not interfere. In this way Gallio came to stand to the minds of many people as a type of indifference.

**Illustration.**—When the tyrant Maxentius learned that Constantine the Great was coming to Rome, he ordered his soldiers to erect a bridge of boats over the Tiber and lay the planks on the boats, so that when the army should come upon the planks, the boats would sink and thus drown the men. But Maxentius, hearing the sudden approach of Constantine, was in such a rage that he rushed out of the gates of Rome, ordering his soldiers to follow him. In his anger he forgot what he had ordered to be done, and led his men onto the bridge. The boats sank and he and his followers were drowned.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Self-support should be every one's ambition. 2. The Jewish plan of having every boy learn a trade, even if he did not follow it, is worthy of modern imitation. 3. A pure life is necessary to an uplifting influence. 4. It is possible to live a good life in the midst of wickedness. 5. The word of God prevails under true discipleship. 6. We should be bold in standing for and proclaiming the truth. 7. Christ says to His workers now, as ever, "Lo, I am with you always." 8. Those who attempt to make trouble for others often end in entangling themselves. Slander, malice and all evil passions recoil upon the authors. 9. True strength for work comes only from an assurance of Christ's presence, and the certainty that the work is that of Christ. This brings confidence in the success of the work itself, no matter what happens to the worker.



Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were



of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the



which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped



and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they



naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their



together, and



before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.



THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 18:18-28; 19:1-20.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Thy truth is pure, and it purifies the heart and the life. It makes no compromises with evil. It will not accept even the testimony of evil beings. We rejoice that it cleanses like fire, and we pray that it may cleanse our hearts from all insincerity and every wrong desire. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"Wherever in the world I am,  
In whatsoever estate,  
I have a fellowship with hearts  
To keep and cultivate;  
And a work of lowly love to do,  
For the Lord on whom I wait."

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 53-55. Places, Cenchreae, Ephesus, Jerusalem, Antioch, Galatia, Phrygia. Persons, Paul, Aquila, Priscilla, Apollos, sons of Sceva, exorcists, Jews and Ephesians.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Money. Silver used as, Gen. 17:12, 13. Ex. 12:44. Num. 3:48-51. 2 Chron. 24:5. Gold used as, Gen. 13:2. Copper used as, Mark 6:8. Weighed, Gen. 23:16. Image on, Matt. 22:20, 21. Conscience, Judges 17:2. Matt. 27:3, 5. Atonement, Ex. 30:12-16. Priest's portion, 2 Kings 12:16. Lust for, punished, Amos 8:5-8. Love of, the root of evil, 1 Tim. 6:10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Paul persevered

in each city, in first offering the Gospel to the Jews in the synagogue after he might seem to us to have been justified in ignoring his countrymen altogether. 2. The desire for Christian fellowship was so strong in Paul as to carry him on a long journey to Jerusalem. 3. Apollos showed an admirable willingness to be further instructed. Christianity that does not include the gift of the Holy Spirit is imperfect. 4. The excellent Christians, Aquila and Priscilla, though not public teachers, went about matters in the right way by inviting Apollos to their homes and giving him privately the benefit of their better knowledge of Christ.

CAPTURING MORE TERRITORY FOR CHRIST.

After his experience before Gallio, Paul continued his preaching in Corinth for many days. He then decided to go to Jerusalem to keep a feast and visit the brethren there. He had not been in that city for almost three years. Having made his farewells to the Christians of Corinth, he, in the company of Aquila and Priscilla, started for Cenchreae. Paul considered that the Jewish law and customs were not binding either on the Gentiles or on Christian Jews, but that those who had been born Jews, like himself, could keep feasts and follow certain customs, if by so doing they could help themselves spiritually or keep in closer touch with Jews who might thus be converted. Paul, who evidently had reasons for wishing to be in Jerusalem at the season of a national feast, had imposed upon himself a vow, after the Jewish manner, possibly in gratitude for some deliverance. This vow of a temporary Nazarite implied abstinence from wine and letting the hair grow long. While this vow required that the head should be shaved in Jerusalem, it seems to have been permitted to Jews who dwelt far away from their capital to have the hair cut elsewhere. The hair thus removed was preserved to be burned in the fire of the peace offerings. Paul had his hair shorn at Cenchreae, and then took ship for Ephesus.

**A Brief Stay in Ephesus.** While Paul's destination was Jerusalem, it was found convenient to take ship for Ephesus rather than to make the whole voyage directly. Besides, it was to Ephesus that Aquila and Priscilla wished now to go, probably as a more favorable place to carry on their trade. There, Paul at once addressed himself to the Jews,

who appear to have received him favorably. Indeed, they invited him to remain with them a longer time, but his vow demanded that he hasten toward Jerusalem. Promising to come again, "if God will," Paul sailed for Cæsarea. From that port he set forth for Jerusalem, to make report of the churches he had founded at the many points included in this his second journey. He brought word of the converts in Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth. But it appears that the Judaizers (that is, the Christians who still claimed that the Jewish observances were binding, and who did not therefore agree with Paul's liberal interpretation) had been gaining great influence with the Jerusalem church. For this reason Paul's reception by the mother church was by no means so cordial and enthusiastic as it ought to have been for the man who carried the Gospel into so many countries and into Europe itself. Luke, the writer of Acts, simply states that he "saluted the church" and then set out for Antioch, where we may be sure that he was received in the heartiest manner. Having spent some time in Antioch, he started on his third missionary journey, visiting the churches in Galatia and Phrygia, and perhaps in other places.

**Apollos.** While Paul had been absent from Ephesus, on his journey to Jerusalem and Antioch, there had come to Ephesus a man named Apollos, who preached with great earnestness and effect. He was a Jew from Alexandria, a city famous for its learning and particularly noted for the culture the Jews there attained during the life of Philo, one of their greatest teachers. This man



Apollos had been trained thoroughly in the Old Testament Scriptures, and he had become a Christian in the sense that he had been taught and baptized by the disciples of John the Baptist. Apollos had an extraordinary gift of eloquence, so that his name in that day became the synonym for powerful and moving speech. Coming to Ephesus, he entered the synagogue and preached to the Jews concerning Christ. Aquila and Priscilla, having heard him, and recognizing that his knowledge of Christ was imperfect, being only such as a disciple of John the Baptist might have, took him to their home and conferred with him concerning Christ. They showed him that John had been but the herald of Christ, and they instructed him in the later life, works and teachings of Christ. Being thus advanced further in knowledge, Apollos preached with remarkable results. Aquila and Priscilla told Apollos of the work that had been accomplished in Corinth, and he desired to go thither to preach. These friends encouraged him to depart, and they gave him letters to the church there. In this city Apollos was enabled to help the believers and to confute the Jews.

**Paul in Ephesus Again.** Having made his visitation of the churches in Galatia and Phrygia, Paul now came to Ephesus, the city destined to become one of the greatest centers of Christianity. His first work was with certain disciples who, like Apollos, had been imperfectly instructed, being, indeed, followers of John the Baptist rather than of Christ. When asked, "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed"? they told him, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." He asked, "Unto what then were ye baptized"? and they said, "Unto John's baptism." Paul then instructed them that John had baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on Him who should come after him, that is, on Jesus. So they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul laid his hands on them they received the Holy Ghost. There were about twelve of these men.

**The Schoolroom of Tyrannus.** Paul now entered into the synagogue and on the Sabbaths for three months he preached, endeavoring to persuade the Jews to believe in Christ. In spite of the fact that these people had at first received Paul favorably, there was now developing a strong opposition to him. They not only rejected, but they reviled him. They even took measures to hinder his work among the Gentiles. It was plain that again Paul must break away from his countrymen and from the synagogue. He summoned his converts around him and

hired as a meeting place the schoolroom of a heathen sophist named Tyrannus. In Ephesus there were numerous schools of philosophy and rhetoric, such as that of Tyrannus. In such a room the Christians could meet daily. For two years Paul made Ephesus the center of his labors. Luke declares "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

**Paul's Miracles.** Not only were numerous converts made, but many miracles were wrought by Paul. So remarkable had his influence become that the people came with handkerchiefs and aprons and touching his body with them they carried them to the sick and by this means expelled diseases and evil spirits.

Wandering exorcists who noted that Paul wrought wonders in the name of Christ, adopted the same means, just as they would have used any supposedly magic spell or words. They would conjure the evil spirit, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth." They did this for money. A Jew named Sceva had seven sons who followed the occupation of exorcists and they strove to conjure in the name of Christ. But the evil spirit replied, "Jesus I know and Paul I know; but who are ye?" The man possessed by the evil spirit leaped upon these magicians and beat them, so that they ran away in terror. The report of this spread abroad, so that fear fell upon all, and the name of Christ was magnified.

**Illustration:** A captive was led before an Asiatic monarch. The sword was raised above his head to decapitate him, when, being excessively thirsty, he asked for a cup of water. This was handed him, but he held it as if fearful the sword would descend before he could drink. The king said, "Take courage, your life will be spared until you drink this water." Instantly the prisoner dashed the water upon the ground. The king's word had been passed and the captive believed him. It was enough. The monarch told him he was free.

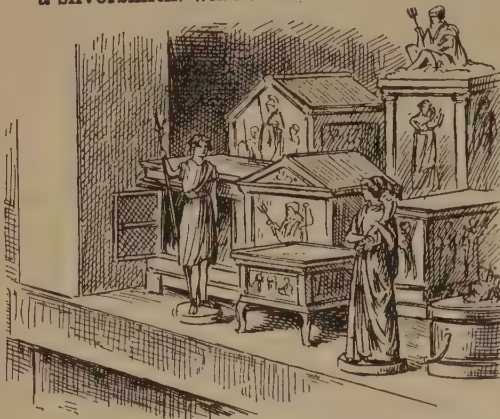
**Burning of the Books.** Many of the magicians who dealt in trickery were so awed by the real miracles done in the name of Christ that they believed, repented and turned from their frauds. Some of these brought the books that were supposed to teach their art and burned them in a public place, before the multitude, that men might know they were giving up their pretenses. The value of these books has been estimated as more than ten thousand dollars. This remarkable incident must have added greatly to the fame of the Gospel in that region for we are told that "mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."

**Practical Truths.** 1. Public confession and repentance for evil doing is the best beginning of a new life. 2. Disgrace is the inevitable end of every fraudulent career. 3. The word of man perishes, but the Word of God abides. 4. We should not make use of the name of Christ or of religion for selfish purposes. 5. Beware of superstition of all kinds and in every degree. 6. Splendid opportunity to work for God may be found in what seem the unlikely places.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And the same time there arose no small stir about that way. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver



for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen whom he called together with the



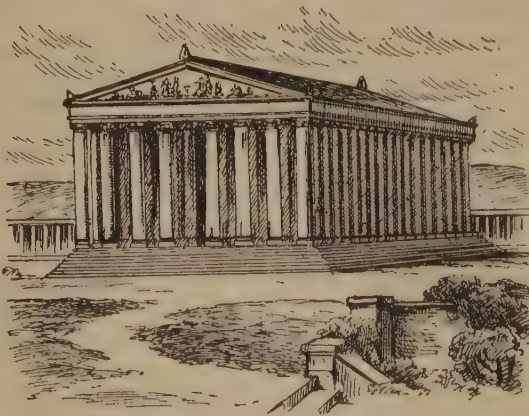
of like occupation, and said, Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much



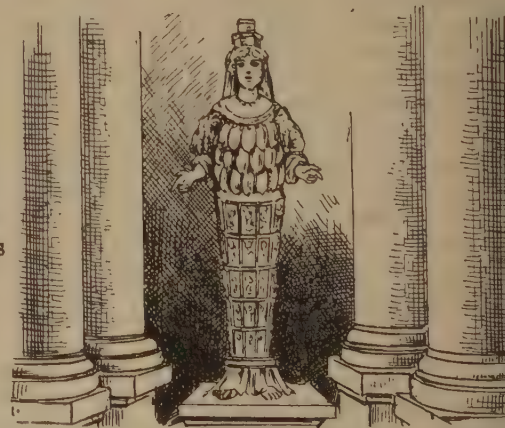
saying that they be no



which are made with hands: so that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the



of the great goddess



should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshipped. And when they heard these sayings, they were full of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 19:21-41.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we have part in the building of that spiritual temple which is to endure forever. We thank Thee that as it rises higher the temples of evil come nearer to their fall. Deliver, we pray Thee, all Thy children from every error, and bring every one to the knowledge of the truth. In the name of Christ. Amen.

"Trust no party, sect or faction;  
Trust no leaders in the fight;  
But in every word and action,  
Trust in God and do the right.  
Some will hate thee, some will love thee,  
Some will flatter, some will slight.  
Cease from man and look above thee,  
Trust in God and do the right."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 57. Place, Ephesus. Persons, Paul, Demetrius, Alexander, Gaius and Aristarchus, Ephesians, Christians, Jews, the town clerk.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Deceit. God abhors, Psa. 5:6. Tongue an instrument of, Rom. 3:13. Forbidden, Prov. 24:28. Shun those addicted to, Psa. 101:7. Wicked full of, Rom. 1:29. Wicked delight in, Prov. 20:17. False teachers are workers of, 2 Cor. 11:13. Impose on others by, Rom. 16:18. Hypocrites devise, Job 15:34, 35. Deceit hides knowledge of God, Jer. 9:6. Punishment of, Psa. 55:23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Shrine making was remunerative but soul destroying. 2. Demetrius alarms masters, artists, and workmen through their common interests to make common cause against Christianity. 3. Loyalty to Christ imperils many money-making schemes. 4. The Gospel is often opposed through selfish interest. 5. Many think more of their earnings than of Christ or the welfare of their fellowmen. 6. Devotion to Diana—the worldly pride of the Ephesian—was made a subterfuge for joining in the riot. 7. By Christian enlightenment all unrighteousness in business will be destroyed.

## CHRISTIANITY AND DIANA.

The chief object of worship in Ephesus and in Asia Minor was Diana. The attributes of the Ephesian Diana, however, differed greatly from those of the huntress of Greek mythology. Her characteristics were rather those of the Phœnician Astarte, and her worship was signalized by impurity and revolting debauchery. The first great temple to this goddess that was erected in Ephesus was constructed long before the time of Paul, and it was burned by Herostratus, B. C. 355. The temple had been rebuilt on a still more magnificent scale. It was a marvel of architecture, and it contained masterpieces of Phidias, Praxiteles, and other great sculptors. Many paintings by the most noted Greek painters adorned its walls. The temple was used also as the treasury house for the wealth of western Asia. Behind the altar hung a great purple curtain, and behind the curtain was a holy place where stood the image of Diana, the most venerated idol of classic paganism. Still further back was a room containing the treasures, and this was regarded as the safest bank in the ancient world, as it was under the protection of the goddess.

**The Image of Diana.** The famous image of Diana was believed to have fallen from Heaven. There is uncertainty as to whether it was composed of the wood of the vine, of ebony, cedar or of stone. In reality this image was hideous, being a mummy-like figure, with a trident in one hand and a club in the other. But superstition is not commonly repelled by unattractive aspects of the objects of its worship, and the very ugliness of this Diana seems to have added to

the awe of the multitude. The adoration of the image was Asiatic rather than Greek. The priests of the goddess were a degraded company, but were recipients of large proceeds from extensive estates and fisheries. They, with priestesses and slaves, had entire charge of the worship of her who was regarded as the "mother of the gods." Flute playing, jangling of timbrels, and wild dances were included in this worship.

**An Asylum.** The temple of Diana with a considerable space round about it was considered sacred as a place of refuge. Criminals and evil-doers of all kinds could flee thither and be safe from pursuers. Consequently, there dwelt within the vicinity of the temple a multitude of the worst sort of men and women who had come thither to escape the just deserts of their offenses. Ephesus was also a center of every kind of superstition, therefore a resort of sorcerers, exorcists and impostors.

**Makers of Images.** In this center of superstition dwelt numerous workers in metals, gold, silver and copper, whose occupation it was to manufacture copies of the shrine of Diana and of her image. The month of May had now arrived, the time specially dedicated to this goddess. At this time was held the great fair, known as Ephesia, when hosts of people came from all parts of Asia. The season was observed with every sort of display and revelry. The streets were filled with processions, and the theater and stadium were crowded by those who desired to listen to music, see horse races, athletic shows, or contests between men and beasts. During this festival the makers of images

reaped their chief harvest of sales to visitors to the city.

**Christ and Diana.** For more than two years, Paul and his co-laborers had been proclaiming the Gospel to the people of Ephesus and the region round about. Among other truths that had been rung in the ears of the multitudes was that gods made by men's hands are not gods. In addition to the large number who became followers of Christ, there must have been hosts of others who were led to pause and consider. It is probable that the increasing influence of the Gospel had diminished the crowds which usually appeared at the annual festival of the goddess. It is certain that the decrease of sales of images was felt by the makers of these idols.

**The Stir.** "And the same time there arose no small stir about that way." Everybody was talking of the falling off of interest in Diana, and the priests were complaining. The leader and spokesman of the malcontents, Demetrius, a silversmith, was a man whose business as a maker of images had been affected. This year there was little demand for the tiny silver shrines and images. He, therefore, called a general meeting of the skilled artisans and common workingmen of his trade, and made them a speech saying in substance, "Sirs, ye know that by this business of ours we have our wealth. And ye see and hear, that not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands. Not only is there danger that our trade will come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana will be made of no account, and that she herself will even be deposed from her magnificence, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth."

**Illustration.** A certain prince named Pharnaces rebelled against Caesar, but at the same time sent him a crown. Caesar returned the crown, with this message: "Let him return to his obedience first, and then I will accept his present."

The shrewd speech of Demetrius appealed to the self-interest of the men to whom it was addressed, while it spread a religious cloak over their selfishness. There arose a great shout, vibrant with fanatical appeal, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Inflamed, angry, set upon creating a counter current against Paul, these men rushed from their meeting place, and soon throughout the city rose the cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

The riot spread. Certain of the rioters began to search for Paul, but as he could not be found, they laid hold of Gaius and Aristarchus, two of his companions, and the mob dragging these two men rushed to the theater. When Paul learned of the peril of his fellow-workers he desired to follow them and strive to rescue them, or to try the effect of an address upon the multitude. But his friends compelled him to remain hidden. Also certain officers of the city sent him word not to venture into the theater. Not being able to find Paul, the rioters fell into confusion, some crying one thing and some another, while the greater part of the assembly did not know why they had come together.

**Alexander.** The unreasoning mob began to shout against the Jews in general, knowing that Paul was a Jew. The Jews who were present felt this an opportune moment to explain that the Christians were not of the same party as themselves. They, therefore, set forth one Alexander, a coppersmith, as spokesman. But when the crowd recognized him as a Jew, they again took up the shout, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and for two hours they continued this cry.

**The Town Clerk.** Not until their lungs were exhausted did the multitude cease their noise. Then a city officer, the town clerk, fearing that a riot would bring down on them the wrath of the Romans, appealed to the mob to keep order. He said, "Ye men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter? Seeing, then that these things cannot be spoken against, ye ought to be quiet, and to do nothing rashly. For ye have brought hither these men, which are neither robbers of churches nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Wherefore, if Demetrius and the craftsmen which are with him have a matter against any man, the laws are open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another. But if ye enquire anything concerning other matters, it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar, there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse."

This appeal had immediate effect. The people saw that this man had spoken truth. Then he bade them depart; the crowd melted away.

**Practical Truths.** 1. The sacrifices made for the truth are not real losses. 2. Follow no business on which you cannot ask God's blessing. Live up to your profession. 3. Be wary of the cant that is mock religion and of the zeal which springs from self-interest. 4. Take part in the building of God's spiritual temple. 5. Be disinterested in the service of God and man. 6. Do not attack the belief of others, but prove the superiority of Christianity by your life and spirit.

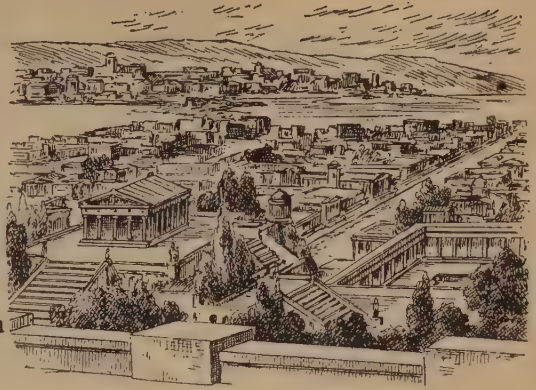
DR. C. D. WILSON.



And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto



not  
knowing  
the things  
that shall  
befall  
me there:  
save that  
the Holy  
Ghost  
witnesseth  
in every



saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with

joy, and the  
ministry,  
which I  
have  
received  
of the  
Lord Jesus,  
to testify the



of the grace  
of God.  
And when  
he had thus  
spoken, he



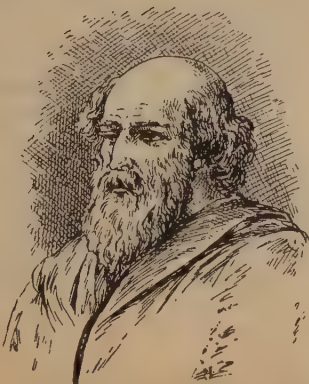
and  
prayed  
with  
them  
all. And  
they  
all



sore,  
and  
fell  
on  
Paul's  
neck,  
and



Sorrowing  
most of  
all for  
the words  
which he  
spake, that  
they should  
see his



no more.  
And they  
accom-  
panied  
him unto the





## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 20:1-38.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We are glad that the Gospel brings Thy people together in tender and abiding relations. We thank Thee that while separations take place, the ties of fellowship, of sympathy and of love last through all changes. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"To live as always seeing

The invisible source of things,  
Is the blesseddest state of being,  
For the quietude it brings."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 57-58. Places, Ephesus, Macedonia, Achaia, Troas, Miletus. Persons, Paul, Luke, Eutychus, elders of the church of Ephesus.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Farewells. David and Jonathan, 1 Sam. 20:42. Elijah and Elisha, 2 Kings 2:11, 12. Joseph and brethren, Gen. 45:21-25. Paul at Tyre, Acts 21:5, 6. Ruth and Naomi, Ruth 1:16, 17. Jesus and disciples, John 14:1-4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. We get a glimpse of the observance of Sunday, or the first day of the week, instead of the Sabbath, the seventh day. 2. The meeting of the Christians at Troas is a

mingling of the religious and social relations. 3. Paul was able to restore Eutychus to life because he had the Christ power within him. 4. Paul kept back nothing of the truth. 5. Paul's labors in Ephesus included both public and individual ministrations. 6. Paul did not separate repentance and faith. 7. The Apostle calls the Gospel "the word of the grace of God." 8. Paul's attitude to his fellowmen and to the church was that of the true Christian. He was an example in both temporal and spiritual things. 9. Earnest, unremitting effort is certain to tell for Christ. 10. The highest type of friendship is among Christians.

### A GREAT-HEARTED MAN.

Paul now had been more than two years in Ephesus; had established a strong church, and had seen the work spread throughout the whole region. His purpose was to visit Macedonia and Achaia, then pass on to Jerusalem, and afterward to visit Rome. To prepare the way for his tour of the churches in Greece, he had sent Timothy and Erastus in advance. Meanwhile, he had remained in Ephesus, where it is supposed that he was arrested and imprisoned for a brief time following the riot.

**Avoiding a Plot.** Paul set out for Macedonia, accompanied by Gaius of Derbe, and Aristarchus of Thessalonica, and two Ephesians, Tychicus and Trophimus. Having visited the churches in Macedonia and exhorted them, Paul went on to Achaia. There he spent three months. His intent now was to embark at Corinth and sail directly for Palestine, but suddenly his friends discovered a new plot of the Jews to slay him on shipboard. It was decided, therefore, that he should return through Macedonia. An escort of friends accompanied him, while other friends went on by sea to Troas. Coming to Philippi with Luke, Paul remained there to celebrate the passover, after which he sailed for Troas, arriving after five days.

**Eutychus.** Paul remained in Troas seven days, where he was rejoined by his friends who had left him in Corinth. From the time of the resurrection of Christ, the Christians had begun to hold special religious services on the first day of the week, and it was now on Sunday evening that the Christians in Troas assembled for worship. As Paul was to depart the next day, the services were of particular moment. According to their cus-

tom, the Christians "broke bread," that is, they celebrated the Lord's Supper.

On this evening they were met together in an upper third-story room such as was used as a guest chamber, being the coolest part of an Oriental home. Luke mentions the fact that there were many lamps in the room. Windows in those days did not have glass, but were simply of lattices that could be opened or closed. In the niche of one of these windows, the lattice being open to admit the breeze from the sea, sat a youth named Eutychus. Paul's visit being near its end, and he having many things to say, prolonged his sermon until midnight. The youth, probably affected by the lights, the crowd and the heat, and perhaps not comprehending all that Paul said, had "fallen into a deep sleep." Then suddenly losing his balance he fell out of the window from that third loft "and was taken up dead."

A cry of alarm rang through the congregation from those who had observed the accident. Paul paused, and learning what had occurred, he "went down and fell on him and, embracing him, said, 'Trouble not yourselves, for his life is in him.'" Calming the excitement of those around him, Paul returned to the upper room, broke bread with his friends, talked with them even till the break of day, and then departed. Eutychus was quite recovered and his friends were comforted.

**Illustration.** A ship captain told that it was his lot to fall in with a steamer which was badly crippled. The night was closing in and the sea was rolling high. He asked if help was needed. "I am in a sinking condition," cried the other captain. "Had you not better send your passengers



on board directly?" he was asked. "Will you not lay by me till morning?" was the response. "I will try," replied the other; "but had you not better send your passengers on board now?" "Lay by till morning," was again the answer. The other tried to fulfill this request, but at night the sea was so heavy that he could not keep his position and he never saw that steamer again. In an hour and a half after the captain had said, "Lay by till morning," the vessel with most of those on board had gone down.

**The Further Journey.** Paul now went by land to Assos, while Luke and the others took ship for the same place. Taking in Paul at Assos, they went on to Mitylene. The following day they anchored near Chios; the next they touched at Samos, and the day after they arrived at Miletus. Paul wished to stop at Ephesus, but he forebore, as he had little time to spare if he would reach Jerusalem for Pentecost.

As the ship tarried at Miletus, Paul wished to make the best of the delay. So he sent messengers to the elders of the church at Ephesus urging them to come to him. The distance being only about thirty-five miles, it was possible for them to reach him on the next day.

**Illustration.** It is told of Bishop Usher and Dr. Preston that as they were about to part one said to the other, "Come, good doctor, let us talk now a little of Jesus Christ." Then the doctor said, "Come, my lord bishop, let me hear your grace talk of the goodness of God. Let us warm each other's hearts with Heaven, that we may the better bear this cold world."

**Paul's Farewell.** And now the great Christian Apostle and minister is about to separate from the officers of that flock to which he had lovingly ministered so long and faithfully. It was a great trial for him and them, but duty called elsewhere.

His farewell to the elders of Ephesus was full of tenderness and counsel. It is one of the most beautiful of Paul's compositions, giving much insight into the Apostle's relation to the churches. It is full of appeals to their memories of him and of his work. "Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews."

He reminded them that he had not shrunk from speaking whatever was good for them, and that publicly and from house to house he had testified concerning repentance and faith in Christ. Now he was going to Jerusalem not knowing the things which would

happen to him there, though the Spirit had warned him that in every city he would meet bonds and afflictions. He held his life as nothing, he declared, that he might finish his course with joy and fulfill his ministry.

His tears and those of his friends mingled as he announced that they would see his face no more. He called on them to bear witness that he had done his duty. He warned them to take heed to themselves and to the flock of God. Sad but necessary was the warning that wolves would enter among them. "Therefore, watch," he bade them. With overflowing love, he commended them to the grace of God as he fitly reminded them that he had not labored among them for their money, but had toiled with his hands for his own support. He held before them his example, and he bade them remember those words of Christ, quoted only by Paul in this discourse: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Having spoken with tenderness, love and sympathy to these men among whom he had labored so long, with full hearts all knelt down while Paul prayed. All these strong men, the elders of the Ephesian church, "wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him; sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, 'that they should see his face no more.'". Then they accompanied him to his ship. While the sails filled the ship lifted anchor and started on its course.

Paul was able to give a good account of his service of love among his people.

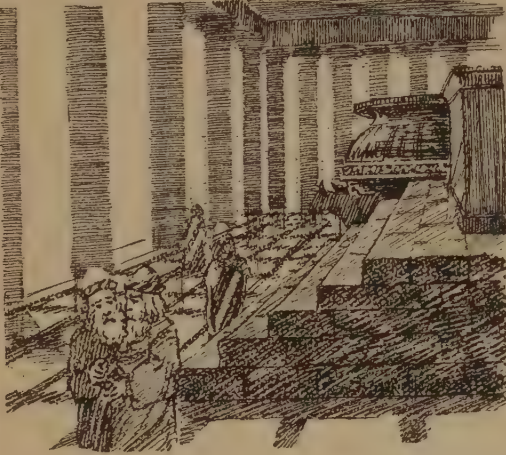
**Illustration.** A little girl, after a Bible class, said to her teacher, "I want to say something to you," while she anxiously waited for her companions to go out of the room. The teacher was weary and knew that she was needed elsewhere. Nature said, "I have not a minute to spare. Come to me another time." But grace said, "Take up thy cross and work while it is called today. Listen to this little child." No sooner were the two alone than the child burst into tears. "What shall I do? I am so wicked. I cannot bear to think of death. Do come and pray with me." That prayer was answered and the teacher was glad that she did not wait until another time.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Be not a sleepy hearer, either physically or spiritually. 2. Christ is the strength of the nobly influential life. 3. Faithful study of the Bible is necessary to the building of Christian character. 4. Let your works bear out your word. 5. So live that farewells may bring no regret for things done amiss or left undone. 6. On occasions worthy of them be not ashamed of tears. 7. Value those ties which cannot be broken by distance or death. 8. Be wisely affectionate in all the relations of life.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the



stirred  
up  
all the  
people,  
and



And all the



was  
moved,  
and  
the



together: and they took Paul, and drew him



and  
forthwith  
the doors  
were shut.  
And as  
they went  
about to  
kill him,  
tidings  
came  
unto  
the chief



of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 21:1-36.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May we devote ourselves and our lives to Thy Truth. In some little way may each of us help to make clearer to other minds Thy grace and Thy Son, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"He saw a hand they could not see  
Which beckoned him away,  
He heard a voice they could not hear  
Which would not let him stay."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 57-58. Places, Caesarea, Jerusalem. Persons, Paul, Philip, Agabus, James, elders, mob, Roman captain and soldiers.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of the Will of God. Test of relationship to Christ, Mark 3:35. Christ's submission to, Matt. 26:39. In prayer, Matt. 6:10. Jesus' source of strength, John 4:34. Just judgment for obedience to, John 5:30. Jesus came to do, John 6:38. Renewed mind proves what is God's will, Rom. 12:2. Paul's habit of qualifying promises by, "if the Lord will," 1 Cor. 4:19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Against warning of danger Paul persisted in going to Jerusalem that he might unite the churches. 2. The

knowledge that he would suffer in Jerusalem came by the Spirit, but human nature entreated him not to go. 3. Paul withstood the pleadings of friends to follow the voice of God. 4. The love of Christ maintains Christian fellowship. 5. Paul's willingness to suffer for Christ is one of the most inspiring examples of Christian heroism. 6. "The will of the Lord be done" is the Christian's motto. 7. Paul's conforming to the law was not an acknowledgment that it was necessary for salvation, but an act of love to remove prejudices from the minds of Jewish Christians. 8. Paul is the great type of Christian liberty. He surrendered nothing of truth, nor did he yield the principle that salvation is only of Christ.

### FACING PERIL.

Having made his farewells to the elders of Ephesus, Paul, with his companions from Miletus, sailed to the island of Cos. The next day they sped on to Rhodes. Passing thence, they arrived at Patara, where they took ship bound for Phoenicia. After four days they reached Tyre.

**Paul's Friends.** Here Paul spent several days with Christian converts and his loving ministrations greatly endeared him to them. Being filled with the Spirit, they foresaw perils to Paul in venturing into Jerusalem, and they attempted to dissuade him from his purpose. But duty urged, and he prepared to set forth. The impression he had made upon these people is shown by the fact that all men, women and children accompanied him out of the city to the beach. There they knelt upon the sands, prayed, and bade one another farewell.

Again taking a ship, the missionary party passed on to Ptolemais, the modern Acre, where they spent one day with the Christians of the town, and now traveling by land for forty-four miles, they came to Caesarea and spent several days in the home of Philip the Evangelist, one of the seven, he who had preached among the Samaritans and had baptized the Ethiopian. In this household were the four daughters of Philip, who were endowed with prophetic gifts.

**The Warning of Agabus.** The prophet Agabus, who long before, in the days of Claudius, foretold the famine, had come from Jerusalem to Caesarea to warn Paul of his danger. Adopting the symbolic methods of the ancient prophets, Agabus unfastened the

girdle of Paul, and with it bound his own feet and hands, saying, "Thus saith the Holy Ghost, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

The scene produced a deep impression upon the company of Christians assembled in the house of Philip, and all including Luke besought Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. But Paul said, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

When his friends saw that they could not persuade him, they said, "The will of the Lord be done."

**Illustration.** The martyr Elizabeth Folkes embraced the stake at which she was to be burned, saying, "Farewell, all the world; farewell, faith and hope; but welcome love."

**On to Jerusalem.** Setting his face, as did his Master, to go to Jerusalem, Paul departed and with him went his companions and certain disciples from Caesarea; Paul carrying with him the offerings to the poor of the church of Jerusalem from the Gentile churches that he had founded. Arrangements had been made that Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, should be their host upon their arrival, and he now traveled in the company.

After a three days' journey over the seventy-five miles, they came in sight of the ancient city, to which crowds were thronging from every direction. This was Paul's fifth visit to Jerusalem since his conversion.

Here twenty-five years before he had taken part in the death of Stephen. Now in all the vast crowds which he beheld he had few friends, and to multitudes his very name was an incentive to murderous thoughts.

**His Reception.** In the house of Mnason Paul was gladly welcomed. The next day, he and his companions met with James and the elders, James being the presiding officer of the Jerusalem church, and to them he delivered the contributions of the Gentile churches; a gift which must have been most welcome to the impoverished Christians of Jerusalem. One by one he rehearsed the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry. Luke states that "when they heard it, they glorified the Lord," notwithstanding they at once began to reproach Paul.

James and the elders, who knew well the liberal views and practices of Paul, said, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous for the law. And they are informed of thee that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs." The great crisis had now come between the spirit of Judaism and the Apostle of the Gentiles. It was not only the unconverted Jews who were against him, but Jewish Christians who held that the law was still binding. They knew Paul had preached that the way to salvation was through grace, and not through the Jewish law.

"What is it, therefore? The multitude must needs come together; for they come." Excitement would spread with the news that the great missionary, Paul, he who was said to be teaching everywhere not only that the Gentile Christians did not need to observe the law of Moses, but that Jews among the Gentiles were also free from the law, had arrived in Jerusalem. There would be division; there would be tumult now.

Paul was advised, therefore, to conform publicly to Jewish usage, and prove that he himself kept the law. Four men had taken a vow upon themselves and Paul was urged to undergo with them the ceremonial purification prescribed by the law, and to pay the charges for them "that they may shave their heads." This ceremony involved considerable expense, and it was regarded as a charitable act to pay the costs for the poorer vow-takers. The person who thus defrayed

the costs was considered as sharing the vow, inasmuch as he must remain at the temple with the Nazarites during the week of their purification.

But Paul's personal conformity to the law did not produce the effect which the elders had expected. When the seven days of the purification were almost over, certain Jews from Asia Minor, men who doubtless had seen and heard Paul during his journeys, recognized him. They were indignant with him for having preached that the Jews living among the Gentiles did not need to observe the law. They also had seen him in the city with Trophimus the Ephesian, and they thought, or pretended to think, that Paul had taken this Gentile into the temple and profaned it.

These Asiatic Jews caught hold of Paul and shouted, "Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law and this place, and further brought Greeks also into the temple and hath polluted this holy place."

At this cry the people ran thither and dragged Paul out of the temple. The Levites, in order to save the temple from bloodshed, closed the heavy gates. The Roman commander of the Tower of Antonia was accosted to keep certain soldiers on the roof of the passageway which connected the fortress and the temple, so that at a moment's notice they could hasten down the stairs into the midst of the crowd. As soon as the Roman officer at this time noted the commotion and saw that the mob was trying to kill Paul he took soldiers and ran down unto them. When the crowd saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left off beating their victim.

The chief captain laid hold on him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he demanded who the man was, and what he had done. But so great was the uproar that the officer could make nothing of what was said. He ordered Paul to be taken into the castle but so great was the throng that the soldiers had to lift Paul upon their shoulders and bear him away, while the multitude shouted, "Away with him."

**Practical Truths.** 1. Do your duty, no matter what trials may come. 2. We must beware of being influenced by friends whose first thought is merely our personal safety. 3. Make the will of God the law of all conduct. 4. The effort to make peace may lead to the very opposite results; act only on principle. Often an act of kindness is turned into a weapon against the doer. 5. Cultivate firmness of character.



## PAUL'S DEFENCE.

And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I



I was in  
a trance;  
and saw  
him  
saying  
unto me,  
Make  
haste,  
and get  
thee  
quickly  
out of



for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that I



and



in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy



Stephen  
was shed,  
I also  
was  
standing  
by, and  
consent-  
ing unto  
his death,  
and



of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles.



THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 21:37-40; 22:1-23.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We bless Thee for Christian enlightenment, tolerance and charity. We are grateful for the heroic men who withstood the storms in olden times and who by their sufferings made better things possible for us. We pray that we may by Thy grace be enabled to further Thy kingdom without hatred or malice toward any men. In the name of Christ, Amen.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 58. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Paul, Lysias the chief captain, the Jewish mob.

**Scripture Setting:** False Accusations. Forbidden, Ex. 23:1. Talebearers condemned, Lev. 19:16. Malignity of, Psa. 41:5-9. Christians blessed when enduring, Matt. 5:11. Prohibited to soldiers, Luke 3:14. Monstrosity of, 2 Tim. 3:3. Happy if reproached, 1 Pet. 4:14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Paul makes a pulpit of castle stairs and an audience of a mob.

ON THE CASTLE STAIRS.

**The Situation.** Antonius Claudius Felix was appointed procurator of Judea about 53 A. D. His rule had been cruel and especially irritating to the Jews. In the year 57 he had employed the zealot assassins to slay the high-priest Jonathan in the temple. This had led to the organization of the companies of Sicarii, or assassins. Josephus relates that after the death of the high-priest there appeared an Egyptian imposter, who led four thousand of these assassins into the desert. He came back at the head of thirty thousand men, before whom he posed as the Messiah, declaring that he would restore the kingdom of Judah. Encamped on the Mount of Olives, he had threatened the Roman garrison. Felix attacked him and slew or scattered his followers, while the Egyptian himself escaped.

**Lysias Questions Paul.** In view of such disturbances as this, the Romans were compelled to be on the alert at every sign of tumult among the Jews. Coming now to a point beyond the crowd, Paul addressed Lysias, the chief captain. The captain, who had supposed this was the rioting Egyptian, was astonished to hear himself spoken to in the Greek language. "Can'st thou speak Greek?" he asked. "Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar and leddest out into the wilderness the four thousand men that were murderers?" Paul replied, "I am a Jew, of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city, and I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people." The chief captain, thinking no doubt that the prisoner might quiet the tumult, gave his consent and bade a soldier release Paul's right hand.

"And so in the wearisome journey  
Over life's troubled sea,  
I know not the way I am going,  
But Jesus shall pilot me.  
I know not the way I am going,  
But well do I know my Guide.  
With childlike trust I give my hand  
To the Mighty Friend at my side."

2. The preacher, a former persecutor in chains, proclaims Christ. 3. Conscious of innocence; pitiful toward misled countrymen; confident of Divine protection, Paul delivers his message. 4. The crowd, unreasoning, passion-swayed, is silenced by the language of Moses and the prophets. 5. Sincerity, charitableness, truth, all are wasted upon fanaticism. 6. Unless hearers are converted to the belief of the speaker they are in danger of becoming hardened. 7. The Christian man and leader shines in greatness before the mob.

**Illustration.** A ship was ploughing its way through a raging sea, when the cry rang out, "A man overboard." A form was seen struggling in the water, but before boats could be lowered the man had been left far behind. His cries, however, could still be heard and when the boat was launched the rowers bravely struggled against the huge waves. "Save him! Save him!" came in agonizing tones as into the throng on deck rushed a man, throwing his arms wildly and shouting, "A thousand pounds to the one who saves his life." The voice was that of the captain of the ship, and the man who was drowning was his brother. To Paul, perishing men were his brothers.

**Paul's Speech.** Standing on the stairs; raising his hand and beckoning for silence; Paul began to speak. Oriental mobs are much more quickly influenced by their feelings than are western peoples; in a moment the angry tumult ceased.

The first words of Paul fell upon the crowd like a spell, for they were in the familiar speech of the Jews, the Aramaic dialect of the Hebrew. It was evident this man then was not a mere Greek-speaking Jew, but one who knew well their own tongue. There is a wonderful charm about what is familiar to us. To hear our own language in a foreign land; to see our own flag in some unexpected place, acts like magic.

Paul addressed the mob without anger or bitterness. A few moments before he had been in the hands of infuriated men, ready to tear him to pieces. Now he was standing out of their reach, surrounded by soldiers with drawn swords, speaking to a silent throng beneath. He began as if these Jews before him were his friends. "Brethren and fathers, hear ye the defense which I now make unto you." In breathless silence they permitted him to continue. He now had the opportunity to justify himself in his course,



which was one of his purposes in coming to Jerusalem.

What Paul said was perfectly adapted to the situation. His hearers had been excited by all manner of rumors about him. Doubtless, many of them were not familiar with the details of his life, where he was born, how long he had resided in Jerusalem, or what part he had taken in persecuting the Christians. He was to them a man of mystery. In spite of themselves they were interested in hearing the facts of his life. If we were part of a vast crowd, wrathful against some man, and that man began to explain who and what he was, beginning his speech by saying, "I am an American," we should be the readier to hear him. Paul struck a responsive note when he declared, "I am a Jew." Instantly every man before him felt that in this he was one of them. He did not repudiate his race; he did not call himself by some other name. "I am a Jew, verily a man, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel." The chord of local attachment was struck. Now he could sway his audience. This teacher Gamaliel, the greatest of the rabbis of that day, was still living. The audience recognized that Paul had at least been properly taught in the traditions of the Jews; taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God as they all were that day. He reminded them that their fathers were his fathers; that he was no alien, but was one of them. He admits their zeal; he does not denounce it, but he would show that their zeal was misdirected. He virtually says to them, "As ye persecute the Christians, so did I. If you are not familiar with the facts, the high-priest himself can tell you I speak the truth, and all the elders can testify that I bore letters from them to Damascus to bring Christians to Jerusalem to be punished.

But a change came to me. I was on my way to Damascus on an errand of persecution, when a revelation was given me. I fell to the ground. Jesus appeared and spoke. My course was changed. I was blind for a time. At Jesus' command I went into Damascus and there Ananias, a devout man, well reported by all the Jews in that city, restored my sight. He announced to me that the God of our fathers, Jehovah, the God of Israel, had appointed me to know His will, to see the Righteous One, and to be a witness unto all men of what I had seen and heard. It was Ananias who baptized me and then I came to Jerusalem going to the temple to

pray; there I fell into a trance, and I saw Jesus, who said to me, "Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem, for they will not receive thy testimony concerning Me."

"I pleaded with the Lord that I should remain in Jerusalem, to give my testimony here. I said that they knew I imprisoned and beat those who believed in Him, and kept the garments of those who stoned Stephen. But he would not permit me to testify here. He said unto me, 'Depart:' for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles."

**Illustration.** The Marquis de Lafayette sent to General Washington, by Paine, the key of the Bastille. In conveying the key to Washington the bearer said, "I feel myself happy in being the person through whom the marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the spoils of despotism—the first ripe fruits of American principles transplanted into Europe. That the principles of America opened the Bastille is not to be doubted, therefore the key comes to the right place." Paul was the man who with the key of truth opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles.

Up to this point the multitude listened in silence. They could bear all that had been said except that God's grace was not only for Jews but for the despised Gentiles, and that this man was the herald of such a message. As one man the crowd roared, "Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live." Oriental mobs, the worst of all, act as if their members had suddenly gone mad. The Jews broke into hideous rage. They yelled, gnashed their teeth, waved their arms, cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, furious and frantic, until Lysias led Paul away into the castle.

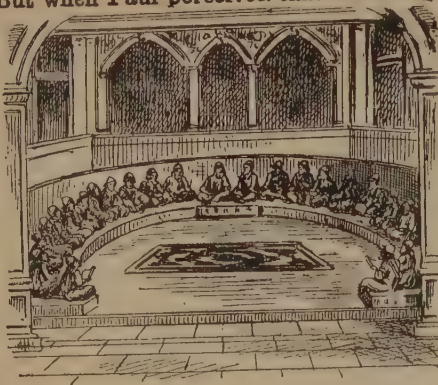
**Illustration.** A chaplain injured at the battle of Gettysburg was lying on the field at night. In the darkness he heard a voice saying, "O, my God!" The chaplain knowing that someone near him was in trouble, said to himself, "How can I reach him?" As he was unable to walk, he started to roll toward the sufferer and he rolled himself through blood and among dead bodies until he came to the dying man, and there he preached Christ. Two soldiers in passing carried him to a dying officer. In this way he spent the long night, carried by the soldiers from one dying man to another. He prayed with all of them, while he himself was compelled to lie on his back.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Pray for a great faith that can sustain you in the most trying situations. 2. As a citizen of the kingdom of God fear nothing. 3. Have the martyr spirit which rises above all that men can do to you. 4. Maintain nobility of spirit under the greatest stress. 5. Every event of life may be used for Christ; do not fall to the level of antagonists. 5. Remember that you owe all to the grace of God.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the



Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the



was divided. For the Sadducees say that there is no



neither



nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both. And there arose a great cry: and the



that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief



fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down, and to take him by force from among them, and to bring him into the





**THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 23: 1-11.**

**Prayer:** Our Father, Thou art our refuge and present help in time of trouble. Thou dost strengthen and uphold all who put their trust in Thee. Be Thou graciously with us in the seasons of stress and storm. Be Thou with us when men are angry against us. May we ever find our rest and peace in Thee. In the name of Christ, Amen.

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 58. Place, Jerusalem. Persons, Paul, Lysias the chief captain, soldiers, the high priest Ananias, priests and Sanhedrin.

**Scripture Setting: Study of Citizenship.** Peaceful citizens, Jer. 29:7. Paying tribute, Matt. 17:24. Duties to God and to Caesar, Matt. 22:17. Subject to authorities, Rom. 13:1. Prayer for authorities, 1 Tim. 2:1. Violation of rights, Acts 16:37. Instances of loyal Israelites, Josh. 1:16-18; 2 Sam. 3:36, 37. David, 1 Sam. 24:6-10. Hushai, 2 Sam.

"Calmly see the mystic Weaver  
Throw His shuttle to and fro;  
'Mid the noise and wild confusion,  
Well the Weaver seems to know  
What each motion and commotion,  
What each fusion and confusion,  
In the grand result will show."

17:15, 16. David's soldiers, 2 Sam. 18:12, 13. Mordecai, Esth. 2:21-23.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. As always, Paul used the means at hand to further the cause of Christ. The fact that he was a Pharisee was useful to Paul as an ambassador of Christ. 2. The apparent results of Paul's great discourse were the wrath and fury of the mob. 3. Uncontrolled passion exhibits human nature at its worst. 4. Oftentimes the world investigates after men have suffered unjustly. 5. The protection of one's flag is a great privilege.

**ROMAN SWORDS AND ANGRY JEWS.**

It must have been a surprise to the chief captain Lysias, when the mob which had listened for a time so attentively to Paul, broke forth into a frenzy of rage. He knew Greek and Latin, but he could neither speak nor understand the Aramaic-Hebrew, which language Paul had used in addressing his countrymen. Lysias could judge what Paul was saying only by its effect, therefore during the speech, save for the last sentence, Lysias must have felt that the Apostle was convincing the crowd of his innocence. But suddenly wrath leaped forth from the mob, and only the swords of the Romans kept the Jews from seizing Paul and tearing him to pieces.

"**I Am a Roman.**" The uproar may have been interpreted by the captain as an evidence of crime. In many ages and countries it has been the custom of the authorities to question the accused by some means of physical torture. The Roman method was to bind the prisoner and scourge him. Lysias, in order to ascertain the cause of the present fury, bade his soldiers take Paul from the stairs into the barracks of the castle and there he commanded his men to scourge him. Instantly obedient hands seized him, stripped his back, laid him along an inclined post, and bound him with thongs. Three times before Paul had been beaten by Roman rods. Five times he had received the thirty-nine lashes administered by the Jews with thongs. Now the command was to apply the whip under which many a victim had died.

Paul had submitted thus far, but now he said calmly to the centurion who stood by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" He could not have said anything to that officer that

would have startled him as much as this that he was a Roman citizen. Such a fact carried rights and privileges and exemptions throughout the then known world. Wherever the Roman eagle perched, the citizens of the Empire were protected in their sacred rights. The centurion who had been chosen to see that the scourging was carried out, at once bade the men desist; then hastened to the chief captain, saying, "Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman."

**A Roman's Rights.** It was now Lysias' turn to be startled, for if this man were indeed a citizen of the Empire, the chief captain had already invaded his rights as he had bound him and given an order to question him by torture. Lysias hastened to Paul's presence and said, "Tell me, art thou a Roman?" Paul answered simply, "Yea." Lysias himself was probably a Greek, and had been compelled to pay for his privilege as a citizen. Paul had told the captain that he was a Jew, and Lysias was puzzled to know how he had gained this right. In explanation of his doubts Lysias said, "With a great sum obtained I this citizenship." "But I am free born," declared Paul.

In an empire composed of many subject peoples, mixed populations, vast hordes of slaves, and numerous freedmen, relatively few were citizens. A special privilege came by being the child of a citizen, or by special favor of the Emperor or by purchase. At certain periods this right was sold at a low price, but at the time named in this chapter the sum demanded was large. Paul inherited his citizenship from his father. Many Jews had this privilege, some having gained it by favor of the emperors and others by purchase.

Lysias was till anxious about his treatment of his prisoner. The men with the whip unbound the thongs and departed, but it appears that the chains were still kept upon Paul. Being informed that the cause of the mob's wrath was a religious question, Lysias sent word to the chief priests and the Sanhedrin to assemble on the next day. This could scarcely have been a meeting capable of disposing of Paul's case, for a Roman officer had no authority to call together the Jewish court, and he certainly would not have given up a Roman citizen to their judgment. Apparently he wished to shift as much responsibility as possible.

**Before the Council.** On the morrow Lysias removed Paul's chains and accompanied him with his soldiers before the priests and Sanhedrin, as he would not risk the safety of his prisoner by leaving him unprotected. A full attendance of the members of these bodies was present, and the high-priest presided. We must remember that while the Romans permitted the Jews to retain their organizations, they had, in fact, only the shadow of power. It is evident that the usual preliminaries of such a meeting were gone through with, that accusations were made and that it was after this that Paul was permitted in regular course to make his defense.

**Illustration.** A prisoner at the bar smiled when hard things were said against him. One asked him why he treated the matter so lightly and he replied, "It is no matter what they say, so long as the judge says nothing." It is of little importance what the world says, so long as God approves.

Paul calmly and steadily surveyed the faces before him. It must have been with deep interest these Jewish leaders saw before them in their court the man who had stirred a considerable part of the world with the doctrines which they fiercely hated. "Men and brethren," Paul began, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." It may have been Paul's addressing them as "brethren," as if he were on an equality with them, that irritated Ananias, the high-priest—though Paul could rightly claim to be a Rabbi, and he once had been a Sanhedrist—or it may have been Paul's declaration of innocence that was offensive. Whatever the reason, the high-priest Ananias, a man noted for violence, and one of the worst characters that ever filled the high priestly office, commanded those that stood by to smite the speaker on the mouth. We need not attempt to justify Paul in his reply, since the best men are imperfect. Stung by the blow, he cried, "God

shall smite thee, thou whited wall." We are to remember that Paul had been absent from Jerusalem for many years, and that the high-priests changed office frequently, so that Paul did not know this man by sight. When they that stood by said, "Revilest thou God's high-priest?" Paul replied, "I wist not, brethren, that he was the high-priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people."

**Pharisees and Sadducees.** The violent act of the high-priest at once created dissension in the council, composed of Pharisees and Sadducees. Seeing this division, Paul took sides with the Pharisees. He had come to Jerusalem to preach the Gospel as the fulfillment of the law. To this end he announced himself as against the Sadducees in their disbelief in spirits, angels and the resurrection and with the Pharisees in these beliefs. He wished to lead the Pharisees to the fulfillment of their own belief in the risen Christ. He, therefore, cried out, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question."

But Paul's declaration only added to the discord. The assembly was divided. A great clamor arose. Then certain scribes belonging to the party of the Pharisees stood up saying, "We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God." Then so violent did the dissension become that the chief captain feared Paul would be torn to pieces. He gave command to his troops and instantly, with drawn swords, the soldiers marched to where Paul was in the midst of the contending parties. They drove back Sadducees and Pharisees alike, and placing Paul within their ranks, they marched off to the castle, leaving behind them the quarreling men, some shouting for Paul and some crying for his death.

**Illustration.** The Romans considered as sacred a statue or building that had been struck by lightning. Surely, Paul's experiences in being smitten so often by the lightning of human wrath but rendered him the more revered.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Love your country and prize its citizenship. 2. Always aim to be able to say that you have lived with a "good conscience." 3. Defend yourself, when necessary, with courage, humility, calmness and frankness. 4. Under no circumstances forget proper dignity and above all your reverence for God. 5. Be ready when attacked to admit a fault; remember that in the end, if you are in the right, fair-minded persons will come to your point of view. 6. If you speak the truth you have nothing to fear. 7. Do what is right, stand for what is right and you will be stronger than all who are opposed to you.



## THE PLOT AGAINST PAUL.

And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither



till they had killed Paul. And when Paul's sister's son heard of their



he went and entered into the



and told Paul. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief



for he hath a certain thing to tell him. So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the



called me unto him, and prayed me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. Then the chief captain



and went with him aside privately, and asked him, What is that thou hast to tell me?

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 23:12-35.

**Prayer:** Our Father, We bless Thee that Christ is always near us and that we are safe until our work is done. When Thou hast accomplished Thy purposes with us and in us, receive us unto Thyself. In the name of Christ, Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 58. Places, Jerusalem, the highway, Antipatris and Caesarea. Persons, Paul, conspirators, Paul's nephew, Lysias, Roman soldiers and Felix.

**Scripture Setting:** A Study of Wicked Plots. Against the just, Psa. 37:12. Against Esau, Gen. 27:6-17. Against Joseph, Gen. 37:26-28. Against David, 2 Sam. 15:10-12. Against Naboth, 1 Kings 21:7-14. Against Jews, Esther 3:8-11. Against Hebrew children, Dan. 3:8-18. Against Daniel, Dan. 6:4-17. Against Jesus, Matt. 12:14; 26:14-16. Note the punishment of these plotters.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The safest place

"O wonderful story of deathless love!  
Each child is dear to that heart above.  
He fights for me when I cannot fight;  
He comforts me in the gloom of night;  
He lifts the burden for He is strong;  
And stills the sigh and awakes the song."

### ITS RELATIONS.

for Paul was a prison. 2. Christ and His assurance made the prison a cheerful place. 3. In the act of the men who took a religious oath to commit murder we see how men may juggle with conscience. 4. The Sadduceean members of the Sanhedrin, who doubtless approved the conspiracy, reveal the affinity of materialism with crime. 5. The church at Jerusalem does not appear to have been greatly concerned for Paul's welfare, since it was a Judaizing body. 6. The affection and loyalty of kindred may often be depended upon when other things fail.

## SAFE AMONG ENEMIES.

**The Conspiracy.** Paul's foes, enraged at their failure to kill him in the temple; to snatch him from the hands of the soldiers; and to get the Sanhedrin to agree in his condemnation, now were planning to assassinate him. The day had scarcely dawned when more than forty Jews gathered in a secret place, whispered, plotted and took an oath. It doubtless was similar to the one king Saul pronounced, when he said, "Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged of mine enemies." These dark conspirators pronounced together something like this: "May I be accursed if I eat or drink until Paul is killed!"

Having thus sworn, they went, or sent certain of their number, to the chief priests and to such members of the Sanhedrin as they knew were specially venomous against Paul. Coming to them as secretly as possible, they told them what they were planning. "We have bound ourselves under a great curse that we will eat nothing until we have slain Paul. Now, therefore, ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you tomorrow, as though ye would inquire something more perfectly concerning him; and we, or even he come near, are ready to kill him."

Forty against one is an imposing force. It looked ominous for Paul; then the oath introduced the element of changeless determination. It might have seemed that out of forty resolute daring men one could get near enough the person of Paul to end his life. But there is nothing more foolish than a conspiracy of evil-doers. Sin and evil are short-sighted.

**Unblushing Priests.** It is an amazing fact that the priests and elders, the highest officials of the Jewish religion at that time,

instead of repulsing these evil men and refusing to connive at assassination, approved of the plan and lent their sanction to the proposed murder. This is a terrible commentary on the possibilities of fanaticism.

**Illustration.** When the famous sculptor Canova was about to begin work on his noted statue of Napoleon the First he had before him a splendid block of marble, which had been brought at much expense and trouble from the quarries at Paros. He had examined this block several times and approved it, but just when ready to start at his work his keen eye detected a tiny red line running through one portion of the block. He declared it would not do and rejected it. So small sins destroy usefulness and injure the whole life.

**Loyal Kinship.** As has been said, "evil is not perfect in its cunning." It usually overlooks something. Doubtless on that day of plotting certain of the more than forty men engaged in the scheme told their families and other friends what was brewing. Perhaps their friends noticed these Jews in the act of arming themselves with daggers. Paul's sister lived in Jerusalem, and possibly whisperings of what was going on reached her, and it was she who sent her son with a warning to Paul. It is not unlikely that the young man himself overheard mutterings of the plot. In some way, this youth had learned of his uncle's danger, and although he knew there was risk to himself in doing anything to interfere with the would-be assassins, family affection, if nothing more, determined him to try to save his relative. As Paul was now recognized by the Romans as a privileged man under their protection, there could have been little difficulty in the young man gaining admission into the castle and into Paul's presence. We may be sure that Paul, who reveals in several letters, his affection for his kinspeople, received the youth with gladness, for he had yet to learn



of the plot whose revelation brought great risk to the boy. God uses means, and the Master who had cheered Paul in the prison used a boy to be in part the agent of His servant's safety. The providence is no less real and the agent no less from God, because the means seem commonplace and natural.

**The Plot Defeated.** But Paul knew it was his duty to use the means put into his hands so he called to a centurion, "Bring this young man unto the chief captain: for he hath a certain thing to tell him." The centurion did as Paul commanded, and when the chief captain had heard the message he took the young man "by the hand and went with him aside privately and asked him, 'What is that thou hast to tell me?'"

Then Paul's nephew told his story: "The Jews have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldst bring down Paul tomorrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them: for there lie in wait for him of them more than forty men, which have bound themselves with an oath that they will neither eat nor drink until they have killed him: and now are they ready, looking for a promise from thee." Lysias listened attentively to the end, then said, "See thou tell no man that thou hast showed these things to me." Then he sent the youth away safely.

**Illustration.** John Knox was accustomed to sit at the head of the table with his back to the window. On one evening, without being able to give a reason, he would neither sit in that chair nor permit anyone else to occupy it. That night a bullet was shot in at the window to kill him. It grazed the chair in which he usually sat.

**Prompt Action.** Lysias called a centurion and said, "Make ready two hundred soldiers, and horsemen three score and ten, and spearmen two hundred to go to Caesarea at the third hour of the night." He added, "Provide them beasts that they may set Paul on and bring him safe unto Felix the governor."

Darkness came and the streets were empty. At nine o'clock, the appointed hour, the four hundred and seventy Roman soldier guard stood at the castle doors. Paul, who had been notified of what was to be done for him, appeared and mounted a horse, having, however, a chain on one arm attached to that of a soldier on a horse beside him. We may be certain that he, with his never-failing courtesy, gave Lysias due acknowledgement of his protection. Then came the order to march, and along the streets of Jerusalem went the soldiery. The fact of troops passing in and out of the city was too familiar to all the inhabitants of the city for this pro-

cession to suggest any special significance at this time. Probably the conspirators themselves, if they saw the soldiers pass, were not led to suspect that their plot was known.

Now Paul, who has forty men seeking his life, has more than four hundred protectors. Enemies have conspired; enemies have put on the mask of religion to destroy him, but the Lord exposes their malice. He influences the hearts of men to befriend Paul. Cunning and deceit are met by bringing a base purpose to light. The Lord takes Paul under a powerful escort safely through the midst of his enemies.

Watchful against an ambuscade while near the city, they pushed on thirty-five miles to Antipatris. There they remained until dawn. Then the four hundred soldiers returned to Jerusalem, leaving the seventy cavalymen to convey Paul twenty-five miles further to Caesarea.

The centurion took Paul into the presence of the governor, Felix, delivered the letter of Lysias to him, and departed. When Felix had asked Paul of what province he was and had learned that he was from Cilicia, Felix told him, "I will hear thee when thine accusers are also come." Then he put Paul in charge of a soldier to be kept in a guard room in the Herodian palace, which was now occupied by the procurators.

**Illustration.** A chamois hunter in Switzerland fell many feet into one of the great crevasses of the ice, but without injury. He appeared to be in a hopeless position, as he could not climb out and he would soon freeze if left there. A stream of water was flowing down the crevasse and this he followed, wading, stooping, crawling as best he could. At last he came to a vaulted cavern, from which he could see no outlet. Commending himself to God, he cast himself into the stream. For a few moments he was whirled along through darkness. Then sunlight burst upon him and he was cast up amid the meadows of the valley of Chamouni.

**Practical Truths.** 1. In the greatest need be sure that Christ will afford the greatest comfort. 2. Do your work in the confidence that God will care for everything else. 3. It is the duty of the Christian as well as his privilege to be cheerful. 4. Have some worthy objective point in your plans for future work. 5. The belief that God has a plan for every life and that that plan will be carried out is a source of unfailing strength. 6. Servants of the Lord will find a way to do His will. 7. God sometimes uses a very humble instrument. His hand makes sacred the humblest undertaking.

"But a time came when my spirit  
Grew weary of its place  
And I cried 'Come back, my Conscience,  
For I long to see thy face!'  
But Conscience cried 'I cannot;  
Remorse sits in my place.'"

—Paul L. Dunbar.

DE. C. D. WILSON.

And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias, the chief



to keep Paul, and to let him have

shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter. And he commanded a



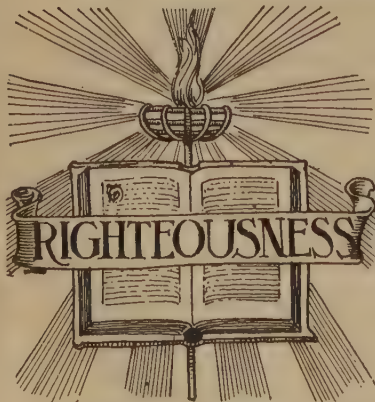
and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him. And after certain days, when Felix came with his



Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and



concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of



and



to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 24:1-27.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Keep us from sin. May we so live that the proclamation of truth may have no terrors for us. May we so walk in righteousness and temperance that the judgment to come may be looked forward to in hope and trust. In the name of Christ, Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 58-60. Place, Caesarea. Persons, Paul, Felix, Ananias, Tertullus, priests, members of the Sanhedrin and Drusilla.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Guilty Conscience. Afraid, Job 15:21. Made penitent by, Psa. 51:1-14. Grieved, Psa. 73:21. Makes wicked flee, Prov. 28:1. Condemns, Matt. 27:3-5. Makes superstitious, Mark 6:14. Conviets, John 8:9. Pricks the heart, Acts 2:37. Seared, lies, 1 Tim. 4:2. Defiled, Tit. 1:15. Remedy for, Heb. 9:14. Apprehensive of judgment, Heb. 10:26.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The high priest and his companions stooped to anything to effect their purpose. 2. Tertullus, an insincere orator, revealed the weakness of his case by flattery of

### A RINGLEADER OF THE NAZARENES.

**Paul's Accusers Arrive.** It must have been with deep chagrin that the high-priest Ananias and other priests and members of the Sanhedrin discovered that their proposed victim had been taken from their jurisdiction, and that they themselves would be compelled to make a long journey to Caesarea in obedience to the requisition from Felix in order to accuse Paul. This being a case to be tried before the Roman procurator, Ananias and his friends engaged the services of a professional lawyer, Tertullus, doubtless a well-known orator and of Italian origin, living in Jerusalem.

**The Proceedings.** The court was constituted in the regular manner with Felix presiding. Formal accusations were made; the prosecuting lawyer arraigned the prisoner, and the Jews swore to the charges. Tertullus began by flattering the judge. Felix had suppressed a sufficient number of rebellions to give color to the fulsome statement of the orator: "Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providences, we accept it always and in all places; most excellent Felix, with all thankfulness." In plausible terms and oratorical manner he set forth that Paul was first a "pestilent fellow," and a mover of insurrections among all the Jews throughout the world; second, that he was a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes;" third, that he had profaned the temple. He declared that the Jews would have judged him according to their law, but Lysias had violently taken Paul out of their hands, and ordered his accusers to come before Felix. Tertullus stated that Felix

"But a time came when my spirit

Grew weary of its pace,  
And I cried 'Come back, my Conscience,  
For I long to see thy face!'  
But Conscience cried, 'I cannot;  
Remorse sits in my place.'"

—Paul L. Dunbar.

### ITS RELATIONS.

the judge: a resort of the weak and servile. 3. Tertullus dealt in assertions rather than proof. 4. Paul replied logically to the charges and stated the true case. 5. Again, Paul's citizenship announced in the letter of Lysias saved the Apostle, for Felix, anxious to please the Jews, would have surrendered him if he had dared. 6. Although Paul was always a conscientious man he had not "a conscience void of offense" until after his conversion. 7. Unawed by rank and power, Paul was not afraid to condemn wickedness in high places. He virtually condemned his own judge. 8. Felix shows his ignorance of the Christian ideal by believing that Paul would pay him a bribe for liberty.

would find the truth of these accusations if he would examine Paul.

**Illustration.** Alexander the Great was wounded by an arrow and the hurt was delayed in healing, whereupon he said to his flatterers, "You say I am the son of Jupiter, but this wound proves me a feeble man."

**Paul's Speech.** When the prosecutor had stated his case and the Jews had given their testimony, the governor beckoned to Paul that he might defend himself. Felix had now been procurator for six or seven years, and in this length of time might be supposed to be fairly familiar with Jewish matters. Paul does not approve the man, but he suggests that his length of service, promised knowledge of the conditions in that land. "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself." He appealed to Felix that he could readily ascertain it was not more than twelve days since he had gone up to Jerusalem. That was a brief space in which to commit all the offenses with which they had charged him. He had not disputed with any man in the temple; had not stirred up a crowd, nor had he disputed in the synagogues or anywhere in the city. He challenged his adversaries to prove the contrary. He admitted that he had served God "after the Way." He did not call himself a Nazarene, nor a Christian, but he used the expression then common among Christians, "the Way," explaining that while serving God in this manner, he believed "all things which are written in the law and in the prophets," having "hope toward God, which they themselves also al-

low, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead both of the just and unjust."

In all this, Paul asserted that he strove "to have a good conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men." He claimed that his motive in this visit to Jerusalem after many years' absence, was to bring alms and offerings, as was the common custom of the Jews who were scattered throughout the world. He had gone to the temple, where he had observed the lawful requirements for purification. He said that his accusers now before Felix could truthfully say nothing more than that he had before the council asserted his faith in the resurrection.

Paul's defense is a fair instance of noble sincerity. He confined himself to the simple facts, and it is evident from results at this time, and later, that Felix was impressed by the character of the Apostle and by the genuine ring of his words.

In defending the truth, or ourselves, or any righteous cause, there is no better way than to make use of the simple truth, fully realized and earnestly expressed. The truth has a power of its own.

**The Outcome.** Felix now saw clearly that the issue between the Jews and Paul was a matter of difference of faith, and not one of which the Roman law could take cognizance. Felix knew something of Christianity, even more than the Jews and their lawyer had been aware. The first Gentile converts had been among the soldiers in Caesarea and it is probable that Felix learned of Christianity through them. He was, however, unwilling to displease the Jews by setting Paul at liberty, and he announced that he would postpone the case until Lysias could be heard from in person. He ordered a centurion to take Paul in charge and to give him every indulgence, also to permit his friends to visit him freely. Luke and Aristarchus, and no doubt the family of Philip, and Cornelius, often cheered Paul by their companionship.

**Felix and Drusilla.** Of Felix, Tacitus says, "He exercised the authority of a king with the disposition of a slave in all cruelty and lust." His wife Drusilla, said to be the most beautiful woman in the world, was a Jewess, and had been married to Azizus. Felix, in order to win her, sent Simon Magus, the notorious sorcerer, to use all his wiles to persuade her to leave her husband and marry him. The weak woman forsook her husband, who was an honorable man and a king, and married the unprincipled Felix.

**Paul's Reasoning.** Drusilla had heard much of the famous Paul of whom multi-

tudes were talking. It was to please her that Felix requested Paul to come before them and to tell of his beliefs. We may be sure that Paul testified, as his custom was, to the revelations of Christ vouchsafed to him personally. And then, seeing before him a man and a woman who had violated the law of God and man, he applied the truth of Christ in its bearing upon their own misconduct. "And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come," Felix trembled and answered, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee."

Felix may have thought he would find in the Gospel something to quiet his fears, but it only alarmed his conscience. The sinner never can find it otherwise. Wrong must be condemned, and the sinner must be awakened. If Felix had been willing to repent and give up his sin, he could then have enjoyed peace, forgiveness, and reconciliation. To break with his past, to cease to sin, and to begin over again was what Felix was not ready to do. Only that alone could have brought relief to his troubled conscience. He put aside his opportunity. He knew what he ought to do, that he should at once turn from sin. His really "convenient season" was that hour. Then his conscience was awakened; then God was calling. The better time never came for him, because he was unwilling to repent.

**Felix's Base Purpose.** Again and again Felix invited Paul to tell him more of Christianity. The subject seems to have fascinated him, yet he was never ready to do more than treat it as a matter of curious inquiry. In addition to what was probably a real intellectual interest in what Paul had to say and a recognition of the greatness of Paul's personality, there was mixed in Felix's treatment of Paul a base desire to get him to pay a bribe for his liberty. Paul's statement that he had brought offerings from far countries up to Jerusalem probably led him to suppose that he still had money. Felix also opened the way for Paul to see his friends and to get help from them. He doubtless hoped Paul would weary of prison and that he and his friends would buy his liberty. For two years Paul was detained in the guard room at Caesarea. In the year 59 A. D. there were murderous encounters in Caesarea between Jews and Syrian Greeks. Many Jews were slain. The accusation was made before the emperor that Felix had permitted the slaughter of the Jews and he was recalled to answer this charge. At the point of his departure in order to make peace with the Jews he left Paul in his prison.

**Practical Truths.** 1. Distrust the motive of flatterers. 2. Emulate the serenity, fortitude and sincerity of Paul. 3. Rely on Divine wisdom in difficulties. 4. Insincere speech, however ornate, produces no vital and lasting effect. 5. Live in all respects according to the Word of God and you will have nothing to fear.

DR. C. D. WILSON.

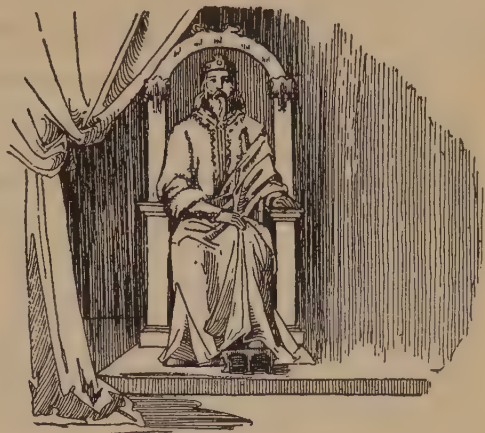


# PAUL BEFORE AGRIPPA.

And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of



and  
soberness.  
For the



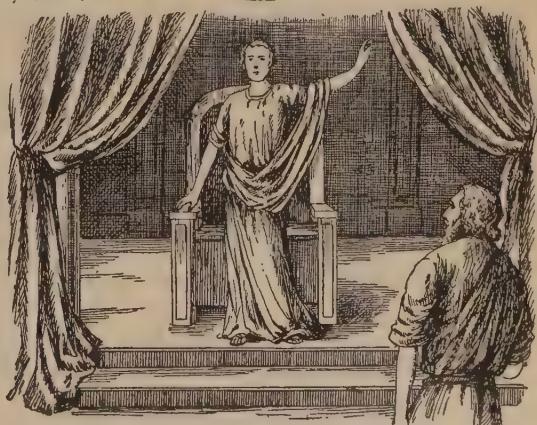
knoweth of  
these things,  
before whom  
also I speak  
freely: for I  
am persuaded  
that none of  
these things  
are hidden from  
him; for this  
thing was not  
done in a  
corner. King  
Agrippa,  
believest  
thou the



I know that thou  
believest. Then  
Agrippa said unto  
Paul, Almost thou  
persuadest me to be  
a Christian. And  
Paul said, I would  
to God, that not only  
thou, but also all  
that hear me this  
day, were both  
almost, and alto-  
gether such as I  
am, except these  
bonds. And  
when he had thus  
spoken, the king



and  
the



and Bernice, and they that sat with them: And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 25 AND 26.

**Prayer:** Our Father, May our faith never be shaken by the unbelief of others. May the realities that are eternal, though unseen, be the inspiration of our lives. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"Since with firm and pure affection,  
Thou on God hast set thy love,  
With the wings of His protection  
He shall shield thee from above."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** A. D. 60. Place, Caesarea. Persons, Festus, Agrippa and Bernice, priests and elders, military and citizens.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Worldly Wisdom. Disastrously obtained, Gen. 3:6. As nothing before God, Job 4:18. Craftiness a means of destruction, Job 5:13. God respects not, Job 37:24. Counsel against, Prov. 3:7. Joy of foolish, Prov. 15:21. Deceptive, Prov. 16:25. Woe unto, Isa. 5:21. Perishable, Isa. 29:14. Not to be trusted in, Isa. 47:10. Inferior to animal instinct, Jer. 8:7. To be sacrificed, Matt. 6:23. Builds on sand, Matt. 7:26, 27. Real wisdom hidden from worldly, Matt. 11:25. Leads to idolatry, Rom. 1:21. Cross mightier than, 1 Cor. 1:17, 26. Puffeth up, 1 Cor. 8:1. Beware of, Col. 2:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. That Paul preferred trial in pagan Rome to trial in the Holy City has a sad significance. 2. The Roman custom of refusing to deliver one to death before he had met accusers and had opportunity to defend himself is worthy of honor. 3. Paul's defense led up to the Messiah in whom Agrippa might be supposed to believe if he accepted the Old Testament Scriptures. 4. To the pagan Festus Paul's address was based on unrealities; he could not comprehend Paul's point of view. 5. Paul had a wonderful opportunity to preach Christ, and the point was gained also that those in authority were convinced of his innocence as to capital matters. 6. Out of the maze of accusation, persecution and trial came at last the opportunity to preach in Rome.

### IN THE PRESENCE OF POMP AND POWER.

A new procurator, Festus, had come to Caesarea. On his first visit to Jerusalem the foes of Paul gathered about the governor and asked that the prisoner be sent again to the Holy City. Festus replied that this could not be, but that his accusers should appear at Caesarea. At the hearing there the case against Paul broke down, and Paul declared to Festus that he would appeal to Caesar.

**Appeal to Caesar.** Paul was perfectly aware that to go to Jerusalem would mean the gathering of a mob; attempts on his life, and delays; and that a fair trial before the Sanhedrin was an impossibility. Caesarea with military protection, was better than Jerusalem. Paul, therefore, replied, "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged; to the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar." There was but one thing for Festus to do. The appeal of a citizen to Caesar could not be refused, so Festus, after conferring with his own associates as to technicalities, answered, "Hast thou appealed unto Caesar? unto Caesar shalt thou go."

**Agrippa.** Herod Agrippa II, the son of Herod Agrippa I, in A. D. 52 was appointed by the Emperor Claudius to the tetrarchies formerly held by Philip and Lysanias with the title of "king." Bernice was his sister. Several cities of Galilee and Peraea were

added to his kingdom by Nero in A. D. 55. A few days after Paul's hearing before Festus, Agrippa and his sister visited Caesarea in compliment to the new procurator, as diplomacy dictated. Paul was now awaiting a ship to take him to Rome. Festus was pondering a letter to be sent to the Emperor explaining the case of his prisoner and why he was being sent to Rome. Agrippa's arrival was, therefore, opportune. Being of Jewish stock and familiar with the religious questions and customs of the Jews, he was the very man to assist Festus, in his quandary. After the festivities in honor of the king and his sister were over, Festus laid Paul's case before Agrippa, explaining the situation in detail, telling him that the prisoner had been arraigned on "certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive," and when "Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar."

**Agrippa Hears Paul.** It is entirely probable that Agrippa knew something of the Christians and of Paul, and that he already was anxious to hear what a leader of the new religion had to say. His reply, "I would also hear the man myself," can be translated, "I was wishing to hear the man myself." At once Festus promised him the opportunity. "Tomorrow," said he, "thou shalt hear him."

Paul's appearance before Festus and Agrippa was in no sense a new trial. Under no circumstances could Agrippa be his judge,



and Paul was merely waiting to be sent to Rome. This was merely an occasion when Paul was given an opportunity to speak and the others to hear. It was, in fact, made a gala occasion. The chief "place of hearing" was made ready. Agrippa and his sister arrived with great pomp. The chief military personages and the principal citizens of the city were invited. Paul was brought in with a chain on his arm attaching him to a soldier.

**Illustration.** When Sinbad the sailor voyaged into the Indian Ocean his ship came within the influence of a magnetic rock. This attracted his vessel nearer and nearer, while silently the metal bolts were drawn from the ship's side, one by one, until the timbers fell apart and Sinbad was cast into the sea. Such is often the effect of worldliness on the moral nature.

Festus made a public explanation of the purpose of the assemblage. He told Agrippa and all present that Paul was accused by the Jews of being worthy of death, but that he had found nothing to make him think he had forfeited his life. He explained that Paul had appealed unto Caesar, and that he had determined to send him to the Emperor. Of Paul he says, "I have no certain thing to write unto my lord, wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, King Agrippa, that, after examination had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him."

As Agrippa was the guest of honor and had been appealed to in order to aid Festus in explaining the case to the Emperor, it was he who now addressed the prisoner, on whom many curious eyes were fixed, as he said, "Thou art permitted to speak for thyself."

**Agrippa Convicted.** Then the Apostle who had been Divinely called to "bear the name of Jesus before Gentiles and before kings," gave forth his most remarkable defense of Christianity. He addressed Agrippa as one conversant with the customs and questions of the Jews. He defended himself as a good Jew, and proclaimed that he had been a persecutor of Christianity. With glowing emotion he narrated the story of his conversion and of his missionary work, in which he had called Jews and Gentiles to repentance. Taking his stand on Moses and the prophets, he declared that he preached the Messiah whom they had foretold.

**Illustration.** Among the ruins of Pompeii was found the body of a woman who evidently had perished while in the act of gathering up her jewelry before trying to make her escape. Thinking that she could save both her possessions and her

life, she had risked the latter for the sake of the former and had lost both. Such is the attitude of thoroughly worldly people.

While much of this story was familiar to Agrippa, it was strange to Festus to hear of visions and revelations and prophecies and the resurrection. Listening intently, but carried away by amazement, Festus interrupted with a loud voice, crying, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." But Paul, thus checked in his lofty speech, was unruffled, and replied calmly, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things before whom I also speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." Then addressing Agrippa directly, he earnestly asked, "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." Agrippa replied, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Paul declared nobly and earnestly, "I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

Paul had borne his testimony. Those who had come out of curiosity had been gratified by a remarkable scene. All could realize that this man was no criminal, but a man of great ability and lofty character. Festus and Agrippa had found out all that was necessary to write to the Emperor. Agrippa rose from his seat a sign that the assembly might disperse. In private conference the procurator and king agreed. "This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds," and Agrippa said, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar."

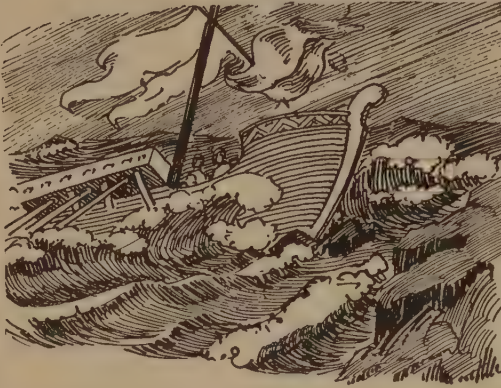
**Illustration.** When Aristides, acting as judge, was asked by the poet Simonides, who had a case before him, to stretch a point in his favor he replied, "As you would not be a good poet if your lines ran contrary to the rules of your art, so neither should I be a good judge or an honest man if I decided aught in opposition to law and justice."

**Practical Truths.** 1. Lange says the Christian has a right to appeal "from the sentence of the wicked to the judgment of the righteous; from the passions of the moment to the justice of the future; from the opinions of the world to the testimony of conscience; and from the tribunal of man to the judgment seat of God." 2. Remember that knowledge is nothing without faith. 3. Keep before you that it is true sanity to accept Christ. 4. Speak the words of soberness and truth and in the end others will realize their value. 5. Aim to be so true that you can sincerely say you wish others were in the same position as yourself. The test of every Christian is his own experience.

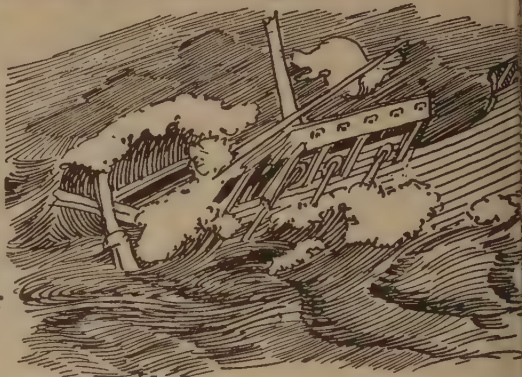
DR. C. D. WILSON.



And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship



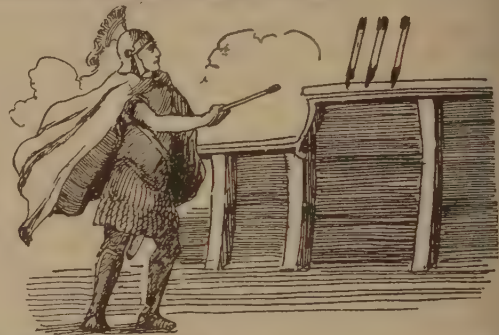
and the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was



with the violence of the waves. And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the



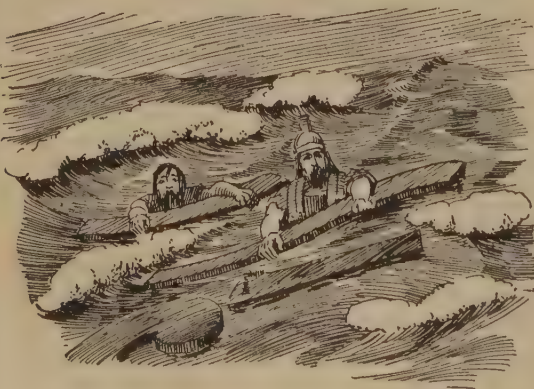
lest any of them should swim out and escape But the



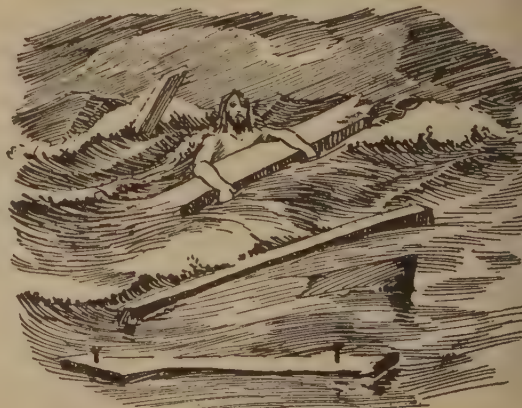
willing to save Paul kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could



should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: And the rest, some on



and some on broken



and so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 27; 28:1-6.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Thou hast created sea and land and Thou reignest over both. Thou rulest over the tempests on the sea and canst keep Thy children when the elements rage. Likewise in the storms on the sea of life Thou dost watch over us. We praise Thee for Thy loving care, which is everywhere over Thy children. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"Be still, my soul; thy God doth undertake  
To guide the future as He has the past.  
Thy hope, thy confidence let nothing shake;  
All now mysterious shall be bright at last.  
Be still, my soul; the waves and winds shall know  
His voice who ruled them while He dwelt below."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 60. Place, ship-board in the Mediterranean sea and island of Malta. **Persons,** Paul, Luke, Aristarchus, centurion Julius, soldiers, sailors.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Sea and Ships. Sea, creation of God, Gen. 1:9, 10. Limits of, established by God, Psa. 1:9. Calmed by Jesus, Matt. 8:24, 26. Dead given up by, at resurrection, Rev. 20:13. Symbolical, in Daniel's vision, Dan. 7:2, 3. In John's vision, Rev. 4:6. Travelers on, see wonders of God, Psa. 107:23-30. Ship used by Jesus to teach from, Matt. 13:2. For passage, Mark 5:21. Wreck of, used as figure of spiritual disaster, 1 Tim. 1:19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Paul was blessed

on his journey by two congenial friends. 2. The native kindness of the human heart is finely illustrated in the centurion's treatment of Paul at Sidon. 3. The narrative by its accuracy in naval matters proves that it was written by an eye-witness. 4. Paul's far-sighted counsel was rejected probably on the principle that he was not a seaman. 5. The mild south wind proved a lure to peril. 6. In the crisis Paul was able to inspire courage. 7. The vision granted to Paul became a source of strength to the others. 8. Paul prayed that all his companions might be saved from the sea. 9. His alertness as well as his spiritual greatness serves in time of need. 10. Paul reflected the grace, spirit and character of his Master.

### A CHARMED LIFE.

A general belief among the Indians who encountered George Washington in border warfare was that he was protected by a spell, since their best warriors had sent arrows and bullets in vain at his body. It is better to believe that he was protected by Providence. The soldiers of Napoleon the First were convinced that he also bore a charmed life; but Napoleon deemed himself a child of destiny. When Julius Caesar was in an open boat on the sea during a storm, and the oarsmen were terrified, he said, "Have courage. You carry Caesar." He felt in himself that he had work yet to do in the world, and this confidence rendered him entirely fearless.

**Paul's Confidence.** One of the most important facts about life is the reality of the unseen world. Until we are vividly aware of its ever-present existence we have learned but little. While Paul was yet in the Tower of Antonia in Jerusalem, he had a vision of Christ, and was told by the Master that he must bear witness to Him in Rome also. Mobs might rage and enemies plot, but they could not destroy this man. No matter what storms might arise or ships sink, He, who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand, would care for the life of this man and bring him to his destination.

**Off for Rome.** After Festus decided to send Paul to Caesar there was some necessary delay before a ship could be found to carry him. It is difficult for us of these modern days to understand the limited fa-

cilities in ancient times for transportation on the seas. With our great steamers crossing the broad oceans, with relatively few mishaps to voyagers, we are inclined to underrate the perils on what seems to us so small a body of water as the Mediterranean. Yet the Mediterranean was full of perils to the crafts of ancient times and for a considerable part of the year sailors did not venture upon its waters.

The Roman government had its warships, but it neither owned nor controlled others, and it did not employ its navy, as a general rule, to carry prisoners from remote parts of the empire to its capital city. Commercial ships, however, carrying grain and other products, frequently passed from port to port during the season of navigation, and these commonly carried passengers. A line of boats conveyed wheat from Alexandria to Italy, and there was also the coasting trade.

Festus detailed a centurion named Julius, of the Augustan cohort, to take charge of Paul and other prisoners on the way to Rome. Julius was accompanied by certain of his soldiers. With Paul went Luke and a friend and co-worker, Aristarchus. All went on board of coasting boat of Adramyttium, in Asia Minor, whose ports were various places on the Asiatic coast. It was now late in August and the navigation season was drawing toward its close. The first day's voyage was favorable, and after a journey of somewhat over sixty miles along the coast, they came next day to Sidon, where Julius

gave Paul leave to go ashore to see his friends "and refresh himself." This phrase of Luke, a physician, suggests that Paul was ill, and the ministration of friends in their homes was, therefore, most welcome.

Putting to sea again, they found it advisable to sail under Cyprus "because the winds were contrary." Passing through the seas off Cilicia and Pamphylia, they came to Myra, a city of Lycia. There Julius found an Alexandrian wheat ship bound for Italy, but driven out of its course. On so large a vessel there was abundance of room for Julius, his soldiers, and his prisoners, and the transfer was made. For two months it seemed to every eye but that of faith that Paul was doomed. Never did the character of a great Christian shine out more grandly than did Paul's during that time. In each experience of his there are fresh revelations of the wonders of providence and the splendor and strength of the human soul. Under delays, accidents; in darkness, storm and wreck we see a soul serene, hopeful, sympathetic and wise. Setting forth for Cnidus, one hundred and thirty miles away, which in good weather could have been reached in one day, required many days' slow sailing. On arrival the winds would not permit them to enter the harbor. From here their direct course would have been for Cythera, but the northwest wind drove them southward. Doubling Salmone, the eastern point of Crete, they sailed under the lee of the island and came with difficulty to the fine harbor called Fair Havens, near the city of Lasea.

**Paul Advising Seamen.** In this harbor for a long time they remained wind-bound. The day of Atonement was past, which indicates that it was now late in September and the seas were increasingly dangerous. Paul's personality had already made a deep impression upon Julius and all on board the ship. In times past he had experienced perils of the sea, and he now entered into the discussion as to what they should do. They were debating as to whether they should winter where they were, though the haven was not commodious, or should put to sea and try to reach Phenice, thirty-four miles further east, where harborage was better.

Paul advised strongly against this move, saying, "Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and the ship, but also of our lives. The centurion, who seems to have had the deciding vote, was influenced in a matter like this more by what the officers said than by Paul's words, and he voted to set forth.

**Illustration.** A man journeying along the coast of Scotland chose a road by the sands as seeming most pleasant. It lay between the beach and the cliffs and was safe only at low tide. Delighted with the view of the waters and the precipices, he sauntered on. Some one on the heights hailed him, saying that the tides were rising and that his only safety would be to ascend the cliffs, as that was the only place that would admit of his climbing. The stranger gave no heed to this counsel but passed on. Presently he noted that the waters had risen on the road in front of him. He turned hastily only to see that the beach was covered behind him. A glance revealed that the precipice at that point was too steep for him to climb. He sought refuge on a projecting rock, but soon the waters rose round him and he perished.

The company on shipboard awaited favorable signs. At last a soft south wind began to blow, and the officers taking this as a good omen, lifted their anchor, let out their mainsail, and keeping close to shore, passed Cape Matala, five miles from Fair Havens. All seemed to be going well, but one mind on board that ship had discerned that behind the gentle wooing of that south wind lurked danger.

**Euroclydon.** In a moment, as the ship sped onward there burst down upon it a tempest smiting it with terrific force. This east-northeast wind, coming from the island of Crete, is described as "typhoon-like," and is called "Euroclydon." Today such gales in the Levant are often accompanied by terrific squalls from the mountains. The sailors at once recognized their enemy by its name, and the dread word "Euroclydon!" rang from their lips. Nothing could be done in that raging storm but let the ship drive before the gale. No sailors on the wide seas could have furled that sail. On and on through the wild waters the ship drove, reeling and rocking as if she would break into pieces. For twenty-three miles, she was whirled madly onward. Happily, after that awful run she came under the lee of a small island called Claudia, where, with difficulty, the boat they had been towing was pulled upon the deck, thus providing a possible means of escape in case the ship should be wrecked. Fearful that she would fall asunder, the sailors lowered cables under the prow, and then drawing them toward the middle of the ship, they fastened them as tight as they could. Fearing now that they would be driven upon the quicksands on the Libyan coast, "she lay to under a storm-sail with her starboard side to the wind." (Smith.)

And now, headed away from the African coast, they drifted slightly to north of west at the rate of about a mile and a half a day.



The storm continued all night. The ship was leaking and when day came they began to cast overboard whatever could be spared. On the third day, as the leaks grew larger, and the pumps failed to keep out the waters, the passengers and sailors together heaved overboard the main mast. There was nothing more that men could do and they rushed into the black heart of the tempest: Neither sun nor stars were visible. All hope was abandoned. Wet, cold, without fire to prepare food, their courage had oozed away. But there was one soul that was undismayed. Gathering about him the whole company, Paul exhorted them to be of good cheer. Paul's account of visions had seemed absurd to Festus when he sat listening comfortably to his words at Caesarea, but a man with encouraging words from Heaven did not seem insane to these who now listened. They were hungry for any word of hope. "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me," Paul was heard saying, "and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, 'Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar; and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer; for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.'"

We may be sure that these words awakened new hope in many hearts, and that the conviction of Paul nerved all to renewed efforts. But that hope was to be further tried, as the tempest continued and the ship was drifting in the sea of Adria. On the fourteenth night after their leaving Clauda, the sailors, warned probably by breakers, sang out that they were drawing near land. They took the soundings, and found twenty fathoms. They sounded again, and found fifteen fathoms. Then, fearful of being cast upon a rocky shore, they let go four anchors from the stern and "wished for the day."

**Paul Averts a Peril.** When day dawned and the shore could be seen, the sailors plotted to lower the boat under pretense of casting more anchors, this time from the foreship, and pull for land, leaving the others to their fate. Paul, ever watchful for others, discerned their intent, and he said to Julius, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Julius promptly ordered his sol-

diers to cut the ropes of the boat with their swords and set it adrift.

**Illustration.** When Mahomet was once encamped with his followers he heard one of them say, "I will loose my camel and commit it to 'God.'" Mahomet called to him, "Tie thy camel and commit it to God."

The light was increasing. All would need strength and courage for what was before them. Paul gathered the two hundred and seventy-six men about him and said, "This day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is your health; for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you." Then he took bread, and having given thanks to God before them all, he began to eat. Taking hope from his words, all began to eat and presently a spirit of cheer pervaded the whole company.

To lighten the ship and so to enable it to run closer to shore, they cast their cargo of wheat into the sea. They were able by this time to see more clearly and a bay was discovered with a beach. After consultation they decided to cut away the anchors, to let down the rudders, hoist the foresail, and make for the beach. The spot they had mistaken for a creek was at the mouth of a little strait separating an islet from the larger island, "a place where two seas met." The ship was run aground and stuck fast, when the open sea, rushing in through the channel, broke the hinder part of the vessel to pieces; but the foreship remained unmoved.

The soldiers began to fear that their captives might leap into the sea, swim to shore and escape, therefore, according to Roman custom, they decided to kill them. But Julius, upon whom Paul had made a deep impression, to save him ordered the soldiers to desist from their purpose, and at his command such as could swim jumped into the sea and got ashore, while the others floated planks, or whatever movable things they could find, and so all escaped safe to land.

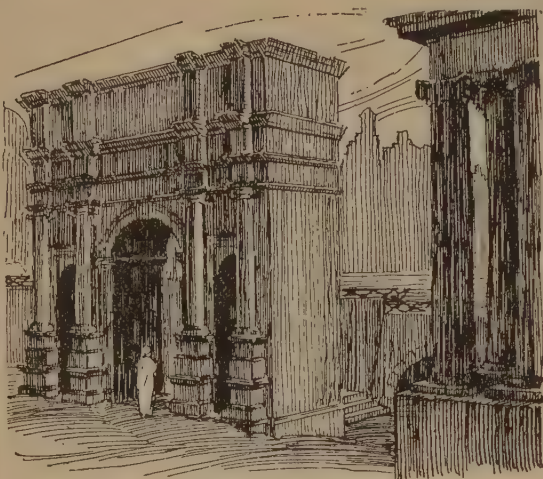
**Illustration.** When Anaxarchus was being crushed to death to make sport for his tormentors, he cried out, "Break the body of Anaxarchus, but his mind you can never break."

**Practical Truths.** 1. Christian graces win the admiration and respect of both friend and foe. 2. Loyal following of Christ will prepare you to meet every crisis of life. 3. Do not despise good counsel. 4. In times of shipwreck the Christian takes command. 5. We should hope in the darkest hours. 6. God is sovereign.

DR. C. D. WILSON.



And when we came to



the  
cen-  
turion  
delivered  
the



to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a



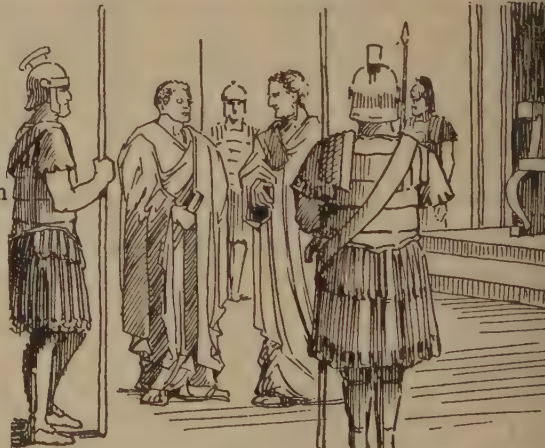
that kept  
him.  
And it  
came to  
pass, that  
after three  
days Paul  
called  
the chief  
of the



together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered



from  
Jerusalem  
into the  
hands  
of the



Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.

ACTS XXVIII: 16-20.



## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS ACTS 28:7-31.

**Prayer:** Our Father, Great and gracious are the gifts which Thy Gospel brings unto barbarians and civilized men alike. We thank Thee that the Spirit of Christ came as a benediction unto the people of Malta and unto the great city of Rome, and that it carries blessings everywhere. In the name of Christ, Amen.

"My cage confines me round,  
Abroad I cannot fly;  
But though my wing is closely bound,  
My heart's at liberty.  
My prison walls cannot control  
The flight, the freedom of the soul.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 62-64. Places, Malta, Puteoli, Rome. **Persons,** Paul, centurion Julius, natives of Malta, Publius, soldiers, Christians and Jews in Italy.

**Scripture Setting:** Study of Contentment. Appreciation of possessions, Psa. 16:6. Rest in the Lord, Psa. 37:7. In one's self, Prov. 14:14. A merry heart, Prov. 15:13, 15, 30. Little with righteousness, Prov. 16:8. Quietness and strife, Prov. 17:1. A medium condition, Prov. 30:8. In labor, Eccl. 2:24. Sight and desire, Eccl. 6:9. With wages, Luke 3:14. With lot assigned of God, 1 Cor. 7:17. Without envy, Gal. 5:26. In whatever state, Philip. 4:11. Godliness with, 1 Tim. 6:6. Based on promise of God, Heb. 13:5.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Good qualities are found among all races. 2. Superstition by its very nature leads from one extreme to another. 3. Paul the Christian gains unsought ascendancy over Publius, Julius and all the pagans. 4. Paul was safe from harm and able to minister to others. 5. Christian fellowship was added to the assurance that came to Paul through the fulfillment of the promise that he would come safe to land. 6. Paul rightly explains to the Jews in Rome the facts in regard to himself. 7. In coming to cosmopolitan Rome Paul brought Christianity to the world. 8. Although chained to a soldier, the Apostle was a free man in Christ Jesus.

### THE DREAM OF PAUL'S LIFE COMES TRUE.

Paul long before had said, "I must see Rome also, for Jesus had promised that he should bear witness to Him in that city. During the many weeks of stormy voyage on the Mediterranean, the vision of this promise fulfilled had been his source of strength and joy. He had escaped many perils, and was now well on his way.

**Paul Makes Himself Useful.** All the sailors and passengers of the Alexandrian wheat vessel had escaped from the wreck to the shore. Certain of the people of the thinly populated island noted as the day dawned, the shipwreck, and saw the men struggling to land. The news spread quickly, and many thronged the shore to assist the wet, shivering, hungry men. The inhabitants of this island of Malta, descended from Phoenicians, did not speak Greek, hence they are classed under the general name "barbarians." They made a fire, spoke words of welcome and in every way showed uncommon kindness.

Paul joined the others in gathering brushwood. He had laid a bundle of sticks on the fire when a viper, revived by the heat, crept out from the pile and fastened on his hand. The superstitious natives, seeing this, said to one another that "he must be a murderer who, having escaped the sea, was pursued by justice on land." But Paul shook the viper into the fire and suffered no bad effects. When they saw that Paul was not harmed, they said among themselves that he must be a god.

**A Friendly Refuge.** The scene of the wreck proved to be not far from the property of the Roman who was in charge of the

island, a man named Publius. Finding that a centurion and some soldiers were in the party he invited them, with Paul and his friends, to his home and provided much-needed hospitality for three days. The father of Publius was seriously ill, and when Paul learned of this, he asked permission to visit him. Entering his room, Paul prayed with him, and then, laying his hands upon him, healed him. The fame of this miracle quickly spread abroad, and the native people brought their sick friends to Paul, who cured them. These wonderful deeds caused the people to look upon Paul as a blessed benefactor, and in gratitude they heaped upon him and his friends many honors. Upon their departure the people supplied abundantly such things they most needed.

**Illustration.** Pisistratus, the Athenian, was always accompanied by a servant with a bag of money, from which was supplied the wants of the sick, the poor, and the unfortunate. So Paul was always ready to serve and help.

There were yet three months before the season of navigation would open. During that period Paul must have made the Gospel known to many of the people. About the beginning of February another Alexandrian ship, the "Castor and Pollux," or the "Twin Brothers," which had wintered in the harbor, made ready to sail. Julius, his soldiers and prisoners engaged passage and bidding their friends on the island farewell they sailed for Syracuse. There they remained three days, then again setting sail they tacked in a circuit on account of the direction of the wind, and came to Rhegium where they stayed a day waiting for a south wind

to spring up. On the second day afterward they came to Puteoli.

**In Italy.** Escaped from many perils, Paul and his company at last set foot on Italian soil. At Puteoli they were rejoiced to find Christian brethren, who gave them warm welcome and urged them to partake of their hospitality. Rested and refreshed in body and spirit, the company again set forth for the famous city now one hundred and forty miles away. Word had reached the Christians in Rome that the great Apostle was coming and a devoted company from the city came some forty miles to meet him and his companions. With what great joy Paul must have greeted these brethren at the market of Appius. Three miles further on they met a second group of Christians at the Three Taverns. At these manifestations of sympathy and love, Paul thanked God and was filled with new courage.

**Julius Delivers His Prisoner.** At last the Eternal City itself, the capital of the world, is in sight; the great center of power and wickedness, which Paul has so yearned to capture for Christ. His heart leaped within him. Christ had fulfilled the promise given to Paul in the castle in Paul's far away country, and given again in the midst of a raging storm on the sea. With what thrilling emotions Paul must have gazed! blended as was his presence there with the Divine intention, promise and protection. Many a conqueror had come to those gates to be received in triumph, but no man ever had entered that city before whose coming was the fulfillment of the direct promise of Christ.

It was in March, 61 A. D., in the seventh year of Nero, that Julius delivered Paul into the charge of that body of Praetorian Guards whose duty it was to watch over the person of the emperor. The captain of the guard was then the celebrated Burrus, an honest and upright man. Doubtless on account of a favorable report from Julius in regard to Paul, he granted him special favors. Though remaining coupled by a chain to a soldier, Paul was permitted to hire a house, in the vicinity of the quarters of the Guards, and to receive his friends, write letters and enjoy many privileges.

**Conference with Jews.** With his heart always longing for the conversion of his own race and recognizing that the command was to preach to Jew and Gentile; with a natural desire also to be understood by his own people; Paul sent an invitation to the chief Jews at Rome to visit him. When these men,

three days after Paul's arrival, came to him, he addressed them as "brethren," and explained to them how he had come into his present position. He assured them he had done nothing against his race nor its customs. He declared that though he had appealed to Caesar, he had no intention of making an accusation before the emperor against his nation. They, on their part, stated that they had not received letters from Judea about Paul, nor had any of the Jews who had come to Rome reported to them any harm concerning him. They said that they would be glad to have Paul give them his thoughts about Christianity, which they knew was everywhere spoken against.

**Preaching to the Jews.** On an appointed day a large number of Jews went to Paul's lodgings and he spent the hours from morning until evening proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah, the hope of Israel, the One for whom they all looked and prayed. Some were convinced, while others strongly disagreed. Toward the end of the conference there must have been some violent dissent for at the conclusion Paul applied to them a passage of Isaiah, declaring that their hearts were gross, their ears dull and their eyes closed. As a farewell word he declared, "Be it known, therefore, unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles and that they will hear it."

The Jews in Rome had had their opportunity and had lost it. Henceforth Paul addressed himself to the Gentiles. For two years Paul lived in his hired lodging a prisoner, but one who enjoyed many privileges. Timothy was much with him, as were also Luke and Aristarchus. The church at Philippi sent him contributions. In that prison Paul wrote some of his great Epistles and thus reached a wider circle than he could have done with his spoken words. Many visited him, to whom he spoke and they were converted. He even reached some who were of the household of Caesar.

With cheerful and unbroken spirit Paul bore his confinement and made his prison a center of Gospel light and salvation unto many. At the end of two years he was set free. He afterward returned to Rome and went on to Macedonia. He spent a winter at Nicopolis and visited Dalmatia. He was apprehended in Asia and brought again to Rome, where he suffered martyrdom.

How marvelously Christ watched over this great servant of His carrying him safely over the seas, strengthening him to make his prison a scene of usefulness and of faith until at last He was ready to receive his redeemed spirit into Heaven!

**Practical Truths.** 1. Take part and help in all good works. 2. Go out of your way to show your Christian fellowship. 3. Make the best of the conditions around you. 4. Keep cheerful. 5. Realize that your service may reach much further than appears. 6. Sin is the only chain of bondage which can fetter your soul.



THIRD DIVISION

THE EPISTLES

AND

REVELATION







## CHRIST OR DIANA

BY EDWIN LONG.

The incident upon which Edwin Long's famous picture is founded occurred during the Roman occupation of Ephesus, and shortly following Paul's institution of a Christian church there.

Among those attracted by the faith of the Nazarene was a virgin, daughter of a noble family, whose affianced lover was a junior commander of the Roman forces.

As in other Roman cities, those professing the new faith were subjected to indignity, torture and death. At the public gladiatorial festivals it was no uncommon thing for condemned Christians, refusing to abjure their faith in favor of the pagan gods, to be thrown to the lions, tigers and other wild beasts in the great amphitheatres, before a bloodthirsty, holidaying populace.

Ephesus was the seat of a famous temple of one of the pagan deities, Diana, corresponding to the Greek Artemis. The Roman governor of the city was merciless in persecution of the Christians. The picture presents the dramatic moment when, upon a public assembly in honor of the goddess Diana, the virgin convert, having been fruitlessly pleaded with by those near to her, was required to make public election of life by offering a sacrifice of incense to the many-breasted Diana, whose image shows at the left of the picture. Her soldier lover pleaded with her in vain. Even the Roman governor in the foreground at the left, the stern old arch priest of the pagan deity's temple, and the chaste, cold maidens, sworn to perpetual virginity in honor of the "virgin huntress of the moon," were touched by the conflict between love and true religion in one so young and beautiful. The Roman commander at the right, perhaps a friend of the junior commander, lays a restraining hand upon the shoulder of the Roman officer, as though he would delay the reading of the warrant. No need; her decision is made, despite the pleading of the dearly loved one, with noble fortitude, for Christ, and death, and life everlasting.

—JAMES BEALINGS





2 BY THE JOHN A. HERTEL CO.

CHRIST OR DIANA

After Edwin Long's painting by Jas. Bealings.

## Births

William Richard Lecocq.

Born, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1857.

Mary Ethel Lecocq.

Born, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1858.

Alma Inesien Lecocq.

Born, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1859.



# PEACE WITH GOD.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have



with  
God  
through  
our  
Lord



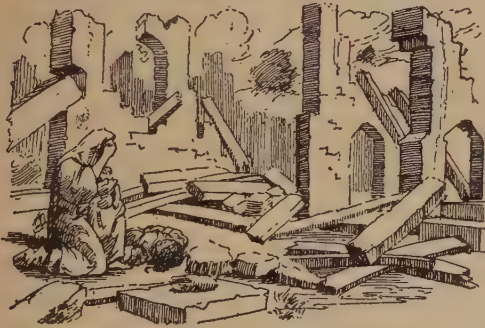
Christ: By whom also we have access by



into this  
grace  
wherein  
we stand,  
and



in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that



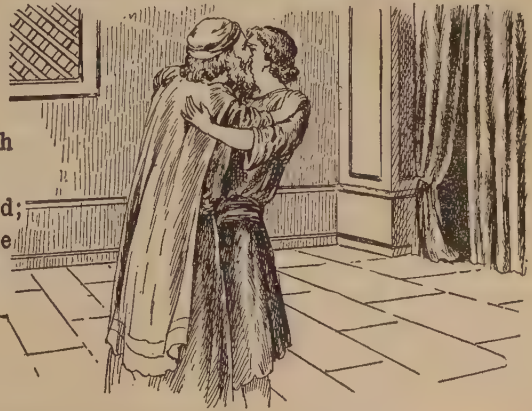
worketh



And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And



maketh  
not  
ashamed;  
because  
the



of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROM. 5:1-15.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thy power is wonderful in moulding hearts and lives. Thou hast sent Thy Holy Spirit to fashion the human spirit into forms of wondrous beauty. Come, Thou great Artist, and recreate us in Christ, so that we may glorify Thee at all times. May Christ be formed in us the hope of glory, and may our lives reflect the radiance of His Heavenly nature and spiritual beauty. For Christ's sake. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, about A. D. 60. Place, where written, Corinth. Persons, Paul and the Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** The Wonderful Salvation. God's inheritance, Psa. 33:1-12. Election of grace, Rom. 9:16-26. The perfected work, Phil. 1:1-11. The Spirit artist, Rom. 5:1-11. He will heal and save, Hos. 14:1-9. Kept by the peace, Phil. 4:1-7. The indwelling Christ, Gal. 2:17-21. Glorious and beautiful, Eph. 5:22-33.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Sometimes it is asked if life is worth living; and also if it is possible to live a good life in this wicked world. Both questions are answered, as we think of the mighty forces at work, fashioning this new and true life, and

"There comes to my heart one sweet strain,  
A glad and a joyous refrain,  
I sing it again and again,  
Sweet peace, the gift of God's love.  
Peace, peace, wonderful peace.  
Coming down from the Father above,  
Sweep over my spirit forever I pray,  
In fathomless billows of love."

### CHISELS FOR CARVING CHARACTER.

**The Chisel of Faith.** Did you ever visit the studio of a sculptor? If so, you probably saw him patiently at work, chipping away the granite or marble from the block. Slowly the face and figure are formed according to his model. Some of those finished statues you have seen in parks, museums or art galleries.

Something like that is going on in the world among people. The material is the human soul and face, and the chisels must be specially fitted for working on such material. The Holy Spirit is the sculptor, and Jesus Christ is both the power and the pattern. The finished work is not a statue, but a living character. This story is about the chisels which carve characters in flesh and blood. The first chisel is faith, for Paul says that "being justified by faith we have peace with God." Faith is a wonderful chisel by which the Holy Spirit makes a beautiful character. That character is described here as at "peace with God." If so it must also be at peace with itself and with all men. When we remember how much of anger and envy are in most people we can see how great is the work which is done by faith. Sometimes this chisel is called trust, for it lets the Holy Spirit use it just as He pleases. The very first thing that is done, when faith begins to work, is to throw down the old model of self and set up the true and new model of Jesus Christ. The faith chisel will work on any kind of human material, even the very worst, for its motto is, "All things are possible with God." So it chips away the old,

the marvelous results produced in the soul. 1. Set free from Satan and sin, by the finding of the highest court, vs. 1. 2. Fellowship and partnership with God and all the good everywhere, vs. 1. 3. All secured by Jesus Christ and assured in one's own faith, vs. 2. 4. Meeting, mastering and even utilizing life's hardest experience, vs. 3, 4. 5. The heart satisfied and made strong by the Holy Spirit, vs. 5. 6. This is done for the weakest sinner, and because he is weak and sinful, vs. 6-8. 7. And now doubly guaranteed both by the death of Christ and by His life, vs. 9, 10. 8. Producing a joy that is from God, and also in Him; a joy in sacrifice, in service, in faith, in love, in victory, vs. 11.

and fashions all after the new model. Personal faith in Jesus Christ gives strength and beauty to the life.

**Why the Tree Fell.** A slight storm laid low a tall, sturdy-looking oak. Then it was discovered that the tree consisted of a shell, its heart eaten away by the canker of rot. An insignificant stroke of disease carried to his grave a man tall, well-proportioned; apparently his vitality had been wasted away by the use of alcohol. Like the hollow tree, there was nothing to withstand the blast.

Sir Galahad, the old knight who stood as the type of chastity, said: "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure." It is so still. The man whose heart is right has the power of ten average men from the very fact that his heart is right.—Selected.

**The Chisel of Hope.** Perhaps you are wondering why you never saw any of these chisels at work, as you can see the sculptor's chisels in his studio. Well, this is because the real work is hidden, and known only to the Holy Spirit. He works on mind, heart, conscience and will, and the result of the work is seen in the life—the way one looks and acts, and the way he treats other people, and especially the way he treats God. This chisel of hope changes one from despondency and despair to a character that is beautiful and happy and confident. Hope seems rather to be the brush of the artist than the chisel of the sculptor. But its strokes are so fine that the effect is like that of the brush. Hope creates a character that expects the best and very much of it, so that it is made to "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."

**What Makes the Face Beautiful?** Sometimes, in



passing through a crowd, we see a face that attracts us by its sweetness of expression. Perhaps it is an old face, crowned with a glory of hoary hairs; yet love, joy, and peace shine out of every dot and wrinkle in it. Sometimes it is a young face that beams with health and purity and beauty. But whether old or young, when we see that unmistakable soul-light in a face, we know the heart behind it is pure, the life good, and that the body thus illuminated is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Hope and joy are the true cosmetics of the soul and the face.—Ex.

**The Chisel of Trial.** It is called here tribulation, but it means trial. There is a picture in that word tribulation. It is of the man who is threshing out the grain in the old way. He used a sledge which they called a tribulum; and he would drag it over the corn and tear the grain with it. This would separate the husk from the kernel, and then they would blow the husk or chaff away, and leave the pure grain. Now trial does that to the character, when used by the Holy Spirit. Among the beautiful things that trial fashions is the character begetting patience, experience and hope. Many years ago, fathers and mothers used to name their girls after these graces. There was Patience in one family, Hope in another and Experience in another; and sometimes two or all three in the same family. This was because they thought so much of these qualities. The chisel of trial carves all these on the character, and so makes it very beautiful. The use of this chisel is often very painful, and may seem even unnecessary; but the great Sculptor knows when to use it. Then, too, even the model, Jesus Christ, was made perfect through suffering; and his followers may expect the same.

**"All These Things Are Against Me."** We remember a parable in which a preacher said, "I listened to a flute one day, complaining that it was spoiled by having a number of holes bored in it. It said, 'Once I was a piece of wood, very beautiful to look upon; now I am spoiled by all these rifts and holes;' and it said all this mournfully and musically. 'O thou foolish flute,' I said, 'without these rifts and holes thou wouldst only be a mere stick, a bit of mere hard, black ebony, soon to be thrown away. Those rifts and holes have been the making of thee; they have made thee into a flute; they are thy life, thy character, thy music and melody, and thou wilt not now be cast aside with contempt, but touched by even the fingers of future generations.'"—Sunday at Home.

**The Chisel of Love.** "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit." Love is the chisel, and love is the character chiseled. This love chisel is a very peculiar and effective instrument. There are several kinds of it—as the love of God in giving His Son, the love of Christ in dying

on the cross, and the love of one person for another. The Holy Spirit knows how and when to use each. In one of Paul's letters he speaks of the result of the Holy Spirit's work under another figure, namely, that of a fruit or growth. He puts love at the very first of these nine fruits of the Spirit. If you were in an orchard and saw an extra fine and ripe apple on the topmost bough of the tree, that would be like love. Love is quite different from trial, as a chisel; for love does its work usually so gently and tenderly that one scarcely knows that it is chiseling away part of one's very nature and life. This is the last chisel used, and it leaves the character very beautiful and lovable.

And note this—that this love is all of God in Jesus Christ. This is specially emphasized in verses 8-10. It is said that God "commendeth" His love, which means that He causes it to stand forth, and shine forth before the eyes of all. This love as seen in the sacrifice of Christ is the very highest in quality and the very greatest in quantity. It stands alone in its redeeming and forgiving power; for however great human love may be it cannot take away sin. And the action of this love chisel on the character is two-fold, both negative and positive. The negative result is stated in the phrase "saved from wrath." This of itself is a very great blessing, corresponding to the pardon bestowed on a criminal.

But Christ does much more than to pardon and that is shown in the phrase "saved by His life." This is beyond human comprehension; but we know it means to have a life like that of Christ; to be growing more and more into the fulness of His character; to have the spiritual power of Christ; to come at last into the Heavenly glory in Christ and with Him "changed into the same image from glory to glory." This is the crowning work of the chisel of love by the great artist, the Holy Spirit.

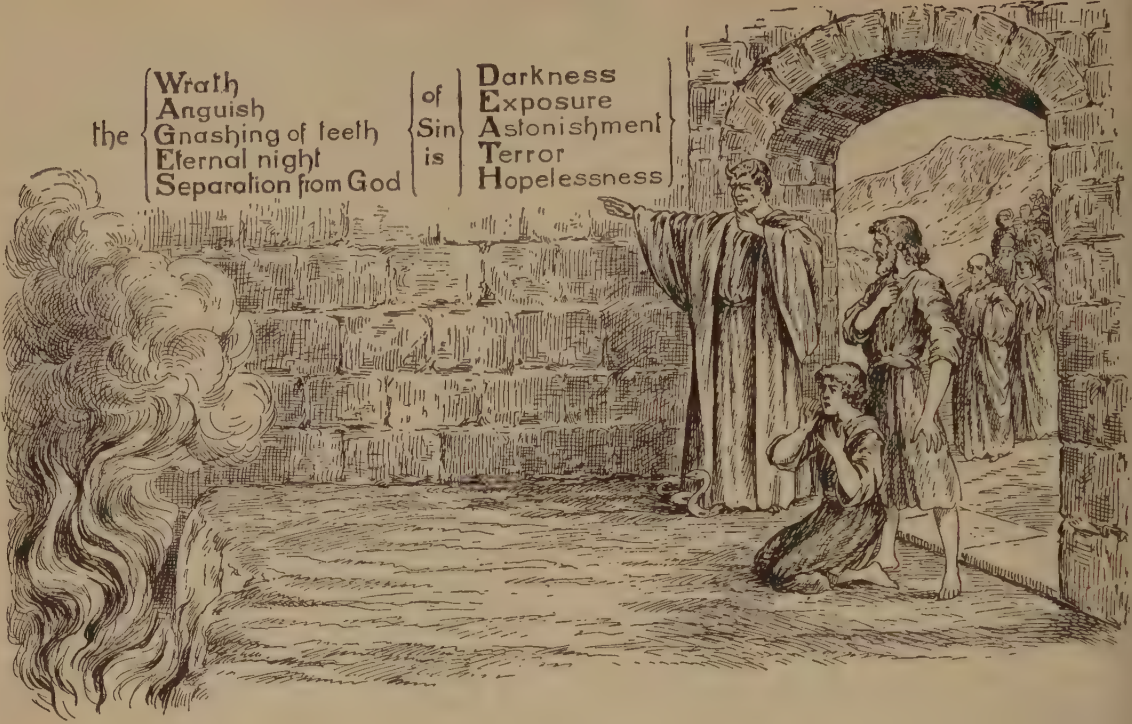
**Quiz and Study.** 1. What four Scripture words describe wrongdoing, and give meaning of each? 2. How may one know he is not at peace with God? 3. What does God think of sin and the sinner? 4. How is God's love shown for the sinner? 5. What are the five steps in salvation?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Jesus Christ alone secures to us the love of God and His peace. 2. The Christian should show both the fact of salvation and its beauty and glory. 3. Blessings and duties are linked and interlinked; and each needs and assures all the others. 4. The peace that God gives puts one in right relations with himself, with God, and with his fellow man. 5. To the Christian even trials and difficulties are but steps to service and glory. 6. The Heavenly joys are some of the best proofs of a Heaven to come. 8. The Christian should learn the art of soul sculpture, in the studio of Christ, under the training of the Holy Spirit.

DR. J. M. COON.

For

the { Wrath  
Anguish  
Gnashing of teeth  
Eternal night  
Separation from God } of Sin is { Darkness  
Exposure  
Astonishment  
Terror  
Hopelessness }



But



the { Godliness  
Immortality  
Fellowship with God  
Triumph over death } of God is eternal { Light  
Inheritance  
Freedom  
Exaltation }

through Jesus Christ our Lord.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROM. 6:12-23.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, May we hear Thy call to us, "Choose you this day." As Thou hast set before us life and death, help us to choose life. Keep our feet in the straight and narrow way that leads to life eternal. May we hear Thy voice saying unto us, "This is the way—walk ye in it." For Christ's sake. Amen.

"We pass out at the world's wide gate,  
Turning our back on all its state:  
We pass along the narrow road  
That leads to life, to bliss, to God."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 58. Place where written, Corinth. Persons, Paul and the Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** Choose Life and Peace. Way of wisdom, Prov. 9:1-12. Remember thy Creator, Eccl. 12:1-8. Redeeming the time, Eph. 5:15-21. Turn and live, Ezek. 18:25-32. The living God, Heb. 10:26-39. All else is loss, Phil. 3:1-11. Seizing an opportunity, Mark 10:46-52. Choose now, 2 Cor. 6:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage is full of

reasons, both negative and positive, why one should choose life and the way of peace. 1. Because it is man's duty to love and serve his Creator and Redeemer. 2. Because God has made it possible, and even easy so to do. 3. Because greatest privileges and honors go with the choice and service. 4. Because the judgments of God fall on those who do not choose. 5. The very past life of sin now calls loudly to take the true and right way. 6. Because the end of the sinful way is death, and the end of the holy way is life and blessedness.

### A STORY OF TWO WAYS OF LIVING

**Two Kinds of Spirit.** When Rome was the queen city of the world, it was said that "all roads lead to Rome." It cannot be said of the life roads that people travel that they all lead to one place. They do all lead to eternity, and to one or the other of two places—Heaven or hell—the one the road to eternal life and the other to eternal death. This story is about the two ways of living. It will be seen that the travelers on these two roads are very different in many ways. By noting the difference we can discover which kind of life we are living; and if we are on the wrong road we can change to the right one.

Now the very first point of difference in persons is a difference of heart and spirit. When you look at George or Irene or Frances, you do not see the real boy or girl. That is hidden from view, and none can know it fully except God, who looks on the heart. We can judge of the heart and spirit, to some extent, by the way they act out in the life. Paul has just given us a picture of the two kinds of lives, and this shows that there are two kinds of spirit or heart—the holy and the sinful. One is "the servant of righteousness" and the other is the "servant of sin." God says to all boys and girls, and to older people, also, "Son, daughter, give Me thy heart"; and in Proverbs (4:23) it is commanded, "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

**The New Heart and New Life.** You may as well hope to make a good painter or musician by hearing a lecture on the arts of music and painting as a righteous life by hearing a lecture on the ten commandments. There is but one way to become godly. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous."

The hearing of the Word is but wasted time if we are not going to practice what it teaches. And no one can or will practice the new life unless he first has received the new heart and spirit through faith in Christ.—Exchange.

**Two Kinds of Purpose or Object.** What are you looking at, and looking for? What are you hoping and working for? How far can you see and what do you see? The answers to these questions show which kind of life one is living. Where are you going? If to New York, then you are facing that way; if to San Francisco, then you keep facing towards the west. Just so, if one is planning to reach Heaven he will be found living the Christ life and traveling the Heaven road. The road may lead through the valley, or there may be enemies and difficulties, but we do not judge of it by these. The end of the journey, and the peace and joy on the one hand, or the misery on the other hand, are evidences of the kind of life one is living, and so of the kind of road he is traveling.

Have you read about the "thousand mile boulevard"? It starts near Washington, D. C., and ends at St. Louis, and follows the old highway route of a hundred years ago. But how much better and grander is the boulevard of eternal life which Christ has built for sinful man. It cost His life blood, and it starts from every man's home town and ends at the pearly gates of Heaven.

The converted Indian was altogether right when he said that he was now walking on "the Jesus road." Those who walk in that way live the true and godly life, for their purpose is to find God and Heaven and all the good. We have many lights and guide posts to show us this true way.

**Steering by Mother's Light.** "A father and daughter were out at sea in a storm, and near a

dangerous coast. The mother lighted a lamp, and started up the worn stairway to the attic window. 'It won't do any good, mother,' the son called after her. But the mother went up, put the light in the window, knelt beside it, and prayed. Out in the storm the daughter saw a glimmer of gold on the water's edge. 'Steer for that,' the father said. Slowly but steadily they came toward the light, and at last were anchored in the little sheltered harbor by the cottage.

"'Thank God!' cried the mother as she heard their glad voices and came down the stairway with a lamp in her hand. 'How did you get here?' she said.

"'We steered by mother's light,' answered the daughter."—Exchange.

**Two Kinds of Masters.** There are really only two kinds. They may differ in appearance and claim and manner of acting, but in fact there are only two kinds of masters. These are Christ and Satan. Everyone is choosing one or the other as a master. The choice may be by act, rather than by word, but it is just as truly a choice. Indeed, it is more of a choice when made by the actions, for "actions speak louder than words." Then, also, it is true that if one fails to choose Christ he really chooses Satan, for one must choose one or the other. Satan pretends to give a world of pleasure and success, but he really gives only failure, disappointment and death. Jesus Christ may seem sometimes to lead one through trouble and sorrow, but He always gives eternal life. Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

**Blessed Christ Road.** A man has invented what he calls the shock absorber for automobiles. By a little relieving device near the rear wheels the rough places are not felt. Is our life road rough? Do strange and difficult experiences beset us? Here stands our Comforter, our Peace, our Shock Absorber. Here is One who will bear our burdens with us. Here is One who intercedes for us. Here is our Rest. What a wonderful Christ is ours, who comes to us, who abides in us and with us, who absorbs the shocks and woes of life and brings us peace.—Exchange.

**Two Kinds of Wages.** Another way by which we can tell what kind of a life one is leading is by the wages he gets, and by the master who pays him. A look at the picture page will help anyone to a right choice. Who would want to accept the invitation of Satan, that deceiver of souls? And who could resist the pleading word and face of the gracious Saviour, offering forgiveness and welcome? Then the contrast between "wages" and "gift" is suggestive. Who would not prefer the gift of God which is eternal life, to the wages of Satan, which are eternal death? The contrast between

the two results and the two masters, is also helpful to a right choice. The black list of "wages" ending in eternal death is enough to terrify and paralyze; while the blessings and joys from the "gift" of God invite and appeal to all, both because of present benefits, and because of eternal joy and fellowship. God in the "gift" of His Son has given us assurance of the Divine help in working out our salvation. Jesus Christ as very God, came down to earth for this express purpose; to save and to give life, while Satan goes about continually doing all he can to hinder and destroy the soul.

These two kinds of living end in two kinds of destiny. The two life roads both lead into eternity, but how different that eternity in each case. Only the eye of God and the great judgment day can rightly divide these countless millions of earth travelers. But when that division is made one class shall hear the dread word "Depart," and the other will be welcomed by the sweet message "Come ye blessed." In which class shall we be then? In which class are we planning to be?

**Where Will I Be?** What a company that will be, gathered at the Judgment Day, before the Great White Throne! Yet there is something for each one of us to think of besides the immensity of the throng: I shall be somewhere in that crowd. More, there will be no possibility of escaping the piercing eye of the Judge. It will be impossible for one to hide himself behind another—Jesus will find every individual there and will know unerringly just what is in his heart. But why should we wish to hide from the gaze of the King? His is a loving eye. If we try to hide nothing from Him during the days of life we shall not wish to hide anything when life is done.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Mention some things which draw people into the way of death. 2. Name four reasons for choosing the narrow way of life. 3. If one does not choose life, what road is he in?

**Challenge Text.** Enter ye in at the — gate, for — is the gate and broad is the — that leadeth to —. Matt. 7:(?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Each one must choose for himself whether he will go in the way of life or not. 2. All reasons are in favor of serving God; many excuses are given for not serving Him. 3. God's love, Christ's death on the cross, the Holy Spirit's pleading are the great motives for a right choice. 4. The example of Christians and the soul's own interests urge to the same choice. 5. Decided choice of Christ is the only gateway to eternal life and blessedness. 6. It is a gracious providence which puts people in a position where they must choose. 7. The neglect to choose may be intended as only temporary, but death may make it permanent. 8. Not to choose Christ as Saviour is to choose that He shall not be your Saviour. 9. Satan says, "Not yet"; the Holy Spirit says, "Now is the accepted time," and it may be the only time.

DR. J. M. COON.



# THE LIFE-GIVING SPIRIT.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who



not after  
the flesh,  
but after  
the Spirit.  
For the  
law of the  
Spirit of



in  
Christ  
Jesus  
hath  
made  
me



from  
the  
law  
of



and



For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own



in the likeness  
of sinful flesh,  
and for sin,  
condemned sin  
in the flesh:  
That the



of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

ROMANS VIII: 1-5.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROM. 8:1-18.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the gift of the Holy Spirit who convicts of sin and gives the new heart. Make us willing to receive Him, and glad to live in and for Him. May He come to many who are indifferent and careless, and quicken them into life. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"We are but organs mute, till a master touches the keys—  
Verily, vessels of earth into which God poureth the wine;  
Harps are we, silent harps that have hung on the willow trees,  
Dumb till our heartstrings swell and break with a pulse Divine.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, About A. D. 60. Place, where written, Corinth. Persons, Paul and the Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** The Holy Spirit's Work. Revival by the Spirit, Acts 2:1-13. Life by the Spirit, Ezek. 37:1-14. Revelation through the Spirit, 1 Cor. 2:1-10. Gift of the Spirit, Joel 2:21-29. A guide to the truth, John 16:7-15. Power by the Spirit, 2 Cor. 3:12-18. Prayer by the Spirit, Rom. 8:15-27. Refreshing by the Spirit, Acts 3:12-21.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Holy Spirit is named about sixteen times in the first sixteen

verses of Rom. 8. In these verses His place and work are indicated. 1. He is the new law and Guide to the believer, vs. 1, 2. 2. He gives power, in Christ, to follow the Guide and obey the law, vs. 3, 4. 3. He weans the believer from worldly things and draws him to the spiritual, vs. 5, 6. 4. He brings the believer into full fellowship with God in Christ, vs. 7-9. 5. He makes him active, energetic, consecrated, vs. 10, 11. 6. He gives him a new vision of life, vs. 12, 13. 7. He imparts to him the Divine nature and power, vs. 14-16.

### HOW PEOPLE ARE SAVED.

**The Gracious Power of God.** Here is a man on horseback, and lashing his horse into a gallop, faster and faster. If you were near enough you could hear him whisper to himself, "I am afraid I am too late! I wish I had five minutes more, or even one minute." And then he looks at his watch, and whips his horse into a faster gallop. He is encouraged by seeing a procession of men slowly marching. He knows now that the deserting soldier has not been shot and that he has still another minute of time. Why is he hurrying so? He has a pardon for the convicted man. Now he is near enough to call, and he shouts, "Pardon, pardon!" The man is saved, for they all wait to see what news he brings from the president. By this pardon he is freed from the penalty of death. He is a saved man. This is a picture of the sinner who is saved by Jesus Christ. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." By the Holy Spirit the sinner was quickened in his inner life. He saw that he was a sinner; he saw, too, that Jesus Christ was able to save, and was actually offering pardon. He hails the offer and joyously accepts the pardon. It is the life giving Holy Spirit who has made him willing to be saved, and who has made him will, or choose to be saved.

**The Power of Love.** I sat down in the cell on the iron floor and put my arm around the boy. I told him how much I thought of him, and how I despised the bad things he did. Yet what could I do if he did not help me? I might help him, but I could not carry him; I would always be his friend, but he was getting both himself and me in trouble if he "swiped things." How could he expect a judge to keep his job if his boys did such things? He saw the point, and standing upright there in

the cell, the light in his eyes speaking better than his words, the earnestness of his promise to "stay wid yer, Judge," as he tearfully declared he would never get me into any trouble and we would both keep out of jail.—Judge Lindsay.

**Are You Trying to Save Yourself?** We all are sinners, and we know it full well. But all do not accept God's way to be saved. Many people think they can be saved by a good life. But the Bible teaches us that the good life is a result of salvation, and not the cause of it. People may do many right and good acts before they are saved, but they cannot act right before God until they are right with God; and they can be right with God only by accepting Jesus Christ as their Saviour, trusting only in Him. All are in the grip of sin and death, and only the "Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" can break the fetters and set one free. Often you hear people say, "It is impossible to reform a person by law." This is true; for all the law can do is to hold back the forces of evil so that the true reformer can work. It is just the same with the sinner. The good life cannot save him. It can only help to bring him where he can be saved. This is what is meant by the words, "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh," etc.

**Is the Soul Connected?** Have you ever toyed with the key of a telegraph instrument while the circuit was closed? The lesson is plain. It is in spiritual telegraphy as in material. If the battery is not working, the message is mere clatter. We may do, but if God is not doing through us, then all our doing is naught. Prayer connects you with the Divine battery of life and power. Prayer puts you "in the Spirit," and "it is the Spirit that quickeneth." From the chamber of prayer you come forth to men with the unction, the subtle power, the thrill



of God's own life upon you; and as you touch them in speech, deed or prayer, "virtue goes forth from you," for then it is not you, but God that worketh in you. As you keep asking, God keeps doing. When you grow prayerless, your deeds grow powerless.—Selected.

**A Pardon Message from Heaven.** "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh," is the pardon courier and the message from the King of kings. Jesus Christ is both the message and the Messenger, for He said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." The case was urgent. The law could not save the sinner, but rather condemned him. Good works could not save him, but rather added to his guilt. "I will save him," said the Son of God. So God sent Him, in the fulness of time. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." Jesus Christ is the swift courier of salvation, sent from Heaven with a full pardon for sinful man; every man, every boy, every girl, every woman. He says, "Lo, I come to do Thy will," and He speeds on the way "to seek and save" before it is too late. It was a long hard journey by which He came, requiring much sacrifice of His Heavenly glory, and needing that He become just like the sinner he would save—like him in appearance and nature, but still kept holy and pure from sin. This was necessary if He would save from sin. And now what is that we see? When the journey is nearly ended, wicked men catch Him and bind Him and beat Him and mock Him, and crucify Him. Alas, alas, has He failed to get the pardon to the sinner in time? No, God makes this put the seal on the document, for it is sealed by His blood; and now it is complete, He Himself says, "It is finished." Here is pardon—pardon for all who will accept it. He has come, and He is here in time to save us.

**The Verse That Saves.** There died recently in the city of Philadelphia a minister of considerable prominence in his church and profession. The remarkable thing about his life was his wonderful conversion. He was born of Christian parents and brought up in a Christian home. When he reached those years of boyhood when his parents thought he should decide for Christ and join the church, his mother made him the special subject of her prayers. At sixteen the boy was still indifferent to religious things, though quite regular in his attend-

ance at church. One Sunday the pastor preached on the text, "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ." Looking at this boy, he added, "sinner, that verse has saved millions, it will save you. You are condemned in your trespasses and sins, but here is the verse that saves." He felt that it was just what he needed and it led to his immediate and sound conversion.

**How One May Know If He Is Saved.** There are several ways. If one has heard and obeyed the gracious invitation of the Saviour, he must be saved. Those invitations are, "Come," "Repent," "Believe;" and whosoever believeth shall be saved. Then when "the righteousness of the law" is fulfilled in him he gives evidence that he is saved. At creation God said that "all was very good," and at this new creation of a soul by the Holy Spirit all is seen to be very good and beautiful. Once more, if one is in the habit of obeying the Spirit, instead of his own selfish desires, he has proof that he is saved. It all depends on who is your master, Christ or Satan. "They that are after the flesh (the unsaved) do mind, or obey, the things of the flesh; and they that are after the Spirit do mind or obey the things of the Spirit." This is the best evidence of all that one is saved.

**Faith and Works.** There isn't much good in religion which doesn't do anybody any good. If our profession is like a hat or coat, to be worn at certain functions, or when it is convenient, it will not affect the life in any noticeable way. If religion doesn't make a new man out of the one who espouses it, we need a new kind of religion.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other names does the Holy Spirit have? 2. How did the Spirit descend on Christ and when? 3. What was the symbol of the Spirit at Pentecost? 4. What other figures are used to describe the Spirit? 5. Name four things the Spirit does.

**Challenge Text.** "When He is — He will — the world of — of — and of judgment." John 16: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The Holy Spirit is gentle, all pervasive and mysterious as the air. 2. The sinful heart is blind until enlightened by the Spirit. 3. This 8th chapter of Romans is the victory chapter of the Bible. 4. The Holy Spirit works upon man, for man, in man, by man. 5. Man may resist the Spirit, grieve the Spirit, quench the Spirit, sin against the Spirit. 6. The various works of the Spirit are suggested by His different emblems, fire, oil, water, door, voice, wind, rain and dew. 7. The Spirit's Deity is shown by His equal association with God and Christ, and by the titles, Spirit of Christ, Spirit of the Lord, etc.

DR. J. M. COON.



Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or



or



or



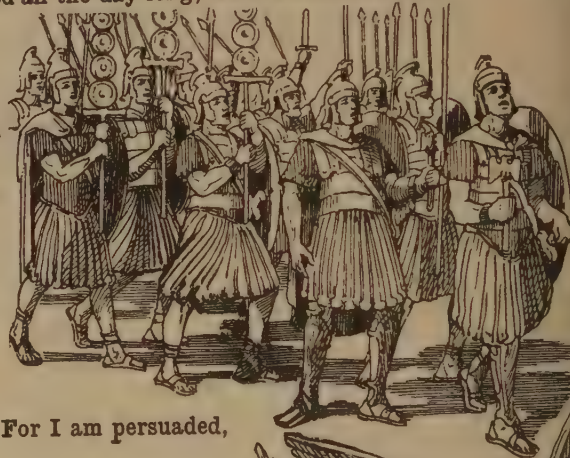
or  
peril,  
or



As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as



for the  
slaughter.  
Nay, in  
all these  
things  
we are  
more  
than



through him that loved us. For I am persuaded,

that neither



nor

nor



nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our

Lord.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROM. 8:28-39.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, We thank Thee for the covenant of grace which brings us a sure salvation. May we trust Thy love and power whatever the difficulties and enemies that confront us. The good work which Thou hast begun in us Thou wilt finish, as Thou hast promised. Grant that we may see Thy hand in all the affairs of life, working our good and Thy glory. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"When I fear my faith will fail,  
Christ will hold me fast.  
When the tempter would prevail,  
He can hold me fast.  
I could never keep my hold,  
He must hold me fast;  
For my love is often cold,  
He must hold me fast."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, About A. D. 60. Place, where written, Corinth. **Persons,** Paul, and the Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** **Kept of God.** Kept by God, 1 Pet. 1:5. By the indwelling Christ, Gal. 2:17-21. By the peace of God, Phil. 4:1-7. By a wakeful God, Psa. 121. By the Good Shepherd, John 10:7-18. Under His shadow, Psa. 91. By the life of Christ, Col. 3:1-11. Shall never perish, John 10:22-30.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The security of the believer is frequently emphasized in the Word.

It is taught in this passage. 1. By the fact that all forces in the world work for his good. 2. By the fact that he is known by name to God and Christ. 3. By the fact of likeness to Christ who lives forever. 4. By the fact of complete and satisfactory justification before God. 5. By the fact that God has covenanted to be ever in him and with him. 6. By the fact of Christ's victories and effective intercession for him. 7. By the fact that both God's promises and the believers' faith affirm the certain "security" of the believer.

### THE CHRISTIAN SAFE AGAINST ALL ENEMIES.

**A Seven Division Army.** What great war days those were in 1861 to 1865! The whole country north and south, east and west, was stirred with the marching of soldiers, the shout of battle and the groans of the dying. The great army of the North had six general divisions, and the army of the South probably had as many. We are rejoicing now that the soldiers of the blue and of the grey are shaking hands over a forgotten past, and are joining ranks in fighting the common enemies of our day and nation. In our story today we have a picture of a mighty army marching against the Christian. It has seven large divisions, led by as many generals. There is General Tribulation, leading the forces of Distress, with his host of anxieties and troubles that lurk and camp in one's own homeland. General Persecution, who cruelly follows his victims wherever they flee; General Famine, with his gaunt and bony soldiers; General Nakedness, whose army strips even the clothing from one's back; General Peril, who is ever threatening to dash over the line with his bushwhackers and raiders; and General Sword, with his swelling ranks of the flashing blades dipped in blood. Is there any chance whatever for the Christian to escape from all of these enemies?

**The Christian's Conquering Leader.** Look! "Who is this that cometh, traveling in the greatness of His strength?" "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." He has seen all these divisions of the opposing army with their generals and their hostile attacks, and He says, "I will tread them in Mine anger and trample them in My fury, for the year of My redeemed has come." "I looked,

and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore Mine own arm brought salvation." This is the Christian's conquering Leader, "going forth conquering and to conquer." Nothing can defeat him or withstand him. This Christ King and General conquers all easily, for by Him "we are more than conquerors." By this is meant that the very enemies and difficulties are made to help the Christian. A few verses before it is said that "all things work together for good to them that love God." One enemy or difficulty may seem to work harm; but when taken together with all other things the result is good. Christ is the conquering Leader who makes all things to work out good, and helps the Christian to win the victory over all enemies.

**"All Things Through Christ."** On the occasion of defeat, Napoleon at one time said petulantly: "I cannot be everywhere." Our living Christ is everywhere at all times. He is the Omnipresent and Omnipotent Leader. The admirers of Charlemagne set up his corpse in its grave, crowned his pulseless temples, and put a sceptre in his bloodless fingers, as if to declare that he should still lead them to conquest (Foster). What mockery and weakness! Our King and Leader lives. He has come out from the grave; on His head are many crowns; in His hand are the keys of death and the grave; and He goes forth conquering and to conquer.

**The True People of Destiny.** Here is a remarkable thing. The Christian looks out into the future and declares that he is mightier than any and all forces that can come against him. Read that long list of the greatest possible opposing agencies. "Death," who is the very king of terrors; "life," that is full of dangers; "angels,"

with their strange power; "principalities," representing princely and royal dignity; "powers," all the great physical forces of nature; "things present and things to come," in the changing orders of time; "height and depth," suggesting unbounded powers for destruction; "any other creature" in the whole universe of God. Amidst all these possible enemies and difficulties the Christian stands enfolded and kept by the love of God. That love that redeemed him will also keep him. Nothing can separate him from it. He not only does not fear any of these forces, but he knows he is superior to them.

Why is the Christian so confident in this spirit of victory? Because he has so clear a vision of the keeping power of Christ. In verse 35 Paul cries out with a challenge to all the world, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" In verse 39 he states the same fact by a positive affirmation. We need to remember that the power is not in ourselves, but only and altogether in Christ. He graciously allows this great power to operate in and flow through the Christian. When the obedience and consecration are perfect the people of God go forward like the moving of "an army with banners," and all because the Holy Spirit is giving guidance and power.

**The Spirit of Conquest.** After the battle of Lookout Mountain, where our army cleared the heights with such an irresistible charge, General Grant inquired of Wood and Hooker and Sheridan, "Did you order that charge?" They each replied, "No; the men were filled with such enthusiasm that they leaped to the fray, defying danger and death, and nothing could stop them." This illustrates the words of Christ, "The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence and the violent take it by force." The Laymen's Missionary Movement in these days seems to point to the time when the Church will be filled with such enthusiasm for the conquest of the world that its members will go forward, whether leaders give the word of command or not. And pastors who lag behind will find a fire kindled, either within them, or underneath them.—Exchange.

**The Three-fold Love That Conquers All.** "Were you not afraid?" said one after I had told him of going up to the top of Eiffel tower. "Not at all," I replied. The fact is that I had faith in the genius that built it, and in the iron and steel that were used. These were the great factors and laws of

the material world, and they could reasonably be trusted. But here are the mightier forces of the spiritual world, all combining for the protection of the Christian. Certainly then he can trust them, and shout his victorious challenge to all the world. This three-fold love is the love of God, who plans salvation and protection; the love of Jesus Christ, who carries out the plan by giving His life; and the love of the Holy Spirit, who fills the soul with the truth and power of Christ, and who inspires the Christian to say, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me." As human love is the mightiest human force, so Divine love is the mightiest Divine force. When these three Divine loves are united it is impossible to break through them to hurt or destroy. The Christian is just as secure and safe as the throne of God itself. God is "able to keep that which we have committed to Him, against that day." "That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

**The Lord's Property.** "You are His by donation, for the Father gave you to the Son; His by His bloody purchase, for He paid the price for your redemption; His by dedication, for you have consecrated yourself to Him; His by relation, for you are named by His name and made one of His brethren and joint-heirs. Rise to the work with all your powers: and when the great sweat stands upon your brow, and you are tempted to loiter, cry, 'No, I cannot stop, for I am Christ's.' 'I am a Roman!' was of old the reason for integrity; far more, then, let it be your argument for holiness, 'I am Christ's.'"—C. H. Spurgeon.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How may we know that "all things work for good"? 2. What four things are stated about Christ as our Saviour? 3. What does God the Father do for our salvation? 4. What does God the Holy Spirit do? 5. What are the four proofs of conversion?

**Challenge Text.** "For we know that all ——— work together for ——— to them that ——— God." Rom. 8:(?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The Christian life is a blessed one, as well as a safe one. 2. Our approach to God and Heaven is only in and by Jesus Christ. 3. As God has assured to us our salvation, so we should render to Him our service. 4. This finished salvation of the tri-une God leaves the sinner altogether without excuse, if he does not accept it. 5. It is the highest honor and glory to become a sharer in this salvation. 6. The greatest trials and sufferings are not worthy to be named in comparison with the "future glory."

Dr. J. M. Coon.



# FAITH AND CONFESSION.

But what saith it?  
The word is nigh thee,  
even in thy mouth  
and in thy heart:  
that is, the word of  
faith, which we



That if thou shalt  
confess with thy mouth  
the Lord Jesus,  
and shalt



in thine  
heart  
that  
God hath



thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto



and with  
the mouth  
confession is  
made unto  
salvation.  
For the  
scripture  
saith,  
Whosoever  
believeth  
on him  
shall not be



For there is  
no difference  
between the



and the



for the same  
Lord over  
all is rich

unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

ROMANS X: 8-13.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROM. 10:1-13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Greatest of all Thy gifts to us is faith in Thee. Greatest of all Thy commands to us is confession of Thee. May these twin truths and facts be seen in our lives. By word and act and constant influence may the heart declare its love and loyalty to the Saviour who makes it all possible. For Christ's sake, Amen.

"In ourselves the sunshine dwells;  
In ourselves the music swells;  
Everywhere the heart awake  
Finds what pleasure it can make;  
Everywhere the light and shade  
By the gazer's eye is made."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 60. Place, where written—Corinth. Persons, Paul and the Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** Faith and Confession. Walking in Christ, Col. 2:1-7. Power of faith, Rom. 1:16-17. Holding fast our faith, Heb. 4:1-16. A dead faith, Jas. 2:14-26. Profession not enough, Matt. 7:13-23. Confessing Christ, Matt. 10:16-33. Walking worthily, Eph. 4:1-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The way of salvation, vs. 9, 10 is the centre of the lesson. The righteousness of faith is compared with the righteousness

of the law. The passage shows the origin and growth of a genuine faith. We see the proofs of such a faith. 1. It trusts entirely to Christ's sacrifice and merit. 2. It magnifies the righteousness of Christ. 3. It roots in and grows by the Word of Christ. 4. It is planted in the heart of man, and becomes the ruling and dominant force. 5. It expresses itself along all lines of outward activity. 6. It brings the Divine approval and blessing. 7. It is open and offered to all, and may be had for the asking, for it is the gift and work of the Holy Spirit.

### FOUR SIGNS OF LIFE.

**The Sign of the Heart.** Two friends were looking at a statue in an art gallery. "How beautiful it is," said one. "Yes, and how life-like," said the other. "You would almost think it might speak." We all know that the statue is not alive, however life-like it may seem. It has no heart and no breath. Our story is about the new life in Jesus Christ, started by the breath of the Holy Spirit. One of the signs of that life is the action of the heart. It is called faith, and is the love of the heart for the Saviour, or the breathing of the soul because of that love.

"Can you feel his heart beat," the policeman asked as they were examining the body of the man rescued from the lake. The heart beat is the test of life. The little boy who accidentally killed his playmate, said that he put his ear to his heart and he heard it beat once and then stop. He was just alive and then died. Paul tells here of "the word of faith which we preach". He says that if thou "shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved"; that is, shall be made alive in heart and soul. And all have the opportunity to hear and believe; at least all in this Christian land. That first picture is what can be seen everywhere. Christ is preached and taught as a Saviour in churches, in Sunday schools in Young People's societies in Christian homes.

**Taking God At His Word.** A little girl of seven was taught in a children's meeting the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart," and told that only Jesus could do this, but that He would if she believed Him. That night she asked the Lord to take her old heart entirely away and give her a new, clean heart. The next night her mother noticed that she did not pray, "Create in me a clean

heart." She asked the child whether she had forgotten it. "Oh, no, mamma," was the answer, "but it would not be right to ask God again for a clean heart, would it? I asked Him for it last night, and he said He would do it, if I asked him; so I know he has given it to me, for He is sure to keep His promise. He can't say 'No,' can He, mamma?"

**The Sign of the Tongue:** "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." The tongue is made to stand for the outward life, as the heart does for the inner life. If one is alive to God, and for Him, he will show it in his life, by such acts and words as are becoming in a Christian. That fourth picture shows how this may be done. At the very start one confesses Christ by his baptism and joining the church. In this way he tells everyone that he has faith in Christ, and has accepted Him as a Saviour. Then his life is a confession of his faith. God expects, and the world expects that he will make his life correspond with his faith. Not to do so makes him a hypocrite of the worst kind. The tongue is one of the hardest members to control, and if one confesses Christ with his tongue he is likely to confess Him every other way.

Then, too, the tongue is one of the chief life builders—a bad tongue building a bad life, and a good tongue a good life. "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation," if true not only in the beginning of salvation, but in its growth and influence.

The right kind of a tongue, and rightly used, can make a life beautiful, and strong, and so it is one of the best signs of the new life. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord harkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written," etc.



The minister, who wished to reprove a member for neglect of prayer-meeting, used this sign. After warming himself by an open grate, he took the tongs, and placed a live coal alone on the hearth. It soon grew dim, and at last was only a black mass. The guilty man spoke up and said, "you need not say a word to me, for I'll be at prayer-meeting next Wednesday night." The tongue is both a sign and a source of the new life.

**An Unruly Tongue.** "Have you heard of the two dangerous doors a boy has? The doors I mean are pink or scarlet; and when they open you can see a row of little servants standing in white, and between them is a little lady dressed in crimson." "They need a strong guard on each side, or else there is great trouble." "Why, what comes out?" said little Peace with wondering eyes. "When the guards are away," said cousin Will, "I have known some things to come out sharper than arrows, and they make terrible wounds. They are words spoken by this little crimson lady, which is the tongue."

**The Sign of the Divine Favor.** Does God love all people? Yes, but not in the same way. He loves the unsaved sinner in a way to influence and persuade him to be saved. He loves the saved sinner in a way to show His joy and approval. The first is called the love of benevolence, the second the love of approbation, or approval. This latter is a sign of life, for it shows that one is saved. "Whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." He shall not be put to shame, for he will have the protecting and favoring love of God. This favor of God is peculiar in the case of the Christian for it makes all things work for good to him. And it enables him to see the love of God even in the trials and troubles of life. Thus even this earthly life is full of beauty for it has the sign and seal of the Divine favor on it.

Many times even in the new life, the love of God is crowded out by the love of the world. These are two things which cannot mingle and work together. If either one flourishes the other will languish and weaken.

It is said of two rival Scottish clans that even their bloods would not mix when poured into the same dish, so great was their hatred of each other. So God and the world will not work together. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." As worldly love and worship prove that one is a follower of Satan, so love to God and worship of Him are a sure sign of the new and true life. Also God's special blessings and favor are a part of this sign.

**The Poetry of Life.** There is no such poetry as that of a genuine Christian character. It is the beauty of life. Life is sweet, life is beautiful. In the spring of the year, when life is bursting forth from every tree, every shrub, and every plant, all nature is clothed with beauty. The Christian religion is not merely a creed, or a bundle of ceremonies, or a profession, but a life. Let no one be content with a mere form of religion, for then he will never see its real beauty. As one can feel physical life

throbbing through his nerves, so the Christian can feel spiritual life palpitating within. The most beautiful life of all is the life of God in the soul of man.—Ex.

**The Sign of the Bible.** God's Word tells who are alive and saved. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." All such are made alive by the power of the Holy Spirit, and because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. This is the best sign of all. Each of the other signs is interpreted in part by one's own experience, and some allowance may be made for that. But the Bible sign is the plain and strong promise of God to those who honestly and sincerely come to Him for life and salvation. The bare promise of God has held many a Christian in time of trial and weakness; held him until the heart could begin to beat again, and the tongue and life could begin to confess again, the favor and love of God could be seen again. By the Bible test and sign we may find among the saved those who differ greatly in appearance as shown by the last two pictures. We may find also that those who differ in manner of life and conduct are yet alive and safe according to the promise of God.

**The Wonderful Word of God.**—"If I follow the thundering Nahum, when his horses plough the waters; or Habakkuk, when he sees the tents of Cushan in affliction; if I read Malachi, when the earth is burning like an oven; if I turn to the smooth page of John, who tells of love; or the rugged chapters of Peter, who speaks of fire devouring God's enemies; if I turn aside to Jude, who launches forth anathemas upon the foes of God, everywhere I find God speaking. It is God's voice, not man's; the words are God's words; the words of the Eternal, the Invisible, the Almighty, the Jehovah of ages. This Bible is God's Bible; and when I see it, I seem to hear a voice springing up from it, saying, 'I am the book of God; man, read me! I am God's writing; study my page, for I was penned by God; love me, for He is my Author, and you will see Him visible and manifest everywhere.'—Spurgeon.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What other word of the same number of letters describes faith? 2. When may it be said that you have faith in your mother or father? 3. Who is meant by "whosoever" in verses 11 and 13? 4. If the heart is right what kind of fruit will it bear? 5. If the fruit of the life is not good, what kind of a heart is back of it?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. "Be ye perfect" may be realized by the believer only in and by Christ. 2. As salvation was impossible by works, so God provided one through faith. 3. The truths necessary to salvation are all plain and simple as revealed facts. 4. Satan keeps many souls from the facts of the Gospel by undue emphasis of its mysteries. 5. A mere intellectual faith does not save for even the devils have that. 6. True saving faith is a product of the love of God, the sacrifice of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. J. M. COON.

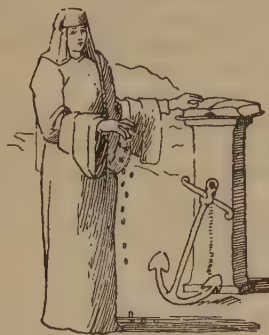
Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly



in  
honour  
preferring  
one  
another;  
Not  
slothful  
in



fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in



patient  
in



contin-  
uing  
instant  
in



Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to



Bless  
them  
which



you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do



and  
weep  
with  
them  
that





**THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS ROM.12:1-21.**

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art both the life, and the way to life. Make us altogether like Thyself in nature and in conduct. Be Thou our perfect pattern. Be Thou the power and skill in us to fashion our lives like Thine. For Christ's sake, Amen.

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 60. Place, where written, Corinth. Persons, Paul and the Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting:** Rules for a Right Life. Imitating Christ, Phil. 2:1-11. Right aim and end, 2 Tim. 4:8. True spirit and purpose, Rom. 12. The supreme gift, 1 Cor. 13. Earnest for the right, 1 Cor. 9:19-27. Heeding good counsel, Prov. 3:5-18. Right ideals and motives, 2 Cor. 5:14-19. Constant in good works, Eph. 2:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** "We find in these verses six laws of Christian character. 1. The law of thoroughness. The Christian should be sincere, pronounced, decided. He should be 'out-and-out' for Christ and against sin. 2. The law of frater-

"To do him any wrong was to beget  
A kindness from him; for his heart was rich,  
Of such fine mould, that if you sowed therein  
The seed of hate, it blossomed charity."

nity. The Christian belongs to the greatest brotherhood on the earth, the church of Christ, He will love all who love Christ. 3. The law of fidelity. The Christian, though not of the world, lives in the world. Let him be faithful in all his house. 4. The law of sympathy. He should have a heart and hand open to the needy; a prayer for those who persecute him, and a tear to drop with those who weep. 5. The law of humility. Christ honors those who are lowly. The mighty may conquer the earth, but it is the meek who inherit it. 6. The law of kindness. There are two ways to conquer an enemy—one way by war, the other and the better by love; for love that conquers turns the enemy into a friend.—Hurlbut.

**A BEAUTIFUL AND FRAGRANT LIFE.**

**A Cluster of Graces.** What is more beautiful than a lovely bouquet of flowers? On the pulpit on Sunday, or in the sick room, or in the home anywhere, it always catches the eye, refreshes with its fragrance, and almost whispers the message of love and joy. A good and true life is something like that, and such a life our story tells about. In the first part of this chapter we see what kind of soil a good life grows in, and how it is fed and kept. Such a life is seen to be very natural, and easy when it has these conditions. This first cluster of graces and virtues is a picture of one's life in his own home or in his home church. There is love, the glorious and beautiful queen among the life forces: love to God and love to man. There is business which really means here a quick energetic and constant doing of things for Christ and His cause. There is hope with its bright and radiant face, made possible by the faith and love which always accompany it. There is tribulation, whose root has a bitter taste, but which grows "the peaceable fruit of righteousness" in the soul. There is prayer which so easily and constantly is telling the Saviour all about everything. These graces all belong to the Christian, and the first pictures help to give you a better idea of them. But the best illustration of them is in a beautiful and godly life. Love is the queen of the cluster.

**Influence of One Life.** A Boston daily paper contained this item one day: "Phillips Brooks walked down Newspaper Row yesterday at lunch time, nodding and smiling as he passed many friends, and although the heavens were overcast with clouds and the pavements were wet with rain, the street seemed to be filled with sunshine." That was a

great thing to say of a great man. Phillips Brooks had a big heart. He was an unselfish Christian man. His thoughts were great and warm and his soul was bright and manly. He was a burning and a shining light, and he made the city of Boston brighter by living in it.

**Invisible Hands of Welcome.** The picture thought in that word "hospitality" is one in which the hands are extended to greet. It means that the person is really glad to see the coming guest, whether friend or stranger. It is quite different from that hospitality which is in words alone. The graces that are spoken of in this chapter are those which are shown to the world in general outside of home and church. In this group there is a dark grace also, shown by that picture of persecution. What are the hands of welcome to that? They are the forgiving spirit by which we are able to "bless them which persecute." The "joy and rejoice" extend glad hands of real pleasure and greeting. Those who weep find wonderful comfort and sympathy in the voice with tears in it and by the hands which soothe. Altogether it is a most beautiful picture of the true attitude towards the great outside world.

Do something for somebody, somewhere,  
While jogging along life's road;  
Help some one to carry his burden,  
And lighter will grow your load.

Do something for somebody gladly,  
'Twill sweeten your every care;  
In sharing the sorrows of others  
Your own are less hard to bear.

Do something for somebody striving  
To help where the way seems long;  
And the homeless hearts that languish  
Cheer up with a little song.

Do something for somebody always,  
Whatever may be your creed;  
There's nothing on earth can help you  
So much as a kindly deed.

—Rev. J. S. Cutler.

**A Right and Bright Example.** Every life touches the world of sin and sinners. It is very important that it be true to itself and to God. Only in this way can the world be made to see the beauty of the Christian life. After the twelve "blesseds", in the sermon on the mount Christ said, "ye are the light of the world". That was just another way of telling them to shine. And the true Christian will shine no matter how much there is to discourage. Moody said once, "Do you know what the moon did when the dog barked at it? It just kept on shining." Surely the Christian can do as well as the moon, for he has God's help in a special way. And the world needs just the light which the Christian can cause to shine out. The Christian will be just the opposite of that demon-looking fellow, sitting there with his falsehoods, slander, and hate. The Christian has truth and counsels and love; and by them he sets an example to all, and so commends the religion he professes. Even the youngest Christian can shine, when love is in the heart, and the need of others is seen.

Did you ever think what a dark and cheerless world this would be if no one cared or tried to let his light shine?

I read of a man once who had a dream of a world without God. All was dark and terrible, and under the power of Satan, for Christ alone can "bring life and immortality to light." This man sought everywhere for God, above, beneath, within, but found none. At last a great bell began to toll the hour of time which would plunge all into the gulf of a hopeless despair. Just then he awakened from sleep and was glad to find that it was only a dream. He rejoiced that there was a God of love, of life, of salvation, and that he had the privilege of making Him known to others.

How many there are who have never heard of the Christians' God! Some never will hear and love Him unless you and I are faithful to declare and reveal Him. Each one is a light in his own world, large or small. "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven."

**Why She Looked So Bright.** Grandma was attracted by the cheerful way of a little girl, and she asked her, "What makes you look so bright all the time?" "Why, I have to," said Susie. "You see, papa's been ill a long while, and mamma is tired

out with nursing, and the baby's cross with her teeth; and if I wasn't bright, who would be?"

"Yes, yes, I see," said dear old grandma, putting her arms around this streak of sunshine. "That's God's reason for things; they are because somebody needs them. Shine on, little sun; there couldn't be a better reason for shining than because it is dark at home." —Apples of Gold.

**How to Win an Enemy.** This story starts in the home, and now reaches to the outmost circle of life. It shows how one can not only conquer an enemy, but actually win him to be a friend. Napoleon could conquer his enemies, but he never made any of them over into friends. That picture of a man with a dagger is the Napoleon way of conquering an enemy. This, too, was the usual way in the world before Christ came and showed a better way. The pictures of giving food and drink are intended to teach that kindness of any sort is the very best way to win an enemy. There is an Irish proverb which reads, "A copper farthing given with a kind hand, is fairy gold, and blesses as it goes". So you see it is not the amount that is given, nor even what is given, which influences; but the spirit in which it is given. That last picture is a queer one. It almost makes one think of the burning bush which Moses saw. They are alike in that God was in both of them. The fire here is intended to show that these acts of kindness make one seem almost to burn with shame and regret that he ever had done harm to such a friend. He will now be changed from an enemy to a true friend. Every heart, however tightly locked has its key. By that key even the heart of an enemy can be opened to the Saviour and to man.

**The Alchemy of Love.** An ancient emperor having threatened to slay all his enemies who had engaged in a certain insurrection, he yet pardoned them all. On being taken to task for breaking his word, he declared he had kept it, for they are no longer enemies, but transformed into friends.—Foster's Cyclopaedia.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What are the nine fruits of the Spirit? .See Gal. 5:22, 23. 2. Is it right to love some persons more than others? 3. What special friends did Christ have? 4. How did Christ say we should love all others? 5. What is the great love ("charity") chapter of the Bible?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christian living will follow from Christian love. 2. Here are gathered all the deeper graces of the new life—loving, holy, humble, loyal, forgiving, sympathetic, kind, helpful, prayerful. 3. Each moment has its duty, and each person one meets offers an opportunity. 4. The Christian spirit transmutes and transforms all it touches—enemies, difficulties, sorrows, toils. 5. To overcome evil with good is the secret and summary of the Gospel of Christ. 6. "But if a brother hates and treats me ill, Must I return him good and love him still?" Echo: "Return him good, and love him still."

Dr. J. M. Coon.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSONS ARE: PSA. 33:12; PROV. 14:34; ROM. 13:1-10.

**Prayer:** Almighty God it is by Thy good pleasure that we have become a great nation sent to sow beside all waters and to multiply sure dwelling on the earth, deepen the root of our life in everlasting righteousness and let not the crown of our pride be as a fading flower. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Lord, while for all mankind we pray  
Of every clime and coast,  
O hear us for our native land  
The land we love the most.  
Unite us in the sacred love  
Of knowledge; truth and Thee  
And let our hills and valleys shout  
The songs of liberty.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATION.

**Historical Setting: Time and Place.** Psalm 33, anonymous. It was probably in use about 600 B. C. in connection with the national worship at Jerusalem. The Book of Proverbs may have been in general circulation in Israel about 1000 B. C. The Epistle to the Romans was written by Paul about A. D. 58. **Persons,** Roman Christians.

**Scripture Setting: The Nation at Peace.** Isa. 60:17-18. God in The National Life, Ezek. 34:25-28. The Duty of Good Citizenship. 1 Tim. 2:1-2. The Safeguard of Nations, Ps. 121:1-8. Love of

Country, Ps. 137:5-6. Praying for the Nation, Neh. 1:1-11. How to Make the Nation Prosperous, Deut. 28:1-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The Psalmist puts religion at the basis of national prosperity. 2. The Wise Man assures the people that there is no national greatness apart from ideals of righteousness and justice. 3. The Apostle sets forth the necessity of obedience to law as the foundation of the state's well being. 4. He also exhorts reverence for authority as the test of good citizenship.

### THE HIGHEST PATRIOTISM.

**The Necessity of National Life.** We do not choose to be born, nor do we choose the land of our birth. But being born we have a life to live; and being born in America we ought to live as Americans. Living as Americans we ought to see that the American manner of life is the best there is. Nominally this is a Christian nation. There is no state church; the name of Christ does not appear in the Constitution; many states do, and all might, exclude the Christian Bible from tax-supported schools. But in spite of this the national ideals to which we give allegiance are Christian ideals, the individual and public morality upon which we insist is Christian morality. The social and industrial relationship, imperfect and inadequate as they are, have as their informing spirit the Christian objective and the Christian rule of life. The founders of the nation were all profoundly religious men, differing of course in their theological points of view, but all uniting in the acceptance of Christ's ideal as the ideal of personal and national life. If we are to be loyal to the best traditions of the fathers of our country, we, too, must exalt and enforce the Christian ideal; it is this sort of righteousness which exalted a nation. This is our contribution to the nation's welfare.

**He Helped Put It There.** An American boy mortally wounded in the battle of Belleau Wood heard his comrades cheer. He asked eagerly what it meant. Upon being told that his comrades had "put the flag over" he sighed contentedly "I helped to put it there."

**The Bible and Patriotism.** The Bible is a manual of patriotism. The Jew had two passions, his country and his God. It is this,

in part, which makes the Bible a people's book. The passages most familiar and most popular are charged with this devotion. The stories of Ruth and of Esther widely different as they are in atmosphere and detail but identical in the central motive. The Psalms are full of passionate love for Israel and for Israel's God. "If I forget Thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." Jesus too was a patriot. See Him as He looks lovingly upon the city which has rejected Him. "How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings and ye would not."

**Religion in a Democracy.** In a nation governed by one or by a few the people do not need to think or to take responsibility for the public welfare. That is all done for them by their rulers. But in a democracy the situation is wholly different. The people must think; they must take responsibility; they are each other's keeper in spite of themselves. And if this is to be done in any adequate way two tempers are absolutely necessary—justice and brotherly kindness. Where are these tempers to be found? How are they to be nourished? It is only in a God-fearing nation that such tempers are developed and maintained.

**The Modern Pharisee.** Germany had a great deal to say about God, but it was merest lip-service. At heart she was thoroughly pagan. Had she truly learned of God she would never have entered upon a war of extermination as a means of promoting justice and brotherly kindness. God was on her lips, but not in her thoughts.

As a democracy therefore religion is necessary to our life and to our prosperity. It

is not in wealth to make or keep us great, nor in our form of government, nor in our national institutions, nor in our public schools. It is only in character, in that sturdy, indomitable and unconquerable integrity of mind and heart which is the fruit and the best fruit of religion.

**E Pluribus Unum.** Our nation is made up of many people. "We need a unifying and cementing principle. That, too, is found and found only in a people who exercise the supreme tempers of religion—justice and brotherly kindness. Only thus are we to be made one. Laws will help, economic adjustments will help, philanthropic activities will help. But a common passion for God is the one tremendous necessity. In a sense we have been chosen of God to make a real demonstration of the unity of the race, how God has made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth.

**The Blood of All the World.** At a dinner given to American soldiers by the French in the recovered city of Sedan, a young American officer spoke on behalf of his country and fellow soldiers. As a climax to his speech he took from his pocket a little silk flag his wife had sent him and presented it to the French officer who was presiding. The officer was profoundly moved. Springing to his feet he held the flag aloft and cried aloud, "The blood of all the world." Upon which the whole company stood, while all the French shouted, "Vive l' Amerique!"

**Religion and National Evils.** The nation is exposed to a variety of threatening evils. It is enough to name some: Mormonism, Vaticanism, Bolshevism, Luxury, Intemperance, Licentiousness, Unscrupulous Politics, Greed for wealth and the like. There is no natural remedy for such. It is only by the power of God that such devils can be cast out. While they remain the country is always in danger. And how is the power of God to be invoked in our behalf? Of course we must pray for it. But we must do more. We must work for it. There must be an

aggressive evangelistic spirit in the church; there must be a revival thorough and widespread of "family religion"; we must take the Sunday School seriously that the children of the nation may have their chance at religion; we must promote intelligently and earnestly all agencies of religious education that the rising generation may know and feel how significant religion is as a national asset.

**The Bible and the Public School.** Desirable as the Bible in the public schools may be it is not indispensable. It is better to avoid denominational controversy than to have the Bible mechanically read in the public schools under protest. It is for the church and the family to make the Bible not only popular but effective.

**Letter and Spirit.** The Bible was and is a text book in German schools. Bible instruction was and is systematic and thorough. Many young people are letter perfect both as to the Bible and the national church creed. But it lies unfruitfully in the mind. It is not quickened by the spirit. The outcome is a dead and powerless religion, a form of paganism.

**Quiz and Study:** 1. In what sense is our country Christian? 2. What is to be said about excluding the Bible from the public schools? What are some of the immediate perils to our national life? 3. What is the Christian attitude towards Roman Catholicism? 4. Towards Mormonism? 5. Towards enforcement of the Prohibition law? 6. Towards Socialism? 7. Towards foreign immigration? 8. Is Japan to be regarded as a threat at our national existence?

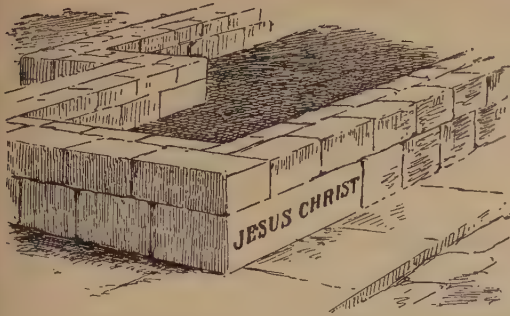
**Practical Thoughts:** 1. It is sweet to die for one's country; it is quite as sweet to live for it. 2. No nation can get along without God, least of all a democracy. 3. The best practical solution to our national problems is high character. 4. The nation has a right to look to the church as its right hand in making high ideals prevail. 5. National honesty is quite as imperative as individual honesty. 6. There can be no national security but on a basis of justice and brotherly kindness. 7. America should lead the world in a liberty which is protected by law.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART

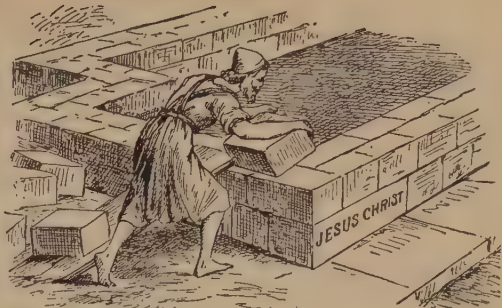


# THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

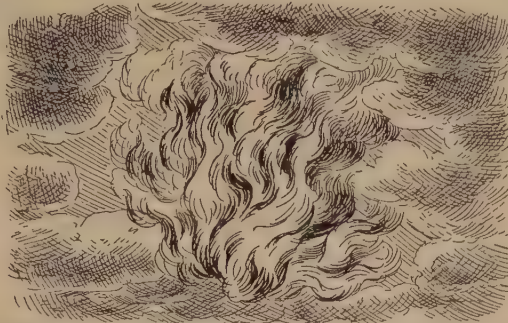
For other



can no  
man lay  
than that  
is laid,  
which is  
Jesus  
Christ.  
Now if  
any man



upon this foundation  
gold, silver, precious  
stones, wood, hay,  
stubble; Every man's  
work shall be made  
manifest: for the day  
shall declare it, because  
it shall be revealed by



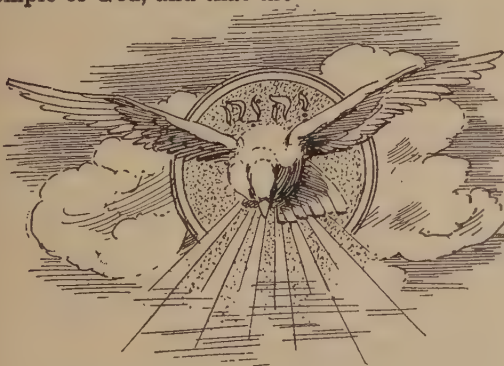
and the fire shall try  
every man's work of  
what sort it is. If any  
man's work abide which  
he hath built thereupon,  
he shall receive the



If any  
man's  
work  
shall be



he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the



of God  
dwelleth  
in you?  
If any  
man



the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I. COR. 3:11-17.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I thank Thee for this human body, so wonderfully made, so mysteriously responding to my will. And I thank Thee that Thou too wast made flesh and dwelt among men. Abide still, we pray Thee, in our midst. Send Thy Spirit into my heart, that as my body responds to my will, so my will in all things may respond to Thy Spirit. Thus shall my life be filled with power and glory. Amen.

“Soul—that mysterious thing,  
Which hath no limit from the walls of sense,  
No chill from hoary time, with pale decay  
No fellowship, but shall stand forth unchanged,  
Unscorched amid the resurrection fires  
To bear its boundless lot of good or ill.”  
—Sigourney.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Written by Paul from Ephesus in the spring of 57 A. D. It is now believed that Paul wrote to the Corinthian church an earlier letter, now lost, as well as the later one preserved as II Corinthians. The inhabitants of Corinth lived wantonly and luxuriously. The letter is a reply to the church there inquiring about the duties of a Christian life.

**Scripture Setting:** The Life Where God Dwelleth. False and true foundations, Matt. 7:24-27. Christ the foundation chosen of God, 1 Pet. 2:4-9. False temples and false worshippers, Jer. 7:2-11. The

temple of Christ's body, John 2:13-22. Heaven one vast temple, Rev. 21:1-4, 22-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This passage presents the church as the building of God. 1. Christ is Founder; His character and teachings the foundation. 2. Every life contributes something to its strength and adornment. 3. Life materials vary in value; only actions worthy and sincere survive the test. 4. Sin profanes the temple, alienating the Holy Spirit, robbing life of its glory, marring the image of God.

### HUMAN LIFE A DIVINE TEMPLE.

**Its Foundations Elected by Divine Choice.** “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” Originally the idea of a temple was the simplest possible. The priest in the most primitive times came forth carrying his holy measuring rod and his holy knife for cutting the turf. Entering the pasture meadow, he ran his line around a well-selected spot, and separated it from all the rest by a deep trench. Taking sole possession he dedicated it, as his *temple*, which means a portion cut off. No foot but his ever crossed that trench, no hand was ever raised there but his, and that only to sacrifice.

Now if we will go back in like manner to Christ's birth we shall see that the Holy Spirit acting as high priest ran the measuring line of consecration and sanctification around the body of one Virgin in all the world and decreed that the Holy Child to be born of her should be the only begotten Son of God. Later Mary was to have other sons, but the Holy Spirit first fell upon the mother of our Lord that His body might be a sanctified spot, a sacred site, a holy temple for a Holy Life. So that in the wide waste wilderness of our fallen human nature there is one selected, separated, sanctified spot of holy ground chosen of God to be kept forever inviolate as a prepared temple site—the character of Jesus. And thus it comes about that the whole society of the regenerate is looked upon as one great, united temple; Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone; in whom the whole building

fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord.

**Its Materials Selected by Human Choice.** “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest.” In Corinth existed side by side strange extremes of fortune: great temples in gorgeous splendor between which were the mean dwellings of the poor and profligate. The temples were constructed of marble and granite, the capitals of their columns and their roofs were richly decorated with silver and gold. The hovels of the poor had walls that were boarded up, with straw in the crevices, and roofs that were thatched with straw, or stubble. In a conflagration this difference of material would be very manifest, for while the noble temples would pass through the fire practically unharmed, the wretched edifices of wood and straw standing near would be burned to the ground. Is there anything else quite so important as the choice of the stuff we select to build into the temple of character?

King Solomon gathered gold and ivory and precious stones from afar for the walls of his temple, and so perfectly were the great stones hewn at the quarry that noiselessly the great fabric sprang into being. Through all the years of life we are silently building, by the choice of our thoughts, ideals, companionships, and pursuits.

A sleeper once dreamed that after death he was carried by angel hands to the skies. Deeply moved at the sight of noble mansions on either bank of the river of life, he asked for his. His complaint was bitter when the attending angel pointed to one



made of coarsest materials and daubed with mud. The angel could only reply, "You only complain against your own choice; for this was built of the materials you sent up to us day by day." He awoke, resolved that golden deeds and precious ministries should mark the rest of his life.

**The Builder's Responsibility for His Own Work.** "If any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss." It was not boasting when Paul declared that through the grace of God he was a wise master-builder. Paul built his lifework on the truth of the Gospel revealed in the person of Jesus. Stone by stone, course by course, year by year steadily grew the walls of his life's building till the capstone was laid in the blood of martyrdom.

**Its Fiery Test on the Judgment Day.** "The day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." The lapidary subjects doubtful jewels to the acid test. The paste imitations either crumble or are hopelessly eaten by the acid. The precious stones pass through the test unharmed and are set in places of honor in rings of dazzling gold.

The judgment day is the acid test of the Divine Judge. Some shall sit upon thrones forever; some shall pass out to eternal rejection. Only a life-work built on the Rock of Ages can endure the fiery ordeal of that long-expected day. Hearts will be sifted, conduct weighed, and motives laid bare. The light straw of hollow professions shall only feed the flames. Some described by Jeremiah as falsely crying, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we," shall be condemned. "I will cast thee out of my sight." But the least grain of the real gold of faith shall never be lost. "Rejoice that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto glory at the coming of Jesus Christ."

This passage is often quoted by the Roman church in support of purgatory, a supposed fire of purification and punishment which begins at the death of all who commit venial sin. But the fiery test described by Paul is not until the last day. The fire of purgatory tries the persons of men, the fire of Paul only their works. The fire of purgatory brings great gain to the sufferer; the fire of Paul brings great loss to the owner. The fire of purgatory is for a great intermediate class, neither the best nor the worst; the fire of Paul is for mankind universally. We conclude, then, that the doctrine of purgatory rests not upon Scripture but upon the practice of solicitous survivors praying for their dead.

**Its Indwelling Presence and Distinctive Glory.** "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" It is recorded that at the dedication of Solomon's temple when the priest brought into the holy of holies the ark of the covenant the glory of the Lord filled the place so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud or shekinah. It is also recorded that at the birth of Christ in Bethlehem the angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them. It was seen afterwards that as the Christ-child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, that the grace of God was upon Him.

The temple of Solomon taught that God communes with men; the incarnation of Christ taught that God dwells in man. One of the names given to Christ is very significant—Immanuel, which means *God with us*. Whenever a human soul clambers up to the consciousness that his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost his entire manhood is ennobled thereby.

Hang on the wall of an humble home some master's conception of the Madonna and her child, and the mother heart may learn there a new conception of motherhood. In the spirit of the picture she will teach her child the way of faith and prayer. The gracious influence of the Holy Spirit will begin to work in the living organism of that home. The human body is a wondrous temple, but the heart is the holy of holies where the glory of the Lord shines round about.

Lord Rosebury went to see Gladstone for the last time, when the great Christian statesman rose in his bed, saying, "Rosebury, mind your soul, mind your soul!"

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What patriarch set up and consecrated a stone to mark the spot where God blessed him? What did he name it? 2. In what did the Israelites worship during the return from Egypt? After what pattern was it built? 3. What three temples stood on Mount Moriah? 4. When and where did Jesus read to His neighbors, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me"? 5. What did Christ say to the Samaritan woman concerning where to worship? How to worship?

**Challenge Text.** "Know ye not that your body is the — of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of —, and ye are not your —." 1 Cor. 6: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The fundamental notion of temple is not construction, but separation, when through the religious motive we cut or sever a portion of time, interest, or possession for the highest use and honor. 2. There can be no true temple without true worshippers. 3. The presence of the Holy Spirit makes the soul God's most beautiful temple. 4. The church's foundation is not abstract doctrine about Christ, not scriptural history of Christ, not a human disciple of Christ, but the Divine-human Personality,—Christ Himself.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

## THE SCRIPTURE ACCOUNT IS 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-27; JOHN 6:1-14.

**Prayer:** In the multitude of thy mercies, O Lord, give to us real passion for the coming of Thy Kingdom which will lead us to seek and promote fellowship with all who are like minded. Help us in our measure to make real the desire of our hearts that all may be one in Him who alone can subdue all Kings unto Himself. Amen.

Help us to help each other Lord  
Each other's cross to bear;  
Let each his friendly aid afford  
And face his brother's care.

Help us to build each other up  
Our little stock improve;  
Increase our faith, confirm our hope  
And perfect us in Love.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, The first epistle to the Corinthians was written by Paul in the Spring of 56 A. D. Place, Just before he left Ephesus for Troas in the course of his third missionary tour (Acts, 19). Person, The Corinthian Christian. The Gospel of John is said to have been written by the beloved disciple some time toward the close of the first century A. D. Persons, The people of Galilee.

**Scripture Setting:** A Hymn of Brotherhood. Psa. 133. How one king works with another, 1 Kings, 5:1-12. A whole people working together, Neh. 3:1-32; 14:15-23. Good team work, 1 Sam. 14:1-23. The New Commandment, John 13:34; 15:12-17. The apostolic exhortation, 1 Thess. 4:9; 1 Peter 4:8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Every man has his gift; he is using it to the best purpose when he is using it for the advantage of the community and world. 2. His gift, whatever it is, comes from God who bestows it not as a personal perquisite, but for the common good. 3. Gifts differ, but all have their place in furthering the common interests. 4. The ideal situation is where every man subordinates his own good for the good of all and cordially acquiesces in a policy of the majority which looks unselfishly to bettering social conditions. 5. The common interest involves not simply material good, but intellectual, moral and spiritual good. 6. The union of Christian forces is one of the Kings most needed in our day. There is a duty laid upon every Church member of promoting such union in the spirit of heartiest co-operation.

### THE FIGURE OF THE BODY.

**Harmony in Working.** It is a striking figure the Apostle uses to urge the necessity of co-operation in the community life. It is true of any community; it is particularly true of the Christian community. The body, he says, is made up of many members, and all its members, many as they are, constitute one body. Comfort, delight and efficiency turn upon the people co-ordination and harmonious working of these members. Where one is deficient the whole is weakened. The members differ in function but they all contribute to the general well being of the body. The human frame is a masterpiece of God. He has adjusted the members each to each and each to the whole that, properly developed, we have the symmetrical man. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you," nor the head to the face, "I do not need you," but eye and hand, head and feet are integral parts of the whole and each necessary to the perfect working of the body. So, he concludes, ye are the body of Christ. If you begin disputing among yourselves as to which shall be greater, whether the one who teaches or the one who prophesies, or the one who works miracles, then it is as if the eye were denying the dignity of the hand and as if the head were despising the feet and the result that the whole body is crippled. This has been the bane of the Christian Community in all the centuries. Her divisions and

schisms have crippled her progress and have hindered rather than helped her success.

**A Condition of Progress.** Other Scriptures are equally insistent. The miracle of the loaves and fishes was performed not only to show that Jesus was the true bread come down from heaven, but also to show that in performing a miracle Jesus made use of all the helps offered Him by the people. He can get large social results even from the good natured open handedness of a hungry boy. Similarly when any are willing, in the day of His power, God can bring to pass the wonders of a changed world whether by the genius of Luther or Wesley or the humble efforts of Robert Raikes. Solomon was able to build a shrine in Jerusalem with the help of Hiram of Tyre and that shrine did more for the patriotism of Israel than any other one thing in the history of that wise and glorious ruler. Jonathan and his armor bearer by mutual support in a critical moment saved Israel and routed her enemies. The history of the world would have been changed had the armor bearer been unwilling for team work. The history of civilization is just one long and vivid commentary on the word of Paul, "We are members one of another." "Mutual aid," says one historian, "is the foundation of success; co-operation is one of nature's most effective agencies for a social standard and a social feeling."



**Some Maxims on Co-operation.** Some of the national proverbs illustrate this truth: "Woe to him who stands alone even though his platter be full," says a Slavic proverb. "He that belongs to no community is like unto one without a hand." "The common household waxes rich." "The more bees in the hive, the heavier it weighs." "United we stand, divided we fall." The recent war furnishes a memorable illustration of the value of working with others. It was when the Allies got together and recognized a unified leadership that Germany was defeated. In response to the question, "What is the greatest need of the world today?" Mr. John D. Rockefeller replied, "The world needs above all else co-operation, that is, working together, which implies friendship, brotherhood, mutual endeavor, mutual sympathy, and mutual support."

**Co-operation in Church Work.** The most important issue for the church in these days is that of Church federation and Church union. The issue has two aspects—one relating to interdenominational co-operation, the other to denominational union. There is no reason of consequence which makes necessary so many kinds of Methodists, or Presbyterians or Baptists or Lutherans. The world would be vastly more Christian without this accentuation of what in the very nature of the case must be incidental and immaterial differences. The waste of money, of effort and of temper which annually goes towards perpetuating these differences is little short of criminal. It is the perpetual scandal of our modern Church life.

There may be valid reasons for the distinctions between Presbyterian and Methodist, between Episcopalian and Lutheran, between Roman Catholic and Protestant. But there is no valid reason why these churches might not co-operate to a greater extent than they do. The churches exist not for themselves but for the Kingdom of God. When, in any given community, they become rivals rather than helpers of each other they sin against the most sacred interests of the Kingdom. There are many community enterprises upon which they might and could unite. There are many communities from which feeble and dying churches might profitably withdraw, leaving the field to more prosperous and aggressive churches.

**How Co-operation May Be Secured.** For this desirable end there is but one virtue necessary—the passion of love for the Kingdom. In that atmosphere all things are possible,

even the disappearance of rivalries and the assertion of an active and attractive unity. The Presbyterian in our day has substantially the same gospel as the Methodist and, for that matter, all the evangelical churches. It cannot hurt a Methodist to hear the Gospel from Presbyterian lips, or for a Baptist to get religion in a Congregational revival.

One used to hear a great deal about the fundamental differences between Calvinism and Arminianism; it was indeed the battle ground of the Presbyterians and Methodists for many a year. But just what happened? The great revivalists of this country, Jonathan Edwards, Gilbert Tennent, Charles G. Finney, Dwight Moody were all Calvinists and not the last nor the least of the products of their work was the great army of converts who found their way into the Methodist fold.

**The Dawn of Better Days.** We are very much better off in the matter of Christian co-operation than we used to be. In this the Church has been helped by Christian movements outside of the Church. The temperance campaigning which has been steadily maintained during the greater part of our national history has shown how Christians may think theologically apart but work practically together. The various philanthropic movements, notably, the Young Men's Christian Association, the hospital movements, missionary enterprises and settlement work have all helped to a new feeling about the essential oneness of all professing the Christian faith. The return of the soldiers helped still further. At the front in the world's war denominational differences were hardly thought of. An exalted Christ brought all together in the hope of a common and complete salvation in Him who loved us and gave Himself for us.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How many denominational divisions are there in Protestant Christianity in the United States? 2. Are these divisions necessary? 3. When there are two or more churches in a community which might decently support one what should be done? 4. Should not all evangelical churches unite to support a week day school of religious education? 5. What is the value of a reasonable denominationalism?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. It is the mission of the church to make God near and dear to the world. 2. A church united in this common aim and working harmoniously and earnestly together is the most efficient instrument for getting this accomplished. 3. Denominationalism has its value, but it is a sin to make of it a Fetich. 4. Different denominations may be one in spirit though separate in organization. 5. A passion for the Kingdom is the best qualification for church membership. 6. The indifferent church member is the greatest hindrance to the success of the Gospel. DR. CHARLES M. STUART.

And though I bestow all my goods to



and  
though  
I give  
my body  
to be



and have not charity it profiteth me nothing

Charity suffereth long and is kind  
Charity envieth not  
Charity vaunteth not itself  
Is not puffed up  
Doth not behave itself unseemly  
Seeketh not her own  
Is not easily provoked  
Thinketh no evil

Rejoiceth not in iniquity but  
Rejoiceth in the truth  
Beareth all things  
Believeth all things  
Hopeth all things  
Endureth all things  
Charity never faileth:  
And now abideth



these three; but the greatest of these is charity.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I COR. 13.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, Thou art the embodiment of love at its best. Thou hast put a Heavenly radiance and glory on all earthly loves. Thy Kingdom is a Kingdom of love, and Thy subjects are subjects of the heart. Help us to see Thee in Thy wondrous spiritual beauty. Then help us to reflect that love and life to all about us. For Christ's sake. Amen.

"Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust  
(Since He who knows our need is just),  
That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.

Alas for him who never sees

The stars shine through the cypress trees!  
Who hath not learned in hours of faith  
The truth to flesh and sense unknown,  
That Life is ever lord of Death,  
And Love can never lose its own."

—John G. Whittier.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 57. Place, written at Ephesus. Persons, Paul to the Christians at Corinth.

**Scripture Setting:** Christian Love. Love described, 1 Cor. 13. Love and law, Rom. 13:1-14. Love commanded, John 13:31-38. Obedience of love, John 14:15-24. The great commandment, Matt. 22:34-46. Love is of God, 1 John 4:4-14. The climax of love, 1 John 3:14-24. Love and service, 2 Cor. 8:8-24.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** This inspired encomium on love is unsurpassed in all literature. It sets forth the nature, place and power of love.

1. Love's queenly position and worth, verses 1-3. It is (1) superior to eloquence, (2) superior to learning of all kinds, (3) superior to faith at its greatest and best, (4) superior to sacrificing toil, and even martyrdom. 2. Love's royal train of virtues and graces, verses 4-7. Six of them are of the negative type, and eight of them of the positive kind. What a splendid retinue of attendants on this heart queen! 3. Love's abiding supremacy and power. Love endures even after the supernatural gifts have passed away. Love is the goal and climax of all, and abides ever as the greatest of all—the greatest thing on earth, and the greatest thing in Heaven.

### A LOVE LETTER TO THE CHURCH.

**Love Superior To All Gifts.** Did you ever see the jewel called a "sunburst?" It is composed of pearls or diamonds, or both, so set together as to reflect the light in many charming ways. However you look at it, it sparkles and flashes, as if a bit of the sun itself were struggling to get free, and in the effort all is made most beautiful.

Love is the "sunburst" gift and grace. Of the one hundred great chapters of the Bible this thirteenth of 1st Corinthians might be called the "sunburst" chapter. Love is a queen, and in this chapter she is radiant and glorious in her beauty. This is one of the short chapters of the Bible, but for importance it stands far up the line towards the top. Some great gifts are named in the first verses of this chapter, but love is greatest of all. There is eloquence, the gift of tongues, which sometimes seems to have the very message of Heaven in it, and the very voice of an angel; but it is all only as so much vain clatter if love be absent. Next is a group of three great gifts—a power which is very much like a genuine inspiration, and a knowledge that is full and wonderful, and a faith that seems to accomplish the impossible; but if one have all of them yet he is nothing if love be lacking. Then there is the angel of mercy, laden with needed blessings, and actually sacrificing life to bestow the blessings; yet it brings no credit or joy or power if there is no love in the service.

**Love Inspires All Graces.** Here is a won-

derful list of qualities, and all in the ordinary life and such as should be and can be manifested by everyone. There are fourteen in all, and someone has said that "these seven graces of love shine like the seven colors of the rainbow, and as the rainbow is a token of the power of the sun over the rain, so love shows itself mighty in and over the natural heart of man."

Let us name some of these beautiful rays or colors, which show what love is. Love is patient, for that is what is meant by long-suffering; patient over the slowness and weakness and even the wickedness of others. Love is kind, and ever on the watch to help others to do and be their best; full of thoughtful service for others. Love is generous, and does not envy the good which others have, and is even willing that others should be first and more favored. Love is humble, and does not vaunt itself, for it is all the time thinking and planning for others. Love is courteous, and very careful about her manners; is winsome in all that she does; is never rude or harsh, but always polite and respectful. Love is unselfish in spirit and act. Instead of looking out for number one, she is rather seeking to give than to receive. She is happiest when all others are happy. Love is sweet-tempered, not allowing anything or any person to provoke her or make her fretful. Love is open hearted, and never takes account of the faults of others in her notebook. She does not even think any evil of them. Love is

sincere, without any dross or foreign substance in it, to mar its purity; is not glad when others fail or fall, but rejoices with every good thing and good person everywhere.

**Secret of Home Happiness.** "We never quarrel," said one member of a delightful family, "because when one of us is slightly off color, and inclined to say naughty things, some one else immediately begins to talk in a particularly good humored strain. The antidote works like a charm, and the first thing we know the threatened storm has blown over."

There are three garments which should be worn in the home in order to make it a happy home. First is that charming covering, thoughtfulness for others. It becomes everybody, imparting to the wearer a peculiar beauty all its own. Then there is the mantle of large human sympathies, a beautiful garment capable of sheltering many besides the owner. And, lastly, there is the robe of love, which envelops from head to foot with a radiance so splendid that it not alone protects the wearer, but seems to draw the sting from every unkind word and look.—Ex.

**Love Does More Than All.** Nothing is too great or too hard for love. The seventh verse in this chapter is the "all things" verse, and love does not hesitate to undertake to do these "all things." Love "beareth all things," or covereth them as with a mantle. The word has a picture in it, as of a roof that does not leak. As a mother in every right way will cover the faults of her child, so love does. Love "believeth all things," that is, believeth the best always. Love is a true optimist in all her pictures of the world and of the people in it. She is constantly making credit marks for persons and things, and then helps to make them true in every case. Love "hopeth all things," and goes right on believing that the hope will be realized. Hoping often against hope, and when all others are discouraged. Even if she can not see the good ahead she is sure it will be found after the next turn in the road. Love "endureth all things," continuing to think good thoughts and perform good deeds in spite of all difficulties and perils, and in spite of all hardships and sacrifices.

**The Heart of Love Is Sacrifice.** Love does not consist in giving and receiving praise, flattery, compliments and personal favors. All this may exist, to be sure, where there is love; it generally does. But it may also exist where there is no love. Love is a self-sacrifice; it is a life out of self and in another. Its very essence is the preferring of the comfort, the ease, the wishes of another to one's own for the love we bear to that other. Love is giving and not receiving. Love is not a sheet of blotting paper or a sponge, sucking in everything to itself; it is an outspringing fountain, giving from itself. Its motto and mission is to make all others happy and loving.—Ex.

**Love Is the Greatest of All.** Professor

Drummond has written a little book on "The greatest thing in the world." It tells the story of this wonderful chapter. Love is greatest in its origin and nature and ministry. It is greatest in its power to do things, and in the many different ways it has for doing them. It is greatest because it is most like God, and greatest because it comes from Heaven and returns to Heaven. It is greatest for it never fails and abides for ever. It is greatest for it makes man most like God in spirit and conduct. It is greatest in that all may have it and all should have it. Here are some of the things which men have said about love: "Love alone has unconditional worth. It carries in itself its own contents. Everything else obtains worth through it. It puts the crown on all excellencies." "The central gift of Christianity—not transient, but permanent—the diamond excellence, of which all other virtues are a phase, is love." "All critics look upon this chapter as one of Paul's genuine gems. It has something of the rhythm, as well as the splendor, of poetry in it." "Love is not only an eternal grace, but the highest among the eternal; other graces contribute to Heaven, but love constitutes Heaven."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. This is one of the ten greatest chapters of the Bible. Can you name some of the other nine? 2. What are the six negative qualities of love? 3. What are the eight positive qualities? 4. Who is called the apostle of love? 5. Who might be called the apostle of faith? 6. And who the apostle of work?

**Challenge Text.** "And be ye ——— one to another, tender-hearted, ——— one another, even as God for ——— sake hath ——— you." Eph. 4: (?)

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Love is the greatest gift. (1) It is greatest in its nature, noblest, deepest, happiest, most pervasive, most heavenly. (2) It brings us closest to God; makes us partakers of His nature, His children and heirs. (3) It is the one thing without which faith and hope are of little avail. (4) It is the most powerful, exerts the widest influence for good, is the strongest motive for the upbuilding of character. (5) It is universal. Every person, of every degree, may have this love. More than all other things together, it makes those that have it "free and equal." (6) With faith and hope, love is eternal. The longer one lives, the more love he can have. It will expand and grow forever and ever, in increasing blessedness and glory.—Peloubet. 2. Love is not only the best gift, but discovers and uses the best. 3. All things take their rank and get their power from the heart, which is the governing principle of the spiritual life. 4. Love is the greatest of gifts, but it may be had and used by the least of saints. 5. Love is both the gold and the gliding of the character and the life.

"Can I be stem, and another be wheat?

Can I be shell, and another be meat?

Another be head, while I am feet?

Yes, if God will."



# THE RESURRECTION.

Behold, I  
shew you  
a mystery;  
We shall  
not all sleep,  
but we  
shall all be



In a  
moment,  
in the  
twinkling  
of an eye,  
at the last  
trump: for the



shall  
sound,  
and the  
dead  
shall be



Incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this



shall  
have  
put  
on



then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written,



is  
swallowed  
up in





## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I COR. 15:12-26, 50-58.

**Prayer:** "O gracious God, grant that before Thou takest from me that breath which Thou gavest me, I may truly repent of the errors of my life past; that my sins may be forgiven, and my pardon sealed in Heaven, so that I may have a place of rest in Paradise with Thy faithful servants, till the general resurrection, when the good Lord vouchsafe to me a better and an everlasting life, through Jesus Christ. Amen." Prayer of Bishop Wilson.

"Now I hold you fast in my hand,  
You marvellous butterfly,  
Till you help me to understand  
Life's infinite mystery,  
From that creeping thing in the dust  
To this shining bliss in the blue!  
God give me courage to trust  
I shall break my chrysalis too."  
—Alice Freeman Palmer.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Same as previous lesson. The letter itself indicates it was written by Paul about Easter in the third year of his residence at Ephesus. This chapter was written primarily to refute the free-thinkers who formed a party within the Corinthian church.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ's Resurrection the Supreme Fact. Prophecy of the resurrection fulfilled, Acts 2:23-32. Many resurrection witnesses, 1 Cor. 15:3-11. The Apostles, personal resurrection witnesses, Acts 1:15-26. Walking in newness of life, Rom. 6:4-11. A heavenly voice and the angel reaper, Rev. 14:13-16.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul's argument

shows the effect of the resurrection on religious faith: 1. Four infallible proofs of His resurrection: (a) the guards are helpless, the stone is rolled away, (b) He appears afterwards to many, talking and eating, (c) fear and despair depart from the disciples, (d) a new moral life springs up wherever the Gospel is preached. 2. Four certain results: (a) the law's penalty cancelled, (b) death's sting removed, (c) Christ's last foe defeated, (d) a seal of Divine credibility placed on faith and testimony. 3. Four incredible results of disbelief: (a) the Apostles are false witnesses, (b) life and death of Christ in vain, (c) human sin still without a remedy, (d) all dead believers have perished.

### OUR DELIVERER FROM THE DREAD OF DEATH.

**The Foundation Fact of Faith.** "If Christ be not raised, then is our preaching vain." Dr. J. G. Holland has not inappropriately called the proclaiming of the Gospel the world's great business enterprise. He conceives of the Holy Trinity as a firm with headquarters in Heaven, engaged in the business of supplying the world's need and hunger with the bread of the Gospel. He calls every minister and missionary an agent, every church and mission a branch office. The commission reads that they are to go quickly, that they are to scatter broadly, that they are to labor unwearyingly. This commission, as an agent of his Lord, Paul accepted. In the eagerness of his going; in the wide area of his scattering; and in the deathless zeal he exhibited, perhaps he outstripped all the other agents of the enterprise. Yet all he had done in a busy lifetime he acknowledged was undone, might better never have been done, if the resurrection of Christ was a myth. So sure was he of his foundation fact that Christ arose, that he built like one who knows his life work will outlast the years.

Originally, preaching consisted mainly in witnessing to the resurrection. Only those who had seen Jesus after He had risen from the dead were eligible to become Apostles. That they were all competent witnesses is evident, possessing the capacity, the opportunity, and the integrity to establish the fact beyond question. Vain indeed was that preached word and those faithful lives if the resurrection was a myth. For most of the Apostles, like Paul, went to a martyr's death with a resistless testimony that Christ arose. Beheaded

on the Appian Way, in sight of the seven hills of Rome, how powerfully did Paul preach the resurrected Christ, declaring, as it seemed, with his last gasp, "It is true!"

**First Fruits of the Harvest Home.** "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Beautifully does Paul describe in this Jewish figure from the harvest field how the sleeping dust of dead humanity shall become the glorious harvest of the skies. When the first ripened heads of grain appeared in Palestine they were hailed with rejoicing as the pledge of a bounteous harvest coming later, and were cut off to be borne to Jerusalem. No grain could be harvested, no kernels crushed, no bread made out of the new wheat until this thank-offering was presented at the Lord's house in Jerusalem. The wide fields were consecrated by making Jehovah Lord of the harvests. The first fruits were laid up as a guarantee of all the rest. Then they hurried away to the fields; and all through Judea they thrust in the sickle, the grain was reaped, gathered into sheaves, and borne in an ox cart into their barns. Once more, after their children had eaten bread baked from the new wheat, they came up to the temple. At the national feast of thanksgiving a grateful people shouted "Harvest home."

Christ's triumph over death is only the first fruits. There will be a glorious harvest of resurrection. Christ was the first of all our race to rise by His own power from the grave. The grim reaper Death did not snatch the crown of victory, but Christ as victor seized the deathless crown of im-



mortality and ascended to His Father. He went up amid the shouts of angels to sit upon a throne. And ever since, His angels, like the reapers, have been busy gathering in the ripened sheaves. Christ the first fruits assures us that the sleeping dust of every continent shall be quickened into the glorious golden grain of eternal life. Asia shall send her brown people, Africa her dark-skinned believers, Europe her sons of many tongues, and America her children of the faith. From ocean bed, from mountain top, from desert plain, from deep ravine, from islands of the southern seas shall come the uprising of humanity, the nations waking from their long sleep.

**Death's Dread Dragon Destroyed.** "He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The earliest Christian art, traced upon stone, represents Christ as standing triumphant upon the back of a dragon. The final book of the Bible represents Him with hair white as wool, with eyes like a flame of fire, and with a voice sounding as many waters, standing triumphant, holding the keys of hell and death. This means that when the sinless and resistless Son of God died and entered the underworld the walls fell before His Divine power, the devils fled, the prisoners' chains snapped and the power of death was broken.

In the catacombs underneath Rome, Christ is pictured on these burial walls as coming forth from the grave on the resurrection morning bearing the cross upon His shoulders in triumph. Looking upon this ancient picture one feels like shouting back, "O grave, where is thy victory?" Christ's victory has changed the world's attitude towards death. The gates that lead to the tomb may be beaten iron on the outside, but through the Christian revelation they are beaten gold within. According to the original arrangement of God, and by the conquest of Christ over sin and the grave, "to die is gain." Every personal exception to this is due to the marring interference of personal sin and unfaith. Since Jesus once died, but now lives and reigns above, we can look upon the shadowy king who bears his prey to the tomb and remember the words of a mightier King who said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

**The Fabric of Flesh Exchanged for the Resurrection Robe.** "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." Paul does not attempt to clear away the mystery of the resurrected body, for it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but this much he knows, that when Christ shall appear we shall be like Him. If the natural body is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. Paul had a mounting and ardent soul, a swift and keen intellect, but he conceived of his diseased and sinful body as a groaning load of clay. So he waited almost impatiently the glad hour of exchange and release. It was like the dream in the breast of the worm

which feels its old house decaying and dreams a dream of wings, and gardens of beauty, and vaster power soon to be its own. God will not disappoint even a caterpillar, and the worm gets its wings.

Berkley says, "I find in myself a strong natural desire for immortality. I have not observed that natural appetites are wont to be given in vain, or merely to be frustrated." Be sure the unrevealed is better than our best thoughts. And Christ has said that no dream of man is too noble for man's full realization; "If it were not so I would have told you." Thus the silence of Jesus concerning the resurrection life becomes as profoundly significant as His spoken words.

**The Steadfast Foundations of Doctrine and Experience.** "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." Those who have neither studied the evidences of the New Testament nor entered into the victorious experiences of a Christian life, might wish that the promise of a resurrected body were true, yet feel an insecurity about its fulfillment. To them this lesson might appear as a bright, triumphal arch reaching to the skies, on which Christ has written, "Because I live, ye shall live also," yet almost too good to be true, built on airy and feeble foundations.

But Paul assures the Christian believers at Corinth that the best part of this glorious good news is that it is a truth resting on tried and true foundations. There were plenty of other religions in Corinth. Sacred places had been built yesterday, only to be abandoned today; others would be abandoned tomorrow. But the proclaimer of this resurrection faith declared that the Man whom he preached was Divine, and had proved His divinity by opening the eyes of the blind, stilling the waters of the sea, living a stainless and holy life, raising the dead to life, and, wonder of wonders, raising Himself from the grave. Thus He had accompanied His proclamation by a demonstration, and men must believe that the words spoken were as genuine as the miracles and cures wrought.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Name ten distinct appearances of the risen Christ. 2. What object in nature does Paul use to illustrate the resurrection? What condition precedes the new life? 3. To what incident did Christ allude in the Old Testament as a sign of His resurrection? To what object then standing? 4. What two Old Testament characters were translated without natural death? What two returned to this life to talk with Christ? 5. Who in this lesson is represented as bringing death on the race? As the penalty of what? Who removes the penalty? Through what means?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Three voices attest the resurrection: the voice of nature in life from decay; the voice of the inner spirit awakening hope; the voice of Scripture confirming the others. 2. Christ is the last Adam, being the Restorer and last Head of humanity. 3. Our Benefactor offers to build us a better house though not of the same precise materials. 4. Death drops the flower that the fruit may swell.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a



differ  
eth  
noth  
ing  
from  
a



though  
he be  
lord  
of  
all;  
But  
is  
under



and governors until the time appointed of the



Even  
so  
we,  
when  
we  
were



were  
in



under the  
elements of  
the world:  
But when  
the fulness  
of the time  
was come,  
God sent  
forth his



made  
of  
a



made under the  
law, To redeem  
them that were  
under the law,  
that we might  
receive the  
adoption of  
sons. And  
because ye are



God hath sent  
forth the Spirit  
of his Son into  
your hearts, crying,  
Abba, Father.  
Wherefore thou  
art no more a



but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.



**THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS GAL. 4:1-16.**

**Prayer:** I thank Thee, Lord Jesus, that through Thy coming in the fulness of time all the children of men may become the children of God. I would not remain all my days a servant in the house. Impart to me, then, the Holy Spirit, that I may have the inward witness that I belong to the family of God. Let me by simple faith and obedience look up and say Abba, my Father. Show me the Father's love and reconciliation through Thine own life and death, and Thy name shall have the praise. Amen.

"We rear not a temple like Judah's of old,  
Whose portals were marble, whose vaultings were gold;  
No incense is lighted, no victims are slain,  
No monarch kneels praying to hallow the fane.  
O come in the power of Thy life-giving Word,  
And reveal to each heart its Redeemer and Lord;  
Till faith bring the peace to the penitent given,  
And love fill the air with the fragrance of Heaven."  
—Henry Ware, Jr.

**THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.**

**Historical Setting:** A controversial epistle written by Paul to the churches of Galatia, a Roman district in Asia Minor, for the purpose of refuting the errors of the Judaizing teachers. It was written from Corinth during the winter of 57-58 A. D.

**Scripture Setting: The Contrast Between Grace and Good Works.** The futility of works, Eph. 2:8-22. Justification by faith, Rom. 3:19-31. Works as a sign of living faith, Jas. 2:14-26. Cain and Abel contrasted, Gen. 4:1-7. Turning back to bondage, Num. 11:4-15. A teacher of good works seeking grace, John 3:1-8.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage teaches that Christ came: 1. "When ye knew not God;" man's inability to save himself either by following

conscience or the works of the law requiring a Saviour. 2. "In the fulness of time," the world being at peace, possessing a perfect language (Greek), controlled by a single political system (Roman). 3. "At the time appointed by the Father," the time around which the prophecies of the ages centered. 4. For the purpose of "redeeming them that are under the law," offering them "the adoption of sons." 5. To be a perfect Saviour; filled with Divine power (God's Son), yet possessing a human nature (born of a woman), fulfilling human righteousness (born under the law), submitting to ordinances (circumcision and baptism).

**BOND MEN UNDER LAW, BUT SONS IN THE GOSPEL.**

**Paul Preaches the Gospel in Galatia.** "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the Gospel unto you at the first." The Apostle dearly loved the church in Galatia, having established it himself as a result of the preaching of his first missionary journey. But now his heart is saddened to know that their first love is turned to suspicion, if not to enmity. They had listened to false teachers who persistently invaded the churches founded by Paul and taught among his converts, Jewish doctrines quite contrary to the Christian faith. They were called Judaizers because, originally Jews, they insisted that the Jewish rite of circumcision in addition to faith in Christ was necessary to salvation. In the Roman province of Galatia they had already obtained so strong a footing that Paul feared lest his work there might be entirely undone.

**Binding Burdens on Their Own Backs.** "Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years." Paul's labors in Galatia placed him in a position to speak to the church as plainly as a father speaks to his child. He had hoped to find free, spontaneous, and glad service. Instead they gave their minds to petty distinctions and fine discriminations of the laws of Judaism, quarrelling between themselves. Paul was especially fitted to lead them out from all this since he himself was once "subject to ordinances," a slave to Pharasaic observances.

Ruskin describes somewhere in his works the dark and tedious Sunday that was commonly observed in England during his childhood. He declares that the day threw backward a dark shadow for three days whenever it approached. A modern teacher has declared that it is the duty of parents to make Sunday the gladdest and brightest day for their children of all the week. To observe the day religiously is not to fence it in with prohibitions only, but to fill it with delightful memories and exercises worth while.

**Servants in Subjection to Law.** "The heir so long as he is a child differeth nothing from a servant, but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father." The law, in Paul's view, was a preparatory system, useful for a time, but it has now passed away.

Christianity is itself complete and sufficient and does not need to be supplemented by Judaism. The figure here employed is a home in which the father places over the two youths therein certain teachers or governors. One of these at twenty-one steps forth from this discipline a free man prepared for his broad career, since he is a full son. The other remains in the house, still subject to authority, since he is only a servant.

Now Judaism was in bondage to customs, times, places, apparel, vessels, and ordinances such as circumcision and the washing of

hands. Depending upon his own good works the Jew feigned prayers, fasted, kept holy days, contributed to charity, and observed the many ceremonies of religion, but could never expect to inherit all the good things of the Father for this, since he was a servant of works. But the true son had acknowledged his own frailty, confessed his sins, ceased to trust in works, and relied solely on the grace and mercy of God in Christ. The Spirit of God had sealed his sonship, giving him the witness of his justification and allowing him to look up into his Father's face and repeat the old expression of an endearing childhood: Abba or Papa.

**Sons in the Freedom of Faith.** "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." It was many centuries after Adam's fall that God actually sent forth His Son, though many a faithful one like Abraham by the anticipation of faith availed himself of the atonement in Christ. For the salvation of Christ was more than an event in time; it was the Divine attitude of mind reaching backward as well as forward from the cross. As soon as you believe in Christ He comes to you, a Deliverer and Saviour, and from that moment your bondage is over.

The relation of Cain and Abel, though they were brothers laboring side by side, was that of a servant and a son in the household. "The Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering." Abel was first counted righteous and acceptable to God, and then for his sake his offering was accepted also, and not because of his offering. Cain's offering was not acceptable because God had no respect for Cain. Under law it is vainly imagined that God will accept the worker because of his work; whereas under grace what really happens is that God accepts the work for the worker's sake. The poor prodigal returned to his manhood, his freedom, and his lost sonship; when empty-handed he threw himself on the tender mercies of his father. No doubt he did good work ever after, but that did not restore him; he was restored because he believed in and accepted his father's grace and forgiveness.

**Released from the Bondsman, Yet Returning to Bondage.** "But now after ye have known God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements." It was impossible, as Paul points out, to combine two utterly inconsistent theories of salvation. Their return "to the weak and beggarly elements" may have been an allusion to the historic turning back of Israel. In the wilderness they had been fed with manna which fell like the dew fresh from heaven each day. But "they remembered the fish which they did eat in Egypt, the cucumbers, and

the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick." Freed from Egypt they were not yet free from the appetites and tastes they had acquired there. Travelling to Canaan, where they were to feast on milk and honey, their sensual minds still fed on the leeks, onions, and garlick of Egypt.

To become righteous and acceptable to God is to enter into Canaan. This is done, the Gospel teaches, by reposing wholly in Christ, denying ourselves and distrusting our own strength. To such He gives His Spirit, making them anew, giving them another reason and another will. Could good works produce this change, Jesus need not have died. The inward change described to Nicodemus as the new birth is always the work of Divine grace, never the product of good works.

**Paul's Personal Appeal as a Faithful Friend.** "I bear you record that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes and have given them to me. Am I, therefore, become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" In a doctrinal letter full of weighty argument Paul makes a powerful personal appeal. Once when he tarried among them for a long while preaching a pure Gospel under great difficulties, probably afflicted by the serious weakness of his eyes, they would have gladly exchanged if possible their own good eyes for his diseased ones.

Now all is changed. Paul will be their true friend, whatever the cost. He remembers how he suffered with their disease when as a bigoted Pharisee he sought peace through obedience to the Mosaic law. But in the midst of this old life his natural eyes were suddenly blinded by the light of Heaven, and there came into his soul a new conception and a new experience,—the knowledge that the justified are justified not by their own good works but by faith in Jesus Christ. Paul may not have won back all of the foolish and bewitched Galatians, but he became a faithful friend to us all in so forcefully presenting salvation, not as a work achieved by human struggle or deserving, but a gift freely bestowed upon simple acceptance and self-surrender.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Whose children are mentioned by Paul as illustrating servants under law, sons under grace. 2. What capacity did the law fulfill in bringing Paul to Christ? 3. In what three respects did Christ become obedient to the law? 4. What distinction is implied in Christ's words, "I return to My Father and to your Father"?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The believer, dying, loses his earthly inheritance, but thereby gains a Heavenly one. 2. The Divine inheritance being "incorruptible," cannot be revoked by law, and, being neither perishable nor transferable, "fadeth not away." 3. Types, sacraments, symbols, and creeds are childhood's alphabet; faith's higher knowledge treats of the spiritual and unseen. 4. "Abba, Father," implies indulgent love, ample provision, sufficient protection, necessary correction, forgiveness, and evokes gratitude, reverence, obedience, and filial affection.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# REAPING THE HARVEST.

Be not  
deceived;  
God  
is not



for  
what-  
soever  
a man



that  
shall  
he  
also



For he that



to his  
flesh  
shall  
of the  
flesh  
reap



but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap



everlasting.  
And let  
us not be



in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS GAL. 6:1-10.

**Prayer:** Eternal God, who committeth to us the swift and solemn trust of life, since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving Thee is always present, may we wake to the instant claims of Thy holy will.

Consecrate with Thy presence the way our feet may go; and the humblest work will shine, and the roughest places be made plain. Amen.

—James Martineau.

"We know that the truth shall triumph,  
That evil shall have its doom;  
That the cause of right, though subdued by might,  
Shall break the strongest tomb;  
That wrong, though it seem to triumph,  
Lasts only for a day;  
While the cause of truth has eternal youth,  
And shall rule o'er the world for aye."  
—Anon.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Same as last lesson. The Galatians were of Celtic origin and naturally vacillating. Paul varies from tenderness to sternness with an undernote of sadness that they had forsaken their warm-hearted teacher.

**Scripture Setting:** **Human Helpfulness and Its Harvest.** Taking advantage of the right season, Eccles. 3:1-11. Returns from seed sown broadcast, Eccles. 11:1-10. Providing corn for his brethren, Gen. 45:3-15. Kindness in the harvest field, Ruth 2:1-12. The right kind of sowing, Eph. 4:25-32. The harvest that crowns the year, Psal. 65:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage teaches

the effect and accountability of influence. 1. Responsibility for doing good: (a) spreading good-will everywhere, especially to the fallen; (b) spreading good things to support and publish the Gospel, especially in our own town; (c) spreading good seed at all times, especially in favorable seasons and places. 2. Effects of personal influence: (a) good work satisfies the worker and lifts the condition of his fellow workmen; (b) each man must do his own work, but with regard for the rights, needs, and wishes of others; (c) honest work outlasts the worker's own day; careless work tumbles on the worker's head.

## THE BEARING OF OUR BURDENS.

**The Burdens we Should Share.** "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." Evidently there are two great classes of burdens, those we should bear alone, and those we should share with others. Sharing the burdens of others is here called "the law of Christ." When some of the Galatian Christians had fallen Paul mentioned the guilty with great tenderness as "overtaken in a fault." With compassion he urges that those who are spiritual should "restore" all such. The technical word he uses describes the setting of a broken bone. The fallen one would have to suffer the pain, but gentleness and sympathy by the church would put strength in the heart the better to endure the suffering.

We approach the likeness of Christ when we make life a little easier for others. The cross under which Christ fainted was not His by desert, but by choice. He suffered in bearing its load that thereby He might share all our burdens. Only one disciple carried himself with honor through the scenes of Christ suffering—the disciple from the country—Simon of Cyrene. Of the others it is written, "They all forsook Him and fled." Staggering up the hill of Calvary in the footsteps of his Lord, easing for a little the Master's overburdened body, we see the spirit of a real disciple shining forth.

If like Simon on our way to the Holy City we find one overburdened and fainting by the way, by bearing his cross and sharing his sorrow we prove ourselves true disciples. Every helpful ministry done to our

fellow man Christ recognizes and rewards as done to Him. How rich is the life of Jesus in its instances of overloaded souls eased of their burdens when He took the heavy end. Right well did He liken His Gospel to a yoke, since by His fellowship He divides the load with us.

"It is the lonely load  
That crushes out the light and life of Heaven.  
But borne with Him, the soul restored, forgiven,  
Sings out through all the days."

**The Burdens We Should Bear.** "Every man shall bear his own burden." It is equally true that every man must live his own life. Mrs. Wilkinson has told this beautifully in a story "David."

When David was twelve his father died. One night after this, sitting in the kitchen, he told his mother of his purpose. He had learned to plow already; he would learn to sow; he would take his father's place. Early each evening, after he had urged the horses before the plow all day, he would take his pan of grain into the hen yard and practice, while he could see, the long swinging movement of scattering the grain broadcast. The mother watched and sadly smiled as she saw her David was putting away childish things.

At last the great day came; the twelve acres were plowed and harrowed, even if the little body was worn. That morning the young sower went forth to sow. Before dinner the kind-hearted neighbor came to survey the first acre, and he pronounced it good. After he had gone, David's overtaxed frame gave way. He stumbled forward to the foot of a great tree, his small shoulders rising and falling against his own will. Throwing himself on the warm ground he wept for the first time since the funeral. His mother had hastened out through the garden, hoping to see her son standing with shining eyes in the supreme hour



of his pride. She spoke not, but quietly stole back to the house, great mother that she was, leaving David alone. David today is one of the world's strong workers in an ennobling profession. From that day he has taken the part of a man. Character is always strengthened when we take the burdens rightfully our own.

## **The Solemn Sermon of the Scattered Seed.**

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." When the hand flings forth for weal or woe the hidden seed of the heart they are soon scattered beyond our recall. Indeed, if we would we cannot stamp them out or stop their spread any more than we can stop a prairie fire. Even the sowing we do in the ignorance and folly of youth, often called wild oats, grows and grows by the wayside to mock us through coming years. Awful and mysterious is the power packed away in seed-thoughts and ideals. It is a mistake to suppose we shall reap only the sowing of our conscious, intentional acts. All seeds follow that eternal law, "Like produces like." The idle, thoughtless word too often sets another to thinking evil. His thoughts ripen into evil acts, and thus the dangerous seeds of thistles and of tares are scattered down the years. A good life can never be hid nor quite forgotten.

An eccentric character, I am told, once passed down through this section of Ohio planting apple-seeds and dropping quaint sayings full of homely wisdom. Johnnie Appleseed long ago ceased traveling, but the fruit of his planting has survived, and the truths that he uttered remain unforgotten still. The winds of God somehow bear them down to other generations. Paul declared, "Our conversation is in Heaven." That might mean that even while we walk the streets of earth we may be in such a Heavenly frame of mind that words spoken without a thought that they will live may nevertheless grow to be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

When Thorwaldsen, the Danish sculptor, returned from study in Florence he brought back to his native Copenhagen some pieces of his glorious marble. The straw which protected them was unpacked and carelessly thrown in the street. Behold, next summer rare flowers from the gardens of Florence blossomed in the dusty streets of Copenhagen! Even the by-products and the unconscious sowing of a Christian life blossom into blessing. Some nameless influence goes out from our least conscious hours, and alters in its little but endless power every man, woman, and child we ever knew.

**Burdens that Blossom and Become Blessings.** "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." Every opportunity in life comes like a gracious spring morning, not only to be enjoyed, but to be improved. There is a song in the heart of the young sower as he

goes forth with the seed bag suspended from his shoulder. Its burden is lightened as he remembers that in a few short months he shall come in bearing on his shoulder sheaves of gold. Whenever by steadfast service we take advantage of the passing time and of that fructifying principle God has placed in the soul of the seed we are conscious of the fact that we are laborers together with God. Sowing is symbolic of all other acts. Every human life is an enclosure fenced for personal investment, a field for cultivation. All the work therein is a work of faith. We sow hoping to reap in due season. God will send the sunshine and the showers. His wondrous laws will operate even while we sleep. "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary." But we, too, must be faithful in our part, bearing abroad the burden of the seed.

The father bends under the burden of providing for a family; the mother under the burden of home cares; the business man under the burden of exacting appointments; the minister under the care of souls. To shun burdens and shy at responsibility is not well. We are here not to grow merry, but to grow strong. The man of wisdom declared, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." It is good to bear it all through life. If we grow not weary in well doing in due season we shall exchange it for a crown.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What physical burden oppressed Paul, and how was his prayer answered concerning it? 2. What was the affliction that tried the patience of Job, and how was he finally rewarded? 3. What were the complaints made by the Israelites against Moses, and what work of Aaron further tried his patience? 4. How did Haman reap the reward of his enmity and how was his enemy rewarded? 5. Name three Hebrews who rose to positions of distinction while in captivity because they remembered their God.

**Challenge Text.** "While the — remaineth, seed-time and —, and cold and —, and summer and —, and day and — shall not cease." Gen. 8: (9).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Human sympathy is a universal language, and kindness is intelligible even to dumb brutes. 2. No man is fitted to restore another who does not recognize the danger of lapsing himself. 3. Since we were carried before we learned to walk, we should not refuse to carry others who are babes in Christ. 4. He who sees the possibilities of the oak in the acorn despises not the littleness of the acorn. 5. God preserves and plants the seed corn; Israel in Palestine, the Pilgrims in America.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# SAVED BY GRACE.

But God, who is rich in



for his  
great



wherewith he loved us, Even when we were



in sins,  
hath quickened  
us  
together with



(by grace ye are saved;)  
And hath raised us up  
together, and made us



in heavenly  
places in  
Christ Jesus;  
That in the  
ages to come  
he might shew  
the exceeding  
riches of his  
grace in his



toward us  
through  
Christ  
Jesus.  
For by  
grace are  
ye saved  
through



and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS EPHESIANS 2:1-10.

**Prayer:** O Saviour of the world, God of gods, Light of light, Thou art the brightness of Thy Father's glory, the express image of His person; be Thou my light and my peace. O Thou who didst raise Lazarus from the dead, raise me from the death of sin. Thou who didst heal the sick, and give sight to the blind, heal the diseases of my soul, and cleanse my heart of every desire but that of advancing Thy glory. Amen.—John Wesley.

“Not what these hands have done  
Can save this guilty soul;  
Not what this toiling flesh has borne  
Can make my spirit whole.  
Thy love to me, O God,  
Not mine, O Lord, to Thee,  
Can rid me of this dark unrest,  
And set my spirit free.”

—Horatius Bonar.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Written by Paul from Rome some time after his arrival there A. D. 61. It was carried by Tychicus to the Ephesian Christians who under the shadow of the great temple of Diana with its outward grandeur and pomp of ceremony needed to be reminded that salvation was by grace alone.

**Scripture Setting:** The Freeness and Certainty of God's Grace. Israel's adoption by grace. Ex. 34: 1-10. Our adoption by grace. Eph. 1:3-14. Miracles of grace in days of old. Mic. 7:14-20. Prayer for the continuation of Divine grace. Psa. 86:3-7,

12-17. God's mercy as source and ground of our love. 1 John 4:10-19.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage exalts grace only as the redemptive power in believers. 1. It alters the desires of both mind and body. 2. It alters the conversation of believers. 3. It alters our relationship from children of wrath to children of obedience. 4. It alters our position from graveyard of sin to fireside of reconciliation. 5. It invigorates His church to triumph through ages to come.

### THE WONDERFUL WORK OF GOD'S GRACE.

**Power That Prevailed Over the Prince of Darkness.** “And you hath He quickened; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air.” Paul presents the conditions of both Gentile and Jew, before the coming of Christ, in sombre colors indeed. He calls them “children of wrath,” “fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind.” In the theology of the rabbis, which Paul mastered, lost souls were under the control of evil spirits called “Powers of the air.” The prince of these, Satan himself, is represented as in conflict with all mankind, holding them with fatal power, gloating over their anticipated destruction.

It might be compared to Retzsch's famous picture of Satan gaming for a human soul. The young man's case seems hopeless and his doom inevitable, for Satan has robbed him of his white pawns of prayer, and holds the black pawns of doubt. Murphy, the great American chess-player, was shown the picture, and after studying it, called for a chess board. He placed the chess-men exactly as pictured in the struggle, and by one move won the game.

Once our case was hopeless; our prayers were of no avail; Satan's doubts were triumphing, when Christ by one great stroke won back our soul from the fateful snare and saved us from eternal death.

**The Disobedient and Disinherited Restored to the Father's Fireside.** “But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ.” Many believe that when Paul became a Christian his wealthy Jewish parents in Tarsus disinherited him.

This would accord with his own statement that for Christ he had suffered the loss of all things. Orthodox Jews do bitterly persecute their own children for embracing Christianity, turning them out of the home, conducting a mock funeral, and henceforth speaking of them as dead. Paul counts even the children of Abraham as dead in sin, since God had cast them out through disobedience.

But Christ, with the beautiful spirit of an interceding brother, paid the penalty of disobedience; effected a reconciliation; showed them the loving heart of God so rich in mercy, and brought them back under the protection of the paternal roof. The death and resurrection of Jesus brings us all around the fireplace of Divine forgiveness, restored to our original places. “God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

A dissipated son by his waywardness hurried his father to the grave. On the day of the funeral this ungrateful son returned home, but sat unmoved by the pale face of his devoted father. Even on the brink of the new grave he showed no feeling. When the family returned home the father's will was read. In it the wayward boy was given an equal share of the property besides a special gift. As his own name was read this son was overcome with contrition and gratitude, his heart heaved with emotion, his tears came fast, and he was heard to say, “O to think that father would be so kind even to me!”

In the family of Christ we can have no place because of our deserving. But trusting the Father's great love; knowing that He is rich in mercy, we come back to hear His will read in the testament of the Scriptures. Feeling our own unworthiness we learn therein with wonder and gratitude that our name is recorded, an heir of God, a joint heir with Jesus Christ!

**Eternity Required to Reveal the Riches of Redemption.** "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." The exceeding riches of God's grace can be shown forth only partially. As the ages unfold, continually succeeding each other, we shall have reason for fresh wonder and praise. Paul describes it as "the mystery which hath been hidden from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to the saints." And the mystery shall grow until it is consummated in the Lord's coming again.

It is well that science is constantly revealing strange surprises for us, since we can use them to illustrate the grace of God so rich in its unfoldings that the poverty of language embarrasses us. An enthusiastic astronomer showed us that the number of known stars had doubled since we were boys, and exhibited photographs he had taken of new world systems in the process of being made. Our Father in Heaven has not exhausted His resources; He has only begun to reveal them.

At Plymouth, Massachusetts, you may read the words that John Robinson wrote in 1620: "I am very confident that the Lord has yet more truth to break forth out of His holy Word. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther said. And the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God—who yet saw not all things." Whatever God makes is packed full of infinity, whether it be a universe, a soul, or a religious revelation.

**The Sinner's Stricken Name Restored by Grace.** "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." How very hard it seems to learn the Divine order in our religious life. And yet how clearly shines the simple fact that we are saved, not by what we feel, or think, or do, or even are, but by grace—which is God's gift. Oliver Cromwell was a great Christian and a man of iron, but his last words were, "I think that I am the poorest wretch that lives, but I love God, or rather,

I am beloved of God." Paul once corrected himself in the same way, "But now ye have known God, or rather are known of God." So much of the world's religious hope has depended upon human efforts, feeble and intermittent, instead of upon God's love for us, which is stability itself.

Lochlan Campbell was a rugged Scotchman who read stern books of theology till he thought that God had only angry thoughts for the wicked. His daughter, Flora, having no mother, went astray, and wandered to the great city. Then Lachlin went to the kirk and made the motion himself that her name be stricken from the roll. He went home and crossed the girl's name off the record in the great family Bible. To him his daughter now was dead. But in the school of suffering he learned what he did not find in his books. His heart was changed, and he made a pile of his stern Puritan books near the window setting a lamp upon them to shine out upon the pathway home. He wrote a father's letter to his motherless girl. She came back one night, and taking down the great Bible this is what she wrote: "Flora Campbell, missed April, 1873, found September, 1873. Her father fell on her neck and kissed her." In the Heavenly Father's great record book is written even the name of the prodigal. And whenever a wandering son comes back He writes beneath his name, "This My son was dead and is alive again."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Whose house and family were saved by a scarlet cord in the window? What according to Heb. 11 did the cord represent? 2. Who tried to purchase God's gift with money. What was Peter's reply to the offer? 3. What general disdained the simple means offered to heal his leprosy? What prophet refused the gift the general urged? What servant afterwards sought the reward? How was he punished? 4. What disciples healed a cripple at Lystra? What did the cripple contribute towards the cure? Why did the disciples refuse garlands and oxen?

**Challenge Text.** "The wages of sin is —; but the gift of God is — — through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:(†).

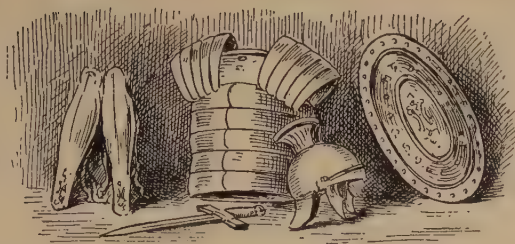
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Walking in sin "according to the course of this world" like walking in sleep is effort without purpose, blindness to duty, imminent peril of death. 2. Salvation resting on our merit rests on doubt; resting on God's mercy rests secure. 3. As moral bankrupts facing Satan the sheriff how desirable the help of One "rich in mercy!" 4. The boast of the Pharisee is self-sufficiency; the Christian only boasts in the love and merits of his Lord.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



# THE CHRISTIAN ARMOUR.

Wherefore  
take unto  
you the  
whole



of God,  
that ye  
may be  
able to



in the  
evil day,  
and  
having  
done all,  
to stand.



therefore, having your loins



and  
having  
on the



of righteousness; And your



shod  
with the  
prepar-  
ation  
of the  
gospel of



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS EPHESIANS 6:10-20.

**Prayer:** O Christ, Great King of kings, the conquering Captain of my salvation, accept me this day as a crusader for Thee. Assist me to buckle on the whole armor of God, to follow where Thy bugle sounds the charge, to fight the good fight of faith, and to trust Thee for the final victory.

Enable me to resist every wrong in my pathway, and to assist every righteous cause in my power. Be Thou with me while I watch and fight and pray. Amen.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Written by Paul during his Roman imprisonment, which began in Feb. A. D. 61. Sent by Tychicus probably the following year, or four years after his parting with the Ephesian elders, while a prisoner chained to a Roman soldier and in the midst of military sights and sounds.

**Scripture Setting: Spiritual Weapons for Soldiers of Salvation.** Divine weapons for safety and salvation. Psalms 35:1-10. The doughty warrior of faith. 1 Sam. 17:38-51. Soldiers of salvation. 1 Thess. 5:1-8. Shields of faith in history's battle abbey. Hebrews 11:32-40. Satan subdued by the sword of the Spirit. Luke 4:1-13. The dragon

"Volunteers are wanted! hear the stirring call, O be swift to answer, comrades, one and all; Girding on your armor, haste to march away, For the Lord is calling, 'To the front today!' Away to the battle, away, away! The King calls for soldiers in His ranks today; Hear the bugle calling, into line be falling, Forth to the battlefield, away, away!"

—Mrs. E. E. Williams.

overcome by Christ's blood and the saint's testimonies. Rev. 12:7-13.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The Scripture passage presents supplies for all of man's spiritual nature. 1. Truth undergirds and unites all virtues. 2. Righteousness defends the sincere heart from base insinuations. 3. Grace prepares for publishing peace tidings with agility. 4. Salvation lifts up the head and preserves the mental powers. 5. The Scriptures probe iniquity and pierce through hypocrisy. 6. Prayer and watchfulness prevent surprises and covert attacks.

### KNIGHTHOOD ARMED FOR THE HOLY WAR.

**Fully Equipped for the Foe.** "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Paul takes advantage of a favorite thought with the Ephesians that the gods gave armor to mythical heroes. A favorite story among the Greek poets was how the mother of Achilles dipped him when a child in the river Lethe because the oracle had told her that thus he would be shielded from danger during the Trojan war. But when Paris, his enemy, learned afterwards that the heel where his mother held him was vulnerable, he shot him in the heel and so killed him. Satan is sure to hit the least part he finds unarmed, hence the Christian must be armed cap-a-pie as the knights said, that is, panoplied with the whole armor.

**The Girdle of Truth.** The belt or zona passed round the soldier's body just below his breastplate. It kept the armor in its place, supported the sword, and strengthened the wearer. So truth is the band that girds and binds together Christian character. The passover was eaten with the loins girt and the shoes on their feet to commemorate the beginning of Israel's midnight march out of Egypt. And the Christian warrior is represented in the attitude of alertness and readiness. He must gird up his loins like a man, for the signal to march may come at noonday or midnight.

**The Breastplate of Righteousness.** "Having on the breastplate of righteousness." In the description of Goliath's armor is found the most complete inventory of a warrior's

furnishings found anywhere in the sacred writings. The Philistines were a nation of smiths, expert in wrought iron and bronze. Goliath was covered from his loins to his breastbone with polished metal scales affording freedom of movement and protection to the vital organs. The heart is after all the vital organ. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

The cuirass or corselet of righteousness is composed of nine polished plates of strength which Paul enumerates elsewhere as the separate graces of a Christian life; patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity. But the Christian, unlike the Philistine, need not forge his own breastplate, for a tried and flawless one is offered him from above. In the great test our own righteousness, Paul declares, will be as filthy rags to cover our heart, and he prays that he may put on the perfections of Christ, "not having mine own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ."

**The Gospel Sandals.** "And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Since the Gospel is a message and every Christian a messenger, his feet are shod with preparedness and winged with speed. Moses promised the Israelites before his death that in their difficulties in conquering Canaan Jehovah would be the shield of their help, the sword of their excellency, and that their shoes would be iron and brass. We know that they wandered forty years in the wilderness, yet as by miracle their Egyptian sandals had not waxed old.

Once in Paul's preaching tour at Lystra the populace mistook him for Mercury, the herald of the



gods, the swift, graceful traveler. In most representations of Mercury he is a slender, beardless youth, having winged sandals tied to his feet. Paul was indeed a swift herald of God, and in his impatient eagerness to carry the Gospel to the ends of the world we are reminded of that Scripture utterance: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

**The Shield of Faith.** "Above all taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The shield is not only "above all" other defensive weapons in importance, but the meaning here is that with it the soldier may cover and protect all the pieces he has put on before. The Roman shield or *scutum* was a great door-like piece of metal oval in shape four feet long and two and a half feet wide. The shield was the weapon which would certainly intercept the fiery darts or arrows tipped with inflammable material and shot after being set on fire to burn the enemy's camp. How the fiery darts of temptation aimed by the prince of this world; wrath, lust, revenge, doubt, and despair, do flame and burn when they reach an unguarded Christian heart. When faith is lost the warrior falls.

History tells of a Greek mother who upon parting with her son as he set out for his first war called to him, "Either bring back your shield or be brought back upon it."

To the Greek it was an ineffacable disgrace to lose his shield in battle. He would rather lose his life. So Paul writing to Timothy, his young Gospel soldier, declares that the shield of faith with which he (Paul) has fought all his splendid spiritual victories he has held to the last, and soon they are to carry him out upon it to the place of his burial. "The time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have kept the faith."

There are plenty of Philistines today who whittle out their own man-made creeds, but the warrior saints receive their shields from God. "I exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints." Live with your shield of faith and be willing to die for it.

**The Helmet of Salvation.** "And take the helmet of salvation." The military helmet of the Roman, the *galea*, was a cap made of leather strengthened and ornamented with metallic plates or bosses, and surmounted with a crest or plume. The head was one of the principal parts to be protected, as on it the deadliest strokes might fall. When the head is wounded, the general is wounded, since that part suffers which commands the whole body. Hence Satan assaults the mind most fiercely through ear-gate, eye-gate, and palate-gate. Often he uses strategy as the Greeks did at Troy smuggling in a little band of unholy suggestions who open the gates to a whole army of evil that blackens

and burns. So long as the white plume of salvation waves over the seat of our thought and decision we are safe. "He will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee."

**The Sword of the Spirit.** "And the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Mohammed's religion with the banner of the crescent has been propagated by resorting to the sword. Christ's religion with the banner of the cross has been propagated by the preaching of the Word. Satan fears no weapon like the Bible; it is the Christian's one offensive weapon.

When David spied Goliath's great sword he cried, "Give it me; there is none like that," and he wrought terrible execution with it along the Philistine coast.

In Christ's opening manhood he met Satan in three fierce assaults and in every encounter with His temptations He was triumphant because in childhood He had stored His mind with the Hebrew Scriptures. The trouble with us today is that our Bibles have been hidden. David's search for Goliath's sword led to finding it wrapped in a cloth and hidden behind the ephod. O for a modern David to find all our lost Bibles! What great victories the church would win equipped with the sword of the Spirit and skilful in its use!

When Joab took the national census of Israel and Judah he only counted the thousands that drew the sword. The modern Sunday-school can count in its effective fighting force only those of its 2,500,000 teachers and many million scholars who can hold up their own copies of the Bible and who know its choicest passages by heart.

To sum up then the thought that shines through all Paul's figures of speech is his declaration that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty, if they be spiritual, in tearing down the strongholds of Satan. Christ says, "Put up thy sword; watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." So we thank God for our spiritual armor, and for the watch-tower of prayer, the arsenal where our weapons are forged.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What in Paul's experience would suggest the soldierly elements of this lesson? Where in Isaiah would he find a model passage? 2. What chapter in Paul's writing renews the figure? What chapter in Hebrews give the record of Hebrew warriors? 3. Where was Paul escorted at night by 200 soldiers? When were his orders to the soldiers obeyed to the saving of many lives? 4. How many soldiers guarded Peter in prison? How many gambled for Christ's seamless tunic?

**Challenge Text.** "For he put on righteousness as a —, and an helmet of salvation upon his —," Isa. 59:17.

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The most soldierly virtues are courage and obedience. 2. No soldier fights alone; the church is a garrison of comrades within call; and angels of God encamp round about him. 3. The sword of the Scriptures is two-edged, sent to relieve all believers from the siege of death; sent to condemn all deniers to court-martial and execution. 4. The sinlessness and consistency of Christ's character has made his seamless robe a coat of mail defying destruction.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

**Prayer:** We bless Thee, Our Father, for the world in which we live and for that most gracious beauty of the world, the love and loyalty of friends. Make us worthy of them and of Thee, the Friend who loveth at all times, that by integrity of character and purity of life we may enrich the lives of those who love us unto all godliness and happiness: Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

There's a Friend for all God's children  
Above the bright, blue sky,  
A Friend who never changes  
Whose love will never die  
Our earthly friends may fail us,  
And change with changing years,  
This Friend is always worthy  
Of that dear name He bears.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting: Time and Place.** The Epistle to Philemon was written by Paul from his prison in Rome to a Christian disciple in Colossae during the year 63 A. D. **Persons,** Paul, the Apostle, now nearing his martyrdom, Philemon, a citizen of Colossae, a convert of Paul's and actively and generously interested in the work of the church. Onesimus, a Phrygian slave who had run away from Philemon, also a convert of Paul's and now being returned to his master.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The Epistle sets forth in beautiful fashion Paul's gift for friendship. 2. The use he makes of it in behalf of the needy. 3. It also shows the power of the Gospel to save both

the rich and the poor, both the wise and the unwise. 4. It solves the slave problem by making master and slave brother Christians. 5. It shows how kindness is all the more lovable that it involves self sacrifice.

**Scripture Setting:** Paul's courtesy, Phil. 1:1-7. Paul's Concern for the Outcast, Phil. 1:10-20. The Advantages of Friendship, Prov. 17:17; 27:9-10. The Danger from Evil Friends, Prov. 22:24-25; James 4:4-11; John 2:15. Jesus As Friend, Luke 12:4; John 15:14. Famous Friendships, David and Jonathan, 1 Sam. 18; Ruth and Naomi, Ruth 1:6-7; David and Ittai, 2 Sam. 15:19-22. Paul and Philemon, Phil. 1:4-5.

### THE ART OF ENRICHING FRIENDSHIP.

**A Domestic Idyl.** One commentator has spoken of the Epistle of Philemon as an "idyl of domestic life," another declares it to shine "among the rich treasures of the New Testament as a pearl of exquisite fineness."

**Value of a Letter.** Letter writing is at present in decline. And yet next to the spoken word it is an evangelistic instrument of the first order. Carlyle's career as a writer was practically determined by a letter from an unknown admirer who praised his work. There was no tonic for our boys in the trenches like a letter from home.

This letter of Paul's to Philemon speaks from the heart to the heart. Philemon must have been less than a man not to be touched by its friendliness, its intimacy, its pathos. Here was the man who had brought him to God (Verse 19) old and infirm and in prison (Verses 2-9-10-13). Thinking not of himself—of his years, of his bodily infirmities, of his chains, of the approach of death—but of the comfort and happiness of a poor slave whom he had taken from the depths and to whom he had given the chance of a new and better life.

**The Fruitful Christian.** Philemon, however, was just the sort of Christian with whom an appeal for kindness would avail. Conversion was real in him; discipleship was

taken seriously. Paul found "great joy and encouragement in his love," and "the hearts of Christ's people were cheered" by his constancy and sympathy. He believed in a social and helpful religion. In his home the little Colossian congregation could find a shelter for worship where the saints might admonish one another with psalms and hymns and sacred songs and refresh each other's hearts by their witness to the loving kindness of God. (Col. 3:16). Apphia, "our sister," was doubtless his wife, and Archippus, "our fellow soldier in Christ," was probably his son, so that here we have a glimpse of an early Christian home united and happy in the fear of God and earnestly seeking to further the interests of the Kingdom by a consistent life and a benevolent temper. A revival of such home life is greatly needed in our day.

**The Living Witness.** The best of Christian evidences is a real Christian living the supernatural life on a natural plane. To witness by speech is easy enough, but it is the life that counts. "I am a human being and nothing which pertains to man is alien to me." So said a famous pagan poet who nevertheless advised his wife to make away with their baby because it was a girl.

**The Efficient Gospel.** It is not easy for us in these days to imagine the degradation of the slave in the days of the Roman empire.



He was simply a chattel in the house of his master. He was sold or killed according to the whims of the man who owned him. He could claim nothing as his own, not even his right to live. No wonder then that he gave himself over to the uncontrolled desires of an animal passion. As nobody cared for him he ceased to have any concern about himself. When, therefore, Onesimus, under the preaching of Paul heard of a new order of things in which every human being was dear to God and in which, under the power of the Spirit, he might become a child of God, it is no wonder he became a convert. Like Philemon he had a real conversion and he took his discipleship seriously. Paul's fondness for him is shown in frequent terms of endearment; he is "this child of mine" to whom in prison "I have become a Father"; to send him back "is like tearing out my very heart," because he has proved himself "of great service not only to you but to me as well"; he is "a dearly loved brother, especially dear to me," and a kindness done to him would be to the apostle a specific "gain" and a source of "cheer," that is the way Christ makes over a man. Onesimus the outcast and worthless became the friend of Paul and a source of blessing.

**How Religion Works.** This truth is written large and plain in the history of the race. Under Christian influence Augustine the profligate became Bishop of Hippo and the greatest theologian of his day; under the same influence came to high usefulness, John Bunyan, Jerry McAuley, Colonel Hadley, Billy Sunday and a host of others.

**The Epistle and Slavery.** The Epistle to Philemon used to be quoted in favor of slavery. But Paul has nothing to say about slavery as an institution. He knows very well that when you make a man a Christian you give him a new view of the inherent dignity of the human soul and of the brotherhood of man. To Philemon Paul says, "It has occurred to me that Providence may have permitted him (Onesimus) to be separated from you for a time that he might come back to you in a new character and relation, no

longer as a mere slave but as a beloved fellow Christian." In this way Paul started a new conscience about slave holding in Philemon and in the world. The abolition of slavery came slowly but it came. And the power which swept it from the earth was the constraint of the Christian conscience. It is in this way that reforms make surest progress, as we know in the case of bull baiting, gladiatorial combats, the drink curse and other evils. It is in this way that we may hope eventually for a clean world in which Christ is accepted as leader and guide. No reformer needs to be discouraged whose work has God's endorsement.

**Evangelistic Tact.** The tone and manner of the letter shows the tactfulness of the Apostle in his dealing with men. It is kindly and persuasive. "I might," he says, "with Christ's authority speak very freely and order you to do what is fitting," but he will not do that, he will ask consideration for Onesimus as a personal favor. The ambassador for Christ should cultivate the winning and gracious manner.

**Denunciation Hinders.** Newman Hall who wrote the beautiful tract "Come to Jesus" wrote also a denunciatory tract for which he wanted a title. A friend upon reading the tract and realizing its repellent tone suggested that he entitle it "Go to Hell," by the author of "Come to Jesus."

**Quiz and Study.** Study Paul's salutations at the beginning and end of his epistles. 1. Why and where was Paul a prisoner? 2. Learn as much as possible about Paul's friends mentioned in this epistle—Apphia, Archippus, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke. 3. What is Paul's thought about praying for friends? 4. How were slaves regarded in the ancient world? 5. Did Christianity make any change in their condition? 6. If so, what and how? 7. Did Paul ever see Colossae?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Letter writing is a good way of keeping one's friendship in repair. 2. In letter writing one should strive to say something memorable and helpful. 3. It purifies and nourishes friendship to pray for your friends. 4. One gives thanks for a meal, why not a friend? 5. A Christian in chains is still free; he knows no bondage of the spirit. 6. Paul tho aged and a prisoner knows how to be happy and content. Faith brings and keeps Jesus at his side. 7. The Gospel knows nothing of master and slave. It knows only brotherhood.

DR. CHARLES M. STUART.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God thought it not



to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a



and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a



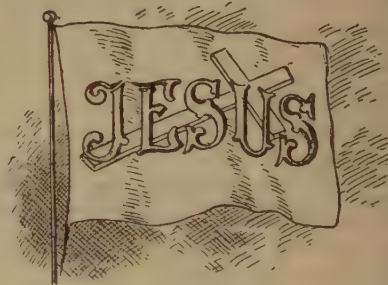
he humbled himself, and became obedient unto



even the death of the



Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a



which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in



and things in



and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS PHIL. 2:1-13.

**Prayer:** Our Heavenly Father who didst suffer Thy Son to be humiliated by taking our human nature, subdue the pride of our hearts, and make us to share Thy Divine nature. The remembrance of how little we have and how little we are makes us to dwell low in the deep valley of humility. May we sink then into the humbleness of Christ that we may be raised to enjoy His glory. For His name's sake. Amen.

"He doth give His joy to all:  
He becomes an infant small,  
He becomes a man of woe,  
He doth feel the sorrow, too.  
Can I see another's woe,  
And not be in sorrow, too?  
Can I see another's grief,  
And not seek for kind relief?"

—William Blake.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Paul first preached the Gospel to the Philippians, A. D. 51. Eleven years later Epaphroditus is sent by the church to Rome with tidings to Paul from them. His letter in reply is warm and tender, written from the standpoint of a personal friend.

**Scripture Setting:** **Sitting Low at Jesus' Feet.** Mary praises God's exaltation of the humble, Luke 1:46-55. The school of the lowly heart, Matt. 11:25-30. Humility becoming old and young, I Pet. 5:1-11. Pleasing others, not ourselves, Rom. 15:1-7. The humiliation and exaltation of Christ, Isa. 53:1-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents Christ's incarnation as our example of the lowly mind. 1. The cure for the strife of brethren and

the glory of self is the spirit of Jesus. 2. Christ was willing to surrender the glory of the Godhead if thereby He might rescue humanity. 3. Christ emptied Himself of Divine attributes, divested Himself of the Divine government, and united Himself to human limitations. 4. Christ assumed the humblest form of human life, born in a stable of obscure parents, choosing humble toil, and foregoing the enjoyment of family life. 5. Christ yielded both mind and body to suffering a death most abject and ignoble. 6. Christ's subsequent exaltation is proof of God's approval of the humble mind. 7. From Christ let us learn the double lesson of humility and obedience.

### THE MIND OF CHRIST THE MOTIVE FOR MAN.

**The Master's Mind Implanted in Men's Lives.** "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The whole meaning of discipleship was to perpetuate the mind of Christ in the world. And the proof of Paul's apostleship is to be found not so much in historical records of church councils as in his heroic life and his own statement that "It pleased God to reveal His Son in me." The mind of Christ was revealed to Paul first through his conversion, and then through his preaching and epistles to countless thousands. The life and labors of the great Apostle to the Gentiles form a many-sided prism through which the mind of Christ is broken into many wonderful and beautiful colorings.

How much the world owes to Paul for revealing so clearly what love is and all its component parts. Yet the love he describes is but the mind and motive of his Lord. Paul left the study of law and philosophy to give his life to the study of the one great subject, the mind of Christ. The lesson before us reveals the motive of Christ in becoming man, the same motive that should prompt all His followers to a life of service for others.

**Christ's Humiliation in Adopting Our Human Nature.** "But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man." The revisers, we think, have more clearly produced Paul's thought, "He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant."

For Christ to begin human life was to enter upon a discipline of subjection totally unlike His preëxistence "in the form of God." He was born as other children are; He grew as others; His body and mind took shape under human conditions.

The Word, the eternal Christ, was made flesh. He who made the worlds was seen in Judea in the lowliness of His earlier peasant life, and afterwards as the public but humble servant of God. He had spoken and it was done; but as man with labor and pain did He accomplish the Divine purpose. The Man of Bethlehem set His face steadily one way, His life was all of one piece; a perfect life clothed with flesh, but clothed with truth and grace. He who was with God and was God did not renounce His essential nature and cease to be Divine. But to Jesus this earth life was, as ours can never be, an experience of human limitation, human weakness and impoverishment, human subjection and dependence, because of its startling contrast with the fulness of that former glory He enjoyed before taking the form of a servant, "being in the form of God."

**The Four Steps of Descending Humiliation.** "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Before Martin Luther was thirty he made a pious pilgrimage on foot to Rome and crept on his knees up the staircase that was known as Pilate's. But ere Jesus was little more

than thirty He journeyed on His knees down a descending stairs that led Him to uttermost humiliation.

The incarnation was the first step He took to rescue us from the power of sin and death. By leaving Heaven and entering into our human life through the helplessness of infancy He bound Himself to our woful fortunes and brought down to us the benefits with which He would enrich us. This was necessary if He would reach us. "It behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren." But to be found in the fashion of a man was not enough; if He would be the strongest, He must be the gentlest; if He would be the greatest, He must be the most humble. His obedience and subjection, therefore, were very special. In mien, in speech, in act, and very spirit He was the fulfillment of all lowliness and obedience. Subject to His earthly parents in childhood and youth, in all His life He entered into a complete subjection to His Heavenly Father's will such as no other life has more than faintly approximated. This was the second step.

The third step mentioned is His obedience unto death. His death at thirty-three was at a time when life was full of zest, not when it was broken by the weight of age or disappointment. And death was in nowise a necessity of His nature. He declared, "I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up." Being Divine He might have lived on endlessly in the human form with which He clothed Himself. How rich and costly the sacrifice of His life may be gathered only in part from His prayer of anguish, "If it be possible, let this cup pass."

The fourth and final step mentioned is the manner of His taking off. His obedience extended to the humiliation of the Roman cross. All of the ignominy that clusters round the gallows now, then shrouded like a pall the cross before the flesh of Jesus exalted it into an emblem of purest love and devotion. A dark and sad death it was, so dark that the Son of Man could cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me!" His death, then, sealed with apparent failure and disgrace, was the climax of His self-emptying, but it marks the lowest step in all of human condescension and humiliation.

**The Nature and Influence of Our Exalted Lord.** "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow." The name above every name which Jesus now bears is the resultant of His humiliation and suffering, and the prophetic picture of all creation falling before Him in homage is the confident declaration that the world shall eventually be brought back to God through the passionate love wherewith He loved us. In that same resurrected body with which he greeted His surprised disciples on the shore of Galilee

He ascended to be forever our human-divine Intercessor.

Exalted though He be now, He has not surrendered His human nature, He is still touched with a feeling of our infirmities. The tie between the Creator and the created, the bridge between the Infinite and the finite—how natural that to Him every knee should bow in Divine homage and in human supplication. In Paul's thinking a double truth shines clear. The eternal God bowed down to bless mankind in and by His Son, but received Him back possessed with the addition of a human nature to increased glory and exaltation because of His obedience and humiliation.

**The Master Mind Working Out in Men's Lives.** "Wherefore, my beloved, work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and do of His good pleasure." Having shown the church the mind of the Master, characterized by lowliness, obedience, and suffering, Paul finally invites all of its members to come into Christ's school and learn the Father's good pleasure for each of them.

The wisdom of Christ is the lowly, loving mind, looking not on our own things, but on the things of others; doing nothing through strife or vainglory; esteeming in all lowliness of mind the other better than himself; substituting kindness, tenderheartedness, and forgiveness for bitterness, wrath and anger. These are the first principles, the A B C's in the Master's school of prayer and discipleship.

At Christ's feet Paul had learned this. It had glowed in his soul. With it he had gone throughout the world, seeking the profit of many that they, too, might be saved. From Paul's epistle and character we are admonished to let the life of Jesus Christ be manifested in our mortal bodies.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What reference to Christ's lowly birth is found in Mary's song of praise? What gift from the wise men suggested Christ was a king? 2. Where is the record: that Christ's fellow-townsmen ejected Him from Nazareth? that His brothers thought Him beside Himself? that His brothers lacked belief in Him? 3. What fact in Christ's triumphal entry, foretold by Zechariah, revealed His humility? what fact showed that His lofty character was recognized? 4. What two words which Christ addressed to His disciples reveal His will that all disciples shall imitate His example? What words of Paul refer to himself as an example to be followed?

**Challenge Text:** "He was —, and He was —, yet He opened not His —." Isa. 53: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Humility, that low, sweet root, from which all heavenly virtues shoot.—Moore. 2. True humility is the ability to forget that in which we may excel our neighbor, and remember only that in which he excels us. 3. Many desire not the beauty of Christ, being too much employed about themselves to penetrate His greatest merit hiding behind greatest humility. 4. The inner life develops the individual; therefore continuous spiritual communion with Christ, not mere imitation of Him, transforms into His image. 5. Salvation is "worked in" believers by the Spirit; it is "worked out" by obedience in progression unto perfection.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



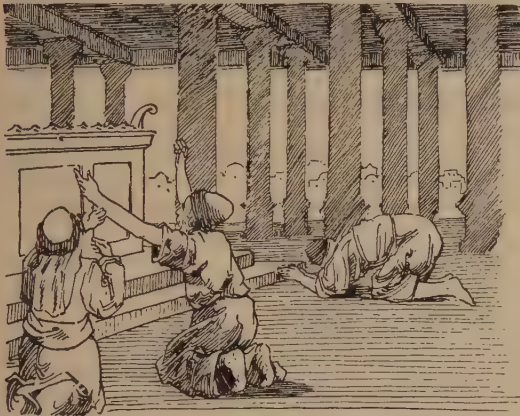
Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say,



Let  
your  
moder-  
ation  
be known  
unto all



The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by



and sup-  
plication  
with  
thanks-  
giving  
let your  
requests  
be made  
known  
unto God  
And the



of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.  
Finally, brethren,

W HATSOEVER *things* True Honest Just W HATSOEVER *things* Pure Lovely of Good Report

if there be  
any virtue,  
and if  
there be any



think on  
these things

THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS PHIL. 4:1-13.

**Prayer:** Whatever, Lord Jesus, may be my lot in life make me to be content. However far from home I need not be far from Thee. If earthly riches be denied me, may I know the riches of Thy grace. If trouble and confusion be around me, keep my heart staid and fixed on Thee. Thus shall life be joy and death gain. Amen.

"A little bird I am,  
Shut from the fields of air;  
And in my songs I sit and sing  
To Him who placed me there;  
Well pleased a prisoner to be,  
Because, my God, it pleaseth Thee."  
—Madame Guyon.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Written by Paul from Rome to the inhabitants of Philippi, a city of Macedonia. **Time,** A. D. 63. Contains no word of censure, but much praise. **Persons,** Clement, Epaphroditus, Euodia, and Syntyche. Nero is also mentioned in the chapter.

**Scripture Setting:** The Assurances of Faith. Security of the saints, Isa. 45:2-8. Resting in the Divine goodness, Psa. 17:5-9, 17. Casting care upon God, I Pet. 5:2-10. Godliness with contentment, I Tim. 6:6-12. Trusting God, fearless of men, Heb. 13:1-6.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** We have in this passage the Christian's secret of a happy life. 1

Christ's secret grip and password had introduced the Apostle into the mysteries of satisfying grace. "In all things I am instructed (initiated), both to be full and to be hungry." 2. The Christian church was a closed fraternity; they must all "be of the same mind in the Lord." 3. The Apostle's leadership consisted in preëminent service; he was most worthy because most helpful; the crown of which he boasted was the circle of converts in Philippi. 4. All the rules and by-laws for directing Christ's followers are to be found in contemplating and practicing the mind of Christ. "Think on these things." 5. In the secret of Christ's presence the disciple receives strength to go forth and meet all conditions.

THE SOUL'S SECRET SATISFACTION.

**Two Kings and Two Crowns.** "My brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." At the time when our present lesson was written two kings were living in Rome. One was Nero who lived in his "golden palace," which had just been completed. In this very chapter (verse 22) this palace is referred to as housing certain serving maids who had become such devoted Christians as to be styled "the saints of Cæsar's household." Attached to the golden palace was the Praetorian barracks where the second king was held a prisoner under Burrhus, captain of the guard. The prisoner counted himself a king whenever with joyful satisfaction he thought of his converts scattered through many distant cities "my joy and CROWN."

Once in a night vision on the Mediterranean (Acts 27:24) he had received a "night letter" from the skies declaring that these two kings should face each other, "Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Nero." (New Version.) Paul and Nero were the two men most talked about, then and now, of any men in Rome. Each wore a crown. Nero's was of gold set with costliest gems, but on his head it was often a heavy weight of guilt and remorse. He had more murders to answer for than any man then living. He gave Burrhus a draft of poison; compelled his old teacher, Seneca, to commit suicide; killed his aunt and seized her estates; murdered his first wife Octavia; kicked to death in a passion his second wife twelve days after he married her; hired an

assassin to murder his mother, and finally got one of his slaves to drive a dagger into his own throat, crying as he expired, "Too late, too late!"

How true are the words of Lucretius, the Roman poet, "The greatest riches is to live content with little; for there is never want to the mind that is satisfied." Nero, with a golden palace, died in despair; Paul in prison met death by saying, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a CROWN." Paul's crown was a circlet of immortal life; the precious stones which studded it were the converts he had won to Christ, housemaids even in the golden palace of Nero. This crown threw about his path beams of joy and contentment in his prison life and martyr death.

**Two Sisters Silence Their Strife.** "I beseech Euodia, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord." The contented mind of Paul, instead of being overwhelmed by misfortune and imprisonment, was busied in pacifying differences which has arisen between two women of note in the church at Philippi. Euodia and Syntyche each possessed social standing and personal influence. These warm-hearted Christian women with strong minds and willing spirits had gladly embarked in the Christian service. But about something their views differed. The difficulty had not been well managed, and growing suspicious of each other their differences had grown into distrust and dislike.



Paul may have known the exact difficulty and the merits of the case, but he addresses himself to both women alike, as if both were guilty of self-will, and entreats them to agree in Christ and be done with quarrelling. He even appeals to a third member of the church, whom he names as a "true yoke fellow," to lend a hand. This Christian bystander, a friend of both parties, is to represent Paul. He is to remind them both of those glad old days of Christian effort, when Paul was among them, and these two sisters with other women had been at work, shoulder to shoulder, rejoicing in a common salvation and common service.

The appeal was probably successful, for we hear of no further discord. So that Euodia and Syntyche ought to be remembered with all honor; two sister saints of God who loved and labored for Christ, bearing their cross when woman's work in the church was unpopular, and burying their personal differences that Christ's work might go forward. So that the mind of Christ not only brought to Paul in prison sweet content, but made him a positive force to reconcile differences among church members and to develop harmony out of apparent discord.

**Gratitude for Their Gift.** "I rejoice in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again." In the school of a rugged experience Paul had learned the mind of Christ, especially the abiding lesson of contentment. "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." These were great, brave words for a death prisoner to utter who was hourly waiting his final summons. How beautiful that in the lonely winter of Paul's imprisonment their love should blossom forth in a gift to this ambassador in bonds!

Once before at the beginning of his gospel they had sent him either provisions or money when he was in Thessalonica. Of the nature or the value of this gift which the Christians of Philippi now send him by the hand of Epaphroditus we know nothing, but it seemed to the prisoner in Rome to possess an unearthly value. It is to his mind "an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing unto God." It refreshed him like an unexpected water-spring discovered in the desert. No one can tell how this last gift helped to enable him to testify to the Gospel's power in prison and later to die a martyr death on the Appian Way. Acknowledging their gift, he reminds them that his God shall supply all their needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

**Final Words Worth Remembering.** "Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true,

honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Paul has had much to say in this chapter of the swift-shifting changes of his checkered life. He was no stoic like the heathen about him, indifferent to pain or surprise. Keenly sensible to even the lower interests, hunger and fulness, pleasure and pain, loss and gain, he was a citizen living for greater ends. Inspired by Christian joy and supported by prayer he tested all his ways by the approbation of his Lord.

To determine what, according to the mind of Christ, was to count for virtue and for praise he gives six short rules. 1. The true things—whatever through veracity and fidelity makes us in conduct and temper God's men. 2. The honest things—whatever in character develops that underlying purpose in life to render to all men their dues, not forgetting what God requires. 3. The just things—whatever cultivates mind and heart to rightly measure in all the relations of life what is ours and what is our neighbor's, not forgetting that we are the stewards of God. 4. The pure things—whatever in thought motive or conduct character can embrace and remain unsullied. 5. The lovely things—whatever is dear or amiable, that feeds pure love as the dew from heaven feeds the white lilies. 6. The things of good report—whatever strikes the heart of the listener with a welcome sound, delighting the ear as a pleasant odor delights the traveler in a path of roses. Study these things, look out for them, learn to recognize them, pursue them as supremely worth while, and whether in prison or palace your heart will be a fountain of perpetual joy.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. On what voyage did Paul and the passengers suffer hunger; how long were they without food; what was his message of good cheer? 2. From what did Paul separate himself for the Gospel's sake, in family life; in nationality; in early plans and preparation; in personal freedom? 3. To whom did he write for his cloak, books, and parchments or sacred writings; to what three sides of his nature would these items bring satisfaction? 4. What in this lesson does he name as his joy and crown; how did they comfort the Apostle; by whose hand?

**Challenge Text:** "I can do all — through — who — me." Phil. 4: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The Christian's strength, like Paul's, is manifested in laboring, in resisting, in enduring. 2. The Philippians' gift met the straitened circumstances of an Apostle, provided a beautiful acknowledgment of their indebtedness, left a permanent record to their honor. 3. Present personal blessings that should make us thankful and contented: the gift of life, the freedom of our bodies, associations with Christian people, special privileges of worship and communion.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



obey  
your



in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.



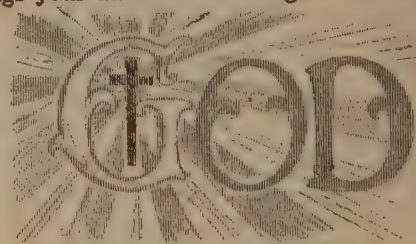
provoke  
not your  
children to



lest they be discouraged.



obey in all things your masters according to the flesh;  
not with  
eyeservice, as  
menpleasers;  
but in  
singleness of  
heart, fearing



And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord,  
and not unto



Knowing  
that of  
the Lord  
ye shall  
receive  
the



of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS COLOSSIANS 3:12-25.

**Prayer:** Our Heavenly Father, guard well our home. Let Thy providential care be the secure roof that covers it; let it be warmed and cheered throughout by Thy Divine love; let Christian faith be its sure foundation and Thy promises the protecting hedge about it. Give me a green room where I may read, a red room where I may eat, a blue room where I may meet my friends, a gray room where I may sleep, and a white room where I may think only holy thoughts of Thee. Amen.

“Wanderer, the fire is warm;  
Vagabond, the hearth is swept;  
Still the little room is kept  
Ready for your welcome form!  
Oh, return! Here old friends need you!  
Is the world more kind than they?  
Turn and let our longing lead you  
Home again, no more to stray!”

—S. M.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The letter to the Colossians was written by Paul from Rome in A. D. 62 or 63, to admonish and instruct in Christian living. In doctrine and phraseology it resembles Ephesians. Colosse, a city of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, had many Jew and Gentile Christians.

**Scripture Setting: An Ideal Home.** Husbands and wives, Eph. 5:22-33. Parents and children, Eph. 6:1-4. Masters and servants, Eph. 6:5-9. Advice for all, I Pet. 3:8-12. The lamp in the center, Matt. 6:22-32. Foundation of the home, Mark 10:1-12.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage suggests the rules of a well-ordered home. 1. Children who early obey their parents at home will later bring honor to them abroad. 2. The wife who is faithful to her husband, her children and her home will inspire the first, mould the second, and direct the third. 3. The father who “chums” with his boy now will not be ashamed of his record by and by. 4. Servants who are faithful in their religious life will always more than earn their wages.

### SEVEN LAMPS THAT ILLUMINE THE HOME.

**The Lamp of Cheerfulness.** “Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” In the reception hall, the very front room of every home, there should be the bright light of gladness and cheer kept trimmed and burning. The old rabbis used to teach that there were two orders of angels, the angels of service and the higher order of angels, the angels of praise. The Bible is full of music; there are more texts on praise even than on prayer. The first note of Christianity to this world was an angel song to the shepherds at midnight. And Christianity has been the great lamp lighting up the midnights of earth. Paul and Silas kept singing even in their imprisonment, and lo, their songs lifted the prison gates from their hinges.

**The Lamp of Thankfulness.** “Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” How different does the evening meal taste to the whole family if the dining room lamp of thankfulness first be lighted to flood the table with gratitude. In some homes grace is never spoken before the meal. It is much like eating in the dark. I have read of young society women in Washington who retired from the dining hall after an evening banquet to smoke cigarettes together. You may be sure that the father at that table had neglected for long years to say grace.

Contrast such a home with that one pictured by Robert Burns in *The Cotter’s Saturday Night*, where the gray-haired sire pushes back from the supper table to lead the family circle in prayer and Bible reading. The poet’s younger brother, Gilbert, says that this, the noblest of all his poems, was inspired

by the memory of his father’s simple family worship, and that after the father’s death, Robert, the eldest son, faithfully followed the father’s example. Thrice happy and blest is that home where the old ancestral custom of having grace before each meal and family worship once a day still holds sway.

**The Lamp of Faithfulness.** “Wives, submit yourselves unto your husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.” Perhaps you are thinking that the lamp out in the kitchen is very plain and its light dim compared to the banquet lamp of the dining hall, or the piano lamp of the parlor, but the truth is that after the dinner party is over, after the guests have gone, when the dining hall and the parlor are dark there is still a light in the kitchen, for the housewife must finish her work against the next day. The kitchen lamp is the best lamp after all, for it is the test and proof of wifely devotion. For it is better to be faithful than to be famous in entertaining or brilliant in repartee. The praise of the faithful wife is as old as human literature. Thus does Homer in his *Odyssey* speak of Penelope, the good wife:

“There is no fairer thing,  
No better than a husband and his wife,  
When with harmonious heart and purposes  
They hold their household.”

Whether you read the Proverbs of Solomon, or the Epistles of Paul, the true wife is pictured as the center and strength of a good home.

**The Lamp of Whole-Heartedness.** “Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them.” While the wife is busy finishing her evening work in the kitchen the husband may be as hard at work under the student lamp of the study. Such is the division of labor which marriage may bring.

But marriage is something more than a

convenient and happy arrangement for dividing the work of life. There must be in every true marriage a loving regard and a desire to serve each other. Only when love is lacking can marriage be called a failure. The wife in the kitchen alone can be happy if she knows that her husband somewhere else at his task is preserving himself entirely for her, is thinking of no other woman in comparison to her, and in his heart extols her virtues above all others. The possession of a fine house, the presentation of silk dresses, or the knowledge that her husband is a genius will not atone for the husband's cruelty, faithlessness, or lack of appreciation. The Apostle, therefore, is right in insisting that love is the husband's foremost obligation.

A courageous wife can be pinched by poverty yet smile; but let her feel that love is failing and she droops like a thirsty violet in time of terrible drought. The true husband not only provides for the larder daily, but daily proves his love, since she feeds more on the affections of her husband than on his daily bread.

**The Lamp of Reverence.** "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Up in the nursery is another lamp of softest rays, a lamp hung low to light the children both in their play and in their preparations at bedtime. It usually falls to the mother to trim and light this lamp, the lamp of reverence. When a little child in his mother's lap looks up into his mother's eyes and recognizes the one who will always do for him what is best, it may be said that the child's education has begun. Learning to give strict attention to what mother says and following her commands with strict obedience is the first step in childhood's education.

The child is humanity in the making, and the parents are God's first priests. A greater responsibility rests on the parent than on the minister or school teacher. In a child's development "an ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy."

Susannah Wesley not only made her children cry softly but she made them play fair. Her boys in that large family learned to reverence God, at the same time learning to revere their godly parents. The loving labor of teaching them their evening prayers in the old Epworth rectory, the time spent in catechism and religious questioning was well rewarded afterwards when John became the great preacher and Charles the great hymn writer.

**The Lamp of Entertainment.** "Fathers, provoke not your children, that they be not discouraged." I know a home where they have a great big laundry room in the basement where they often turn the children loose. Whenever father gets an evening off he sets up there his magic lantern and has an

evening's entertainment for his children and their friends. The pictures he throws upon the sheet stretched at the farther end are wonderful: little Esquimo people from the far north; brown little folks from India; black little picaninnies from the rice fields; and dusky papooses from the western plains. Aladdin's magic lamp in the Arabian Nights does not compare with this magic lantern to conjure up the weird and wonderful.

The very best fathers are the fathers who entertain as well as educate. No home is quite complete without children, and no child is at his best unless someone under the soft lamplight of evening takes time to tell him the wonderful tales of patriotism, adventure, travel, and knighthood. It is a happy thought that the world is understanding children better than ever before, and they are being encouraged where once they were discouraged.

**The Lamp of Solitude.** "Servants, obey in all things them that are your masters according to the flesh, in singleness of heart, fearing the Lord." After all the rest of the house is still and all the other lights are out, there burns one lamp high up in the attic bedroom; it is the lamp of devotion and solitude. It is the lamp of Jane the servant girl. We know nothing of her parents or family, and although she is now old enough to have a home of her own, she never married. She has been with us a long time—the best servant we ever had. After she has worked hard all day she goes to her room and under the lamp of solitude she reads her Bible and talks to her Heavenly Father.

Jane is a very simple soul, but we would trust her with anything, our pocketbook or our life. The reason why she pleases her mistress so well is, I think, because she is always trying to please her Lord. Jane is as busy as any, yet she always takes time to read and pray. How ideal would be that home where every member of it entered his closet and shut the door to pray. But if some are careless and jump prayerless into bed, I am glad for a faithful Jane, the last to retire, who bears to a throne of grace each member of the household asleep beneath her attic room.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. In what home did Christ spend his boyhood? 2. To what home near the sea did He then go? 3. What did He say later concerning His own homelessness? 4. At what home was He frequently a welcome guest? 5. To whose home did He entrust His mother? 6. What is the final Home mentioned in Eccl. 12? 7. To what final Home did Christ invite all believers?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. In the perfect music of the family circle there are no star soloists, but one balanced chorus wherein each is subservient to the whole. 2. If on going in we expect a welcoming smile from those who keep the home, we should, on coming in, bring a smile and cheery salutation. 3. "Home, Sweet Home" was composed in a foreign land; why leave home to sing its praises? 4. The face we bring to the breakfast table we wear all day; let it be bright, with cheerful thoughts.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

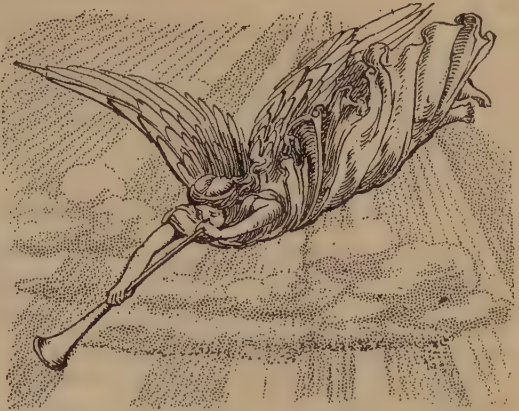


# THE COMING OF THE LORD.

For the Lord himself shall



with a  
shout,  
with  
the  
voice  
of the  
arch-



and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall



first:  
Then we  
which  
are alive  
and  
remain  
shall be



together  
with  
them  
in the  
clouds,  
to meet  
the



and so  
shall we  
ever be  
with  
the Lord.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I. THESS. 4:13-18.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, in the soft, downy clouds which float over my head may I read the majesty of Thy promised coming; in the sharp flash of the lightning that streaks the heavens may I read the sign of Thy sudden return; and in the rolling thunder may I hear and heed the voice which tells me that some day the trump of God shall call my body home. Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

"O Church of Christ, behold at last  
The promised sign appear,—  
The Gospel preached in all the world;  
And lo! the King draws near.  
The scattered sons are gath'ring home,  
The fig-tree buds again,  
A little while, and David's Son,  
On David's throne shall reign."

Dr. A. J. Gordon.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** This epistle was written, the first of all the letters of Paul we now have, at Corinth, either in the winter of 52 A. D. or the early part of 53 A. D. It is written in the joint names of Paul, Silas and Timothy, the three founders of the church there. Its style is calm, its spirit commendatory, its appeal chiefly to Gentiles, as seen by its omission of Old Testament quotations.

**Scripture Setting:** **Watching for the Lord's Return.** Sudden return of the Lord, Matt. 24:23-33. Christ's coming for judgment, Mark 13:14-19. The general resurrection, Rev. 20:11-15. Argument for the resurrection, I. Cor. 15:35-45. Watchfulness required, I. Thess. 5:1-10.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents

both the proof and the details of the Lord's coming. 1. Paul based his teaching on two great pillars, "the word of the Lord," and the historic fact "that Jesus died and rose again." 2. Christ delegates not His kingship, ambassadorship, judgment, or priesthood to another. "The Lord Himself shall descend." 3. This universally public scene will be both glorious and terrible, Michael, the tallest angel leading his train, and the fallen Lucifer leading from their dungeons the ruined third of Heaven. 4. We should wait for it, watch for it, welcome it, since His coming means our coronation. 5. The resurrection to the heathen seemed uncertain, to the Hebrews, probable, to Christ's Apostles certain, and by His followers living and dead it will be realized.

### CHRIST COMING IN THE CLOUDS.

**How His Hand Has Scattered Heathen Hopelessness.** "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are fallen asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." The leading topic of Paul's message at Thessalonica had been the coming Kingdom of Christ. (Acts 17:7.) The truths he then preached were destined to honeycomb the very foundations of the Roman empire. The mighty fact that Christ was coming back in power and glory was a doctrine so fully believed that the church then dared to denounce even kings and despots in their wickedness.

Towards the end of the fourth century a mob sacked the governor's house in Thessalonica and killed him. The Emperor Theodosius was so angered that he sent soldiers into the circus while it was crowded, who in three hours slew seven thousand men, women, and children. After that the Emperor tried to enter the church, when Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, met him at the door. "Back to your palace," he cried, "Repent! repent! and then come. Your hands drip with blood." In the midst of all the people Theodosius did repent, and promised to make new laws for capital punishment.

Paul came to their city preaching something better than this. He described their dead as "them which are sleeping," and "those laid to sleep by Jesus." He said that though their bodies were sleeping in the cemetery or "sleeping place," they need not mourn in hopelessness as the heathen, for Christ by His death and resurrection had taken the sting from death. Most of Paul's

converts were won from raw heathendom, and their turning to the gospel of the resurrection was like turning from midnight to noonday. Human life became a precious thing and their dead were buried in the hope of a glad reunion.

**The Bridegroom's Return the Basis of the Church's Belief.** "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." Only one doctrinal topic is touched upon in this whole letter, and that with a purely practical end in view. It was to enlighten and cheer those Christians who had become possessed of the notion that their dead brethren would be at a disadvantage at Christ's second coming in comparison with those then living who should immediately join their victorious Lord. His first great victory over the grave, says Paul, is the pledge of His coming in final, complete victory.

"This same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into Heaven." The coming which the Apostle looked for is to be the consummation of all things at the end of the world, when time shall be no longer, when the dead are raised, when judgment is set, and eternal retribution begins. He will return to claim His own. Since in the grave He giveth His beloved sleep, He will return to waken our sleeping forms. Those members of the church who have been "laid to sleep by Jesus" shall be awakened



by the same gentle hand. The church triumphant has passed on to be with God. She is the bride of Christ. One thing she lacks which will be supplied. With a mighty shout the Bridegroom will return at the end of the world and first of all clothe the dead with the resurrection garments.

**Swiftness of His Second Coming and Suddenness of His Shout.** "For the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." The twentieth chapter of Revelation with its mystic and symbolic language has been the fruitful source of many sects of Millenarians or Second Adventists. Many, like the Millerites, have given up their secular concerns and waited for the set day when the Son of man cometh. All such presuppositions have failed, and all Millennium Dawn heresies have proved themselves fanciful and unscriptural interpretations.

The Scriptures clearly describe the Lord's coming, but His advent shall be with all the swiftness of surprise. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no not the angels in Heaven, but My Father only." "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; as the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

**Friends That Have Fallen Asleep First in His Triumphant Train.** "The dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds." Even these Christian believers seem to have shuddered when they thought of their dead friends lying in the grave. But Paul was sure of his ground. "This we say unto you by the word of the Lord." They might rest assured that the bodies of their dead friends would take precedence over their own living bodies when the Lord should come in the final resurrection. It was no advantage but rather a disadvantage to escape physical death. Before those then living should be caught up to meet their returning Lord in the air "those laid to sleep by Jesus" should first be clothed upon with their resurrection bodies. The dead raised first, then the changed living followers shall form one joint body, one glorious company making Christ's triumphant train.

But the resurrection of the body means more than the immortality of the soul. It means the resurrection of the identical body which had been buried, even as Christ in His resurrection appeared and was identified by the wounds in His hands and feet. The difficulties involved we may not attempt to explain. We will leave it to the omnipotence of God, as did Paul, when he exclaimed, "Behold, I show you a

mystery! We shall not all sleep but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." Christ has already done enough to assure us of what He yet will do. His part is to come; our part is to wait and believe.

**Comforting Words in Conclusion: Christ Will Come.** "Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Previous to His death and resurrection, just before midnight, a Galilean Peasant set twelve men, His chosen Twelve, afloat upon a wide, wide sea. They were to perpetuate His name and teachings, carrying them down to nations yet unborn. Leaning down He whispered to them a closing message: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come again and receive you unto Myself."

It was a sad separation, for outside in the darkness of that midnight Death was lying in wait for Him. Nevertheless He could comfort them,—for He pushed aside the future and saw Himself the victor over death; saw His little boat-load of fishermen disciples in the midst of a great ocean of infidelity, yet triumphing; saw the judgment and the end of time. Rowing away in the awful darkness those fishermen kept repeating His strange, wonderful words, "Not comfortless; He will come."

While the Titanic was sinking that Sunday night, Nadji Narsani, an Armenian peasant, kissed his wife Maria for the last time, and placed her tenderly in the small boat, for she was about to become a mother. On this sinking ship were their accumulated savings, in her little boat was all his life held dear. He remembered the dream of a home in America, then stooped and whispered, "Maria, perhaps we never meet again on earth, but tell our child how I died." So the disciples rowed away, away down the years to tell to all the children of men of the death and the last loving words of Jesus, "Not comfortless; I will come again." In the home in Armenia there may be persecution; in the home in America there may be sorrow; but in the home up in Heaven all burdened hearts will be comforted. Hear it, oh mothers who teach these lessons, and children who study them, "I will come!"

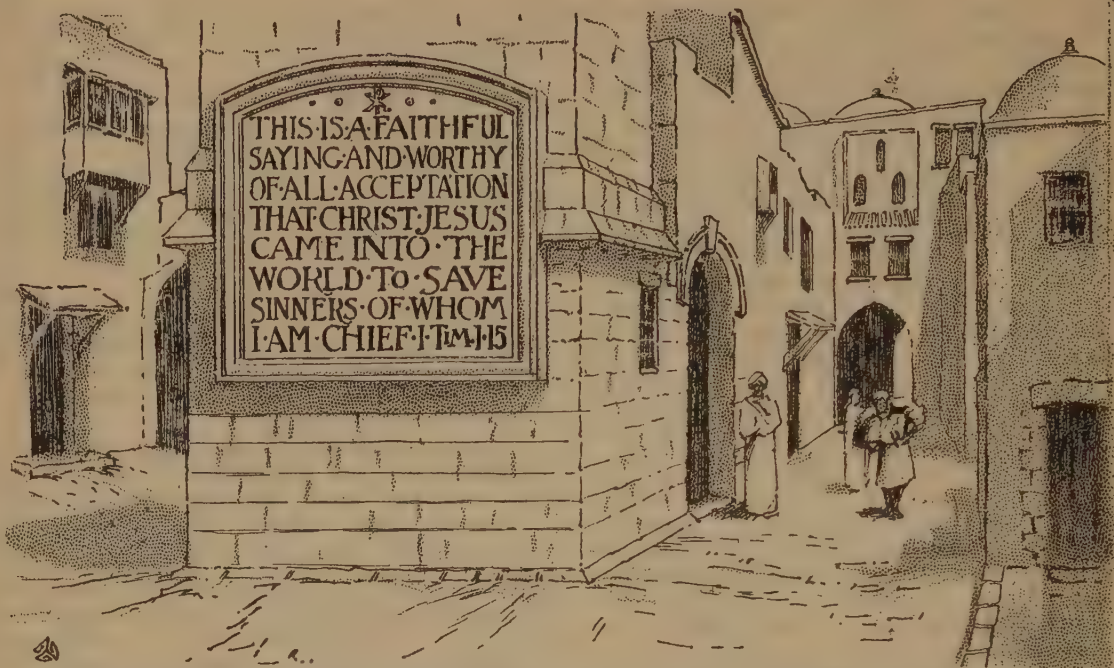
**Quiz and Study.** 1. What fear occasioned the writing of this lesson? 2. What will be the three signals of His coming? 3. What is to be the order of the resurrection of the quick and the dead. 4. Upon what historic fact rests our belief in the resurrection of our mortal bodies?

**Challenge Text:** I will come —, and receive you unto —, that where I am, there — may be also. John 14: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Four great events coincident with His coming: The general resurrection; the final judgment; the end of time; the destruction of the world. 2. Christ's coming will be as sudden as the lightning's flash on the clouds. 3. Some will greet Him with joy; some will meet Him with fear and trembling. 4. Vigilance and preparation are the chief duties of life. 5. The expectancy aroused over His coming should fill us with zeal for His service.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.





For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; Who will have all men to be



and to  
come  
unto the  
knowledge  
of the



For there is one God, and one mediator between God and



the  
man  
Christ  
Jesus;  
Who  
gave  
himself  
a



for all, to be testified in due time.



THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I. TIM. 1:15-20; 2:1-6.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, We thank Thee for the Mediator standing between us and Thee, Christ Jesus who gave Himself a ransom for all. In His name we ask Thee to hear our prayer, that we may live godly lives and war a good warfare. Even as the child Timothy was trained by religious parents and early called to be Thy disciple, so may we learn Thy Word and do Thy will. Amen.

"Thou art nearer than the nearest;  
Thou art dearer than the dearest;  
No mortal can compare with Thee.  
Yet still nearer draw Thou to me;  
Yet still dearer be Thou to me:  
Until I care alone for Thee."  
—Ernest G. W. Wesley.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** I Timothy was written by Paul to Timothy A. D. 65. The Apostle had been the means of the lad's conversion at 15, some twenty years before. This occurred at Lystra on Paul's first missionary journey. Seven years later he returns, and hearing such favorable reports of the young man's faithfulness, circumcises him and ordains him to the ministry.

**Scripture Setting:** The Gospel Message and the Gospel Messenger. The Gospel revelation to be preached, I Pet. 1:18-25. Duties and perils of a bishop, Tit. 1:5-14. Office of an elder and respect due him, I Pet. 5:1-9. Good example of Paul's ministry, Acts 20:26-35.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents Paul's influence on the young man Timothy and his message. 1. Christianity's power transforms the chief of sinners into the chief of apostles. 2. Paul's influence and power calls Timothy and ordains him to the ministry. 3. The call of Timothy is verified by the favorable opinions and the prophecies of the presbyters. 4. Paul gives exhortation, prayer, and instruction that the young soldier may war a good warfare. 5. The message is reconciliation, its end godly living, its provisions for all, to be published everywhere in due time.

PAUL'S SON IN THE FAITH.

**The Short Saying that Sums Up the Whole Story.** "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." In the last nine words of the first verse of this lesson Paul gives to Timothy a condensed, concise statement of what is included in the Gospel story. He had been preaching it so many years and under such varied circumstances that he knew it by heart. Probably he never preached it under greater difficulties than when Timothy first heard him twenty years before. That was at Lystra, near Derbe, the home of Timothy, where the Jews silenced the preacher by stoning him and dragged him out of the city for dead. Now twenty years had tested the faithfulness of that preaching which Timothy that day accepted and Paul is urging his convert to preach the old story without modification, since it is worthy the acceptance of all.

Some sayings we eagerly accept in youth appear silly and shallow in old age. But this saying, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," fascinated the lad of fifteen as he heard Paul first preach it; it was the very heart of the message which the evangelist of Asia Minor was now himself preaching in his prime; and it was the steadfast hope of "Paul the aged," who had tried it out through a busy life.

An English teacher one day asked his boys, "What is the best news you ever heard?" One said that it was that his father, who had long been at sea, was coming home. Another, that he was soon to have a new Bible all his own. One, who had lived all his life in the country, that he was going to London for a long visit. But one little

fellow, the last of all, said: "The best news that I ever heard, teacher, was that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

**Paul the Pattern for Others.** "That in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe." In this letter (1:2) Paul speaks of Timothy as "my own son in the faith." And following the example of John, Timothy might have called himself "the disciple whom Paul loved." The beautiful friendship which ripened between the great Apostle and his chief disciple, so different in gifts and in ages, is full of interest. Timothy's debt to Paul was immense. Timothy was the one among his many disciples who had sacrificed everything for Paul and his Master. He left a loving mother and a pleasant home for a task of ceaseless labor, untold anxiety, and worldly scorn, facing oftentimes dangers to life and limb. Humanly speaking he owed his salvation to Paul, and Paul's noble life was in part reproduced in the perils and journeyings which Timothy endured to spread the gospel.

Paul prayed that his life might be a "pattern" life to them who thereafter believe. And through all the succeeding generations God has been answering that prayer, for as young men have read the autobiography and the heroic letters of Paul they have been moved to emulate his heroism and valor. Paul is a pattern from which endless copies have been taken.

**The Battle Bequeathed from Sire to Son.** "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare." Certain

churches have taken peculiar pride because they could trace down their line of ministers historically from the early Apostles by ordination and the laying on of hands without a break in the succession. But if we will look carefully we will see that the true apostolic succession is a succession of sacrifice and suffering. What is the record? Christ died upon the cross, and Peter gazed upon His sufferings from afar. "I am a witness of the sufferings of Christ." (I. Pet. 5:1.) Under the passion of that cross he became a new man and preached the sufferings of the cross till he, like his Lord, was crucified. He preached Jesus and Him crucified at Pentecost and among the three thousand converted tradition says that Stephen was pricked to the heart and dedicated his life to the ministry.

One day Stephen was preaching on the crucifixion of Jesus saying, "Ye have been now the betrayers and murderers of the Just One." His hearers could not bear this truth and they stoned to death the youthful Stephen. The murderers threw their outer garments at the feet of a young bystander named Saul. He never forgot the look of glory on Stephen's face and his prayer of mercy for his murderers. Not long after this Saul's spirit and name was changed, and he became the Preacher Paul, won by the story of the cross. He preached that same story at Lystra, and for it was stoned and left for dead. But in his audience was a lad of fifteen who said as he fell, "I will take the Gospel flag he drops and bear it on through the world."

Let us follow the history a step further. Eusebius, writing two hundred years later, says that Timothy became the overseer, or bishop, of the diocese of Ephesus, and five centuries later Nicephorus writes that a drunken Ephesian mob beat to death the aged Timothy as he preached to them Christ from the stone steps of one of their heathen temples.

It is most natural to believe that very night some noble Greek youth caught the fire from the soul of the dying preacher and grasping the Gospel torch promised to keep it burning as he carried it down through another generation. Christ, Peter, Stephen, Paul, Timothy, and on down to the remotest generation, the true apostolic succession of sacrifice and suffering! The world will be saved by the cross uplifted two thousand years ago only as it sees the same sacrifice of love and life offered daily by those who are crucified with Christ, "filling up that which was lacking of the sufferings of Christ." (Col. 1:24.)

**Christianity as Centering in the Character of Christ.** "One mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all." We shall need the important truth of this verse to correct any impression which might have been made

by what has been said already of how we are still influenced by those about us whose lives, in sacrifice and suffering, are offered daily. For however heroic are modern examples and however helpful, we have but one Mediator, and we are saved only by one Person, Christ, "who gave Himself a ransom for all."

So great has been the progress of the centuries since Christ that some are led to believe that man's natural condition does not require a mediator or a ransom. We can reform the world, they say, through the machinery of social reform and by recognizing man's remarkable advance.

But a few facts will show that the world without Christ still manifests the depravity of human nature. Every bolt upon a door, every safe with its complicated lock, every check placed on public officials, the multiplication of laws in recent times, the reinspection of weights, efforts to stop the adulteration of foods, the searching of the baggage of every traveler who comes into a port of entry even after he has sworn to a government official, all these are fresh evidences of our belief that the natural tendency of man is toward evil. The unregenerate world is still sold under sin and it can be bought back unto righteousness only by a Divine ransom. The method has not changed, since human nature has not changed. Law, however multiplied, is a dead thing, but Christ after two thousand years is the living Personality who sets new motives at work within.

Paul as a Jew made an honest experiment of the power of law covering years and said: "Therefore by works of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight." Yet he gives the law the credit of showing him his sin. "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ" (Gal. 3:24). So as the multiplication of civil law aimed at the reaching of the evil doer shows us that we are "a crooked and perverse generation," we instinctively turn to the Saviour of Paul and Timothy as the Ransom for our sin and the Hope of our world.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. Who are the two women Paul mentions as first influencing Timothy in matters of faith? 2. What in Timothy's age, temperament and difficulties (1:3, 4) made Paul's counsel necessary? 3. How was Timothy of help to Paul, as a friend; in church discipline; in evangelistic labors? 4. What happened when Paul and Timothy first met; what occurred when they met seven years later; where was Timothy during Paul's first imprisonment (Philemon 1:1); was Timothy ever sent to prison (Heb. 13:23)?

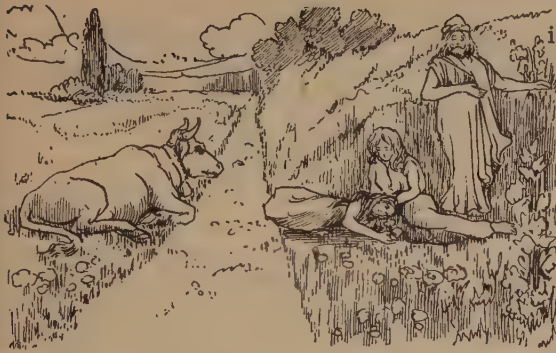
**Challenge Text.** "Fight the good fight of —, lay hold on eternal —, whereunto thou wast —, and didst confess a good —." I Tim. 6: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Christ is mediator between God and man, between earth and Heaven, between broken law and the law-breaker, between a sinful past and a blissful future. 2. Four points of "good warfare": to avoid surprise, to guard weak places, to keep hostile spies without, to keep in line with fellow-soldiers. 3. This "faithful saying" must be accepted by all our faculties, the belief of intellect, the sympathy of feelings, the action of the will. 4. Some prophecies of Timothy's greatness seen at his ordination: teachableness, faithfulness, purity, modesty, singleness of purpose.

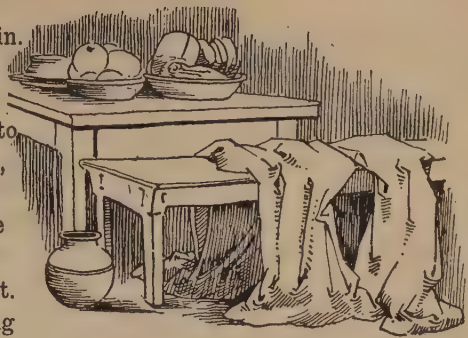
REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



But godliness with



is great gain.  
For we brought  
nothing into  
this world,  
and it is  
certain we  
can carry  
nothing out.  
And having



let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into



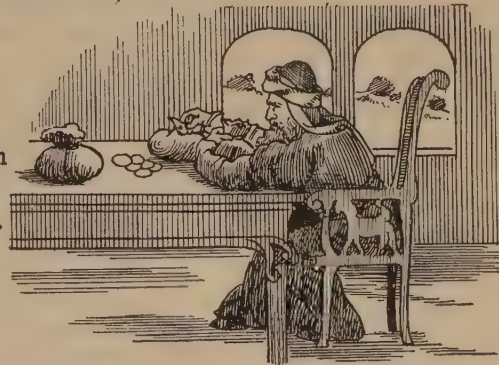
and a



and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which



men in  
destruction  
and  
perdition.  
For the



is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the



and



themselves through with many sorrows.

THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS I. TIM. 6:12; 17-19.

**Prayer:** Grant me, most sweet and loving Jesus, to rest in Thee above every creature, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honor, above all power and dignity, above all riches and art, above all fame and praise, above all gifts and reward, above all things visible, and above everything which Thou, O my God, art not. Amen.

—Thomas à Kempis.

"Last year my one lone ship came back to me, A ruined wreck of what she used to be, No cargo in her hold, storm-stained and scarred, O Lord, Thou knowest it was hard, was hard, To watch her drifting bulk with hopeless eye. Yet in my desolation Thou wert nigh.

Lord, I give thanks!"

—Susie M. Best.

THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Timothy, in Paul's absence, superintended the church at Ephesus. This epistle was written to supply Timothy with needed rules and advice. The closing chapter deals especially with those who regarded godliness as a means of earthly gain.

**Scripture Setting:** The Relation of Godliness and Riches. The Kingdom first, prosperity afterwards, Matt. 6:24-33. A lost soul's lust for gold, Matt. 26:14-16, 21-25, 47-50. Danger of riches; reward of virtue, Mark 10:23-31. Bags which wax not old, Luke 12:33-43. Wise use of money, Luke 19:12-26.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** Paul's letter presents God's soldier fighting a good fight. 1. The riches of this world entangle and burden. 2. Spiritual riches: righteousness, godliness, etc., are not a burden, but a source of strength. 3. Covetousness is a bundle of arrows, darts that pierce with sorrow. 4. Avarice is a snare, a pitfall set for good soldiers. 5. He who carries godly contentment in his knapsack need carry little else. 6. The good soldier carries little baggage marching towards the final record, the final review, and the final reward.

THE RELATION OF GODLINESS AND RICHES.

**Godliness Is Great Gain.** "Godliness with contentment is great gain." Between the first and second imprisonment of Paul at Rome, he and Timothy were together in Ephesus. When the Apostle went on into Macedonia he left his companion behind him to oppose certain erroneous doctrines. In wealthy Ephesus, with its abundant commerce, the lust for gold was an absorbing passion. The silver image of Diana represented the avarice which the whole city had personified and set up for worship. The silversmiths were a powerful and wealthy craft who made much gain out of the popular religion. Against all this Timothy was left to preach the simple life.

All temporal advantages, such as large possessions, rank, power, family name, and honors are too often so many worries, anxieties, and obligations. A quiet cottage and a few hundred dollars a year, content with what God has given, offers more genuine happiness than any advancement in mere worldly interests accompanied by a covetousness that is never satisfied. Godliness with contentment makes a man a better master, a better servant, a better citizen, a stronger man in mind and body, and surely no man can be happy in his heart who does not possess a good conscience.

**An Empty-Handed Entrance and Exit.** "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." Both of these statements have been abundantly proved by the experience of mankind. One of the earliest books of all literature gives this moral, "Naked came I out of my

mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." In the day of Job's utter ruin, these truths were very evident as they have been to millions since whose riches have suddenly taken wings and flown away. Some who bring no money with them into life find plenty of it heaped up waiting their arrival. Seldom do the babies "fed out of a golden spoon" make as good records as those who must feed themselves out of pewter spoons.

Recently a prominent business man gathered the names of one thousand successful men in America, and after painstaking inquiries traced out how each one started in life. Their first foothold offers a fine study for the boys of today. Three hundred started as farmer's sons. Two hundred started as messenger boys. Two hundred were newsboys. One hundred were printers' apprentices. One hundred were apprenticed in manufactories. Fifty began at the bottom round in railway work. And fifty—only fifty—had wealthy parents to give them a start.

**Satan's Silver Snare.** "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare." Every impulse of the miser is tainted. Whenever a call for sympathy or generosity is sounded he only tightens his purse strings, and his poor, starved soul is caught and strangled in the noose just as a boy snares and strangles a bird with his cotton string in the old apple tree. Judas kept the money bag, but he was never content. He even quarrelled with his Master because a devout follower took her money and with it bought an expensive gift to anoint Christ's body against the burial. He pulled the strings of that old money bag so tightly that with it he finally strangled his own soul. He seemed to see the blood of his Saviour on the pieces of silver that were the



price of betrayal, and he threw them back into the face of his bribers declaring, "It is the price of innocent blood;" then went and hanged himself.

Once Paul wrote to Timothy, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." (2 Tim. 4:10.) This looks like another instance of a deserter who went over to the enemy for a gift of gold. How paltry are the bribes which some men take; how small the price that will buy the soul filled with avarice, as they forsake the company of saints and relinquish hopes of Heaven!

"Just for a handful of silver he left us,  
Just for a riband to stick in his coat."

**Coins of Christian Contentment.** "Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness." After Paul warned Timothy to flee the poisoned arrows of covetousness which have pierced so many with sorrows, he urges certain positive virtues which he may well make his life pursuit. Here are six bright coins that shine with permanent worth and beauty because they bear the stamp of Heaven. How shall we earn the coin of righteousness? We shall not earn it at all, but it shall be presented to us by the King just as the badge of the Legion of Honor is pinned upon the friend whom the king would delight to honor. But to be the King's friend and to wear the King's name we must prove ourselves worthy.

A second coin of everlasting worth is godliness. How many lives of ability and opportunity failed to write their names among the permanently great because they were not godly? Not to be vindictive or unjust, let us think of two. There was Daniel Webster, who in native gifts towered above his fellow men like Jupiter. He had a great physique, a great mind, a great voice, but not a consecrated heart. He missed true greatness by being weak where he should have been strong. Colonel Robert Ingersoll had a war record, was so great an orator that his party chose him to make the nominating speech for their candidate for president. But Ingersoll, lacking godliness, left not a name or record that men admire. And what shall we say of the coin of faith? Read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and you will read the Hebrew heroes of the ages who conquered by faith. A secular newspaper recently said in an editorial: "No man who does not believe in God should be entrusted with the management of public affairs in a great emergency. It is a psychological fact that faith in God gives a man nerve, decision and hope."

But the coin of love is the purest of all. It has no counterfeits. It passes at its face value in all countries beneath the sun. If we should lose all other coins in the collection let us not lose love, for "love never faileth." Two other coins are worth seeking after most earnestly, patience and meekness. They look so much alike they can scarcely be told apart. How rich was Lincoln in these homely virtues. With his scarred visage and homespun suit he towered above others of his time because he was

at once so patient and so meek. Let us seek after these six rare virtues as a merchantman crossing seas hunts for goodly pearls. For the possession of them will make us rich indeed.

**Heaping Up the Heavenly Treasure.** "That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate, laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come." The wealthy heathen in Ephesus were accustomed to deposit their valuables with the keepers of Diana's shrine, believing that goddess would make her sanctuary stronger than any bank. In the midst of all this depositing and storing up Timothy was to faithfully remind his Christian followers of the heavenly treasures they might store against the great judgment day.

In a very remarkable passage (Luke 16:9) Jesus tells us to make friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into eternal habitations. How strangely dissimilar are these two things which Christ so intimately connected, the mammon of unrighteousness and eternal habitations. Money itself has no moral quality whatever. Our financial transactions take on a moral quality, however, from the motive back of the act.

The selfish lust for money is one of the basest of passions, but the charitable and Christian use of money is worthy of heavenly reward. With a dollar I may buy a Bible that may lead to the conversion of a friend and the opening up of a strong life for God. With a dollar I may send the glad tidings of salvation across seas and through another convert a soul I shall never see till I reach Heaven. Great is the power of consecrated money; it will work while you work and will work in your name after you are dead and gone. Then, too, there are so many good deeds we may do that require no financial outlay. They represent the expenditure of forethought, kindness, time and personal ease. Those who thus serve their age live a life rich in satisfaction and die rich towards God.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. For what purpose was Job dispossessed of his property; how liberally was it restored? 2. What disciple complained because they had forsaken all; what did Christ say would be their reward now and hereafter? 3. Which of the seven churches of Asia was condemned for its riches; what was it urged to buy? 4. What was there in the luxury of heathen worship at Ephesus that cultivated pride; what was Paul's boast regarding his own support?

**Challenge Text:** "Bring ye all the tithes into the —, and prove me now herewith; if I will not open you the — of Heaven, and pour you out a —, that there shall not be — enough to receive it." Mal. 3: (9).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. We cannot serve God and mammon, though we may serve God with mammon. 2. The insatiate love of money is not the only root of evil, but a root whence all evils may spring. 3. The bounties of Providence are for human enjoyment; to be received with thanksgiving to God, to be distributed for human need. 4. The riches of the rich are not to be cast away, not to be trusted in, but to be used "to do good."

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

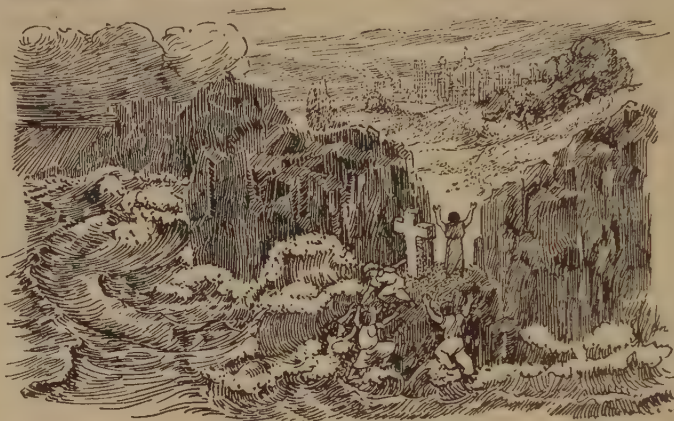
But continue thou in the things which thou has.



and hast been  
assured of,  
knowing of  
whom thou hast  
learned them;  
And that from a



thou hast  
known the  
holy scriptures,  
which are  
able to  
make thee  
wise unto



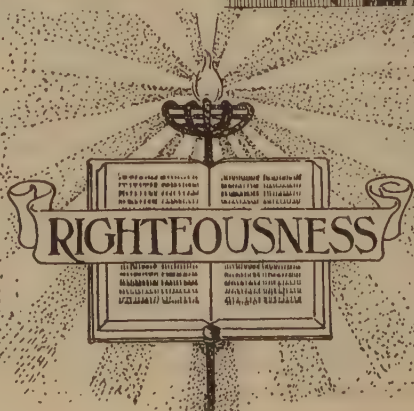
through



which  
is in  
Christ



All scripture is  
given by inspiration  
of God, and is  
profitable for  
doctrine, for  
reproof, for  
correction, for  
instruction in



That the man  
of God may  
be perfect,  
thoroughly  
furnished unto  
all good works.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS II. TIM. 3:14-17, 4:1-5.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, make me a diligent student of Thy Word that I may be a Christian workman that needeth not to be ashamed. May I be true to all the religious teachings of my childhood, clinging to that which has been tried, rather than running after that which is novel. May the Scripture teachings, warnings, and promises continue to be the weapons and armor of my warfare,

protecting me perfectly and thoroughly furnishing me unto all good works. Amen.

“Laden with guilt, and full of fears,  
I fly to Thee, my Lord,  
And not a glimpse of hope appears,  
But in Thy written Word.”

—Isaac Watts.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** II. Timothy was written by Paul from Rome near the end of his imprisonment, and therefore the last epistle he wrote. At this time Timothy was overseer of the church at Ephesus. He is implored to come and comfort Paul in his last hours, but we have no means of knowing whether he reached the Apostle before his martyrdom.

**Scripture Setting:** Christian Scriptures in Conflict with Error. Folly of rejecting God's Law, Neh. 9:25-35. Curses written in God's Book, Deut. 29:9-20. Warnings from God's Word, Psa. 19:7-13. Handling God's Word in refuting error, II Tim. 2:14-19, 23-26. Bible prevails over books of sorcerers, Acts 19:13-20.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage discusses the Bible as a reprover of error and champion of truth. 1. Four profitable uses of Scripture: for doctrinal teaching; for refuting error; for correcting conduct; for instruction by example. 2. Four facts that make the Bible's progress inexplicable as a human product: it condemns all ancient religions and supersedes them; it enjoins duties displeasing to flesh and blood; without gratifying the senses, its rewards lie in the future; it predicts persecution for all of its followers. 3. Four marks of the “reprobate concerning the faith”: unwillingness to endure sound doctrine; calling teachers that aim only to please; listening to fables; attracting silly women.

### THE IMPREGNABLE ROCK OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

**Time-Honored Truths to which Timothy Sticks.** “Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of.” The greater part of this third chapter of II. Timothy is a denunciation of false sects, which, pretending to be Christian, were nevertheless “reprobate concerning the faith.” The false teachers at Ephesus used magic arts. Around the statue of Diana were unintelligible inscriptions to which wonderful powers were ascribed. The sons of the Jew Sceva had tried to use the name of Jesus as a magical word to drive out evil spirits, making it necessary to utterly destroy large numbers of costly books on the art of magic. (Acts 19:13-20.) Paul declares that these false teachers in Ephesus are resisting Timothy and himself in spreading pure Christianity even as Jannes and Jambres, two brothers who were Egyptian magicians, withstood the two Hebrew brothers Moses and Aaron. Timothy is not to let the wild teaching of his opponents shake his own security.

At the present hour there is need for Christian believers to continue in the things which they have learned and have been assured of rather than to drift away into teachings the truth of which they have not been assured of. Some modern cults use the old Christian terms only to deceive, depriving them of all their Christian meaning. Calling themselves Christian, terming their organization “The church,” insisting that their views are most “liberal,” using the term “God” for a being impersonal and un-

conscious, not distinguishable from blind force operating in nature, they sometimes deceive the very elect. A little Hindoo philosophy, a pinch of telepathy and mental science, a trace of spiritualism, with excessive charges for absent treatment, and you have an old witch's potion which, starting in New England where witchcraft did, is swallowed by the gullible simply because it is labelled “new Christianity.”

The essential doctrines of Christianity,—the depravity of human nature, the atonement, the witness of the Spirit, holiness, prayer, and Christian stewardship, are slurred over with a passing word to make room for more modern formulas for getting rid of the world, the flesh, and the devil by merely denying their existence. The folly of all these modern substitutes for Christianity must be exposed as were the seducers of Ephesus.

**Truthworthiness of Timothy's Teachers.** “Knowing of whom thou hast learned them, and that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures.” Timothy could choose between the teachers of the new “fads” and his old teachers of whom he had learned the truths of the Gospel,—his grandmother Lois, his mother Eunice, and the Apostle himself. The very remembrance of these saintly instructors helped to keep him steady. Learning the doctrines from the time he was a child, best of all he had seen them practiced within his own home,—Christian evidences that could not be refuted.

With the sacred roll open upon her knee and the grandchild Timothy sitting close beside her Grandma Lois had spent many golden hours reading how Jehovah guided the Hebrew nation in its infancy and made the patriarchs to triumph over their enemies. And the gentle mother Eunice had often put her boy to sleep by recounting how Joseph was left by his brethren in the pit, or how Daniel braved the lions in their den, or how young David struck the giant Goliath low. Then came Paul to graft upon the Hebrew teaching the great doctrines of the Gospel as only he had learned them. Surely Timothy was favored in his teaching and his teachers.

What an inestimable privilege and benefit to know the sacred writings from earliest childhood and to know them from godly teachers! Those who acquire this knowledge late in life still cling to old habits of thought and conduct which are not extinguished by their baptism. Even after they enter the church their false opinions and behavior vex the officials and hinder the work of God. O for a church full of young Timothys who from childhood have known the holy Scriptures!

## God's Breath Breathed Into Our Bible.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Paul thus places the sacred writings in a class by themselves. They communicate a saving wisdom to those who read them aright. This power was not exhausted in young Timothy, for our lesson declares they are still "able to make wise unto salvation." Scripture possesses a unique power over all other literature, not by any charm it possesses, not by any magical effect upon the reader, but because God's Spirit breathes through the whole of it, making every passage vitally spiritual. The Apostle said this of the Old Testament; much more can it be said of the New. For as Paul was writing this very sentence the Spirit of God was leading him in his thought and expression, making his words to be a blessing to all future generations.

This inspiration was not mechanical, making the writers mere machines and their writings mere dictation. The Spirit governed the substance of the message, but the individual writer chose his own words. Inspiration did not preserve the writers from occasional bad grammar, nor did it preserve them from possible errors as to dates, facts of history, or points of geology, astronomy, or physiology.

Luke tells us in his preface that he took great pains to obtain the best information for his Gospel. He need not have done so if inspiration would have made error impossible. No theory of inspiration can stand that does not leave room for each writer to freely use his own language, illustrations, personal characteristics, and individual peculiarities. But such inspiration has produced unparalleled literature. In their boundless adaptability to all ages and circumstances, in their lofty spirituality, in their inexhaustible capacity for consolation, and in their ceaseless power to satisfy the deepest cravings

and inspirations of the heart the Scriptures prove themselves to be the Word of God.

**Permanent Value of the Scriptures.** "All scripture is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The Bible is the only Gibraltar in the world which has never been taken. It is thirty-four hundred years since Jannes and Jambres, the critics of Egypt, began to attack the truth which was spoken through Moses, and critics have assaulted the Bible ever since. Five kinds of criticism have tested it out, criticism of text, criticism of history, criticism of archeology, criticism of philosophy, and criticism of human experience.

The nations still need the Bible. Gretius, the founder of international law, was a most diligent student of the Bible, and one of its best commentators. To spread its teachings to all lands he wrote ballads for the Dutch sailors; they remembered the poetry and sang the Bible in all ports. When shall the Bible's exalted peace teachings be international law? "He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

Our cities still need the Bible. Rev. Brooke Herford preached a farewell sermon to cultured, questioning Boston which, of the cities of America, most resembles ancient Athens of which Luke said: "They spend their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing." He said: "I long for the time when, from the fringe and tassels of constantly new studies, Boston shall turn to that old Bible which made the life of the fathers strong and true; and reading it only with 'larger, other eyes'—shall feel the power of the slow unfolding of God's truth and of its culminating life of Christ; and, rooted there, shall grow to nobler heights of thoughtful Christian character than ever before. That is what this community most needs." Gladstone was fond of calling the Bible "The Impregnable Rock." Shortly before he died he reviewed the whole field of Biblical criticism and said, finally, "I see no grounds for fear that the Bible is discredited, its teaching or authority discounted."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What godly mother dedicated her boy at birth to religious service, and sent him early to the prophet for training? 2. What answer did Christ give his mother when she found Him in the temple discussing the law? 3. In what way did Jesus use Scripture passages when tempted? 4. What three teachers made Timothy familiar with the Scriptures? 5. What teachers was he compelled to oppose in Ephesus?

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. The unity of the Scriptures is such that to reject one book is to take a living stone from the arch of truth. 2. Scriptures, like the Saviour, are Divine-human; Divine in source and character, but human in the channel whence they flowed and in the form in which they appeared. 3. The man of God, minister or layman, has in God's Word a spiritual arsenal from which he may draw all needed weapons. 4. The influence of the lessons and teachers of youth is never wholly lost.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



But



thou  
in all  
things,  
endure  
afflictions,  
do the  
work  
of an



make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my



is at  
hand.  
I have  
fought  
a good



I have finished my

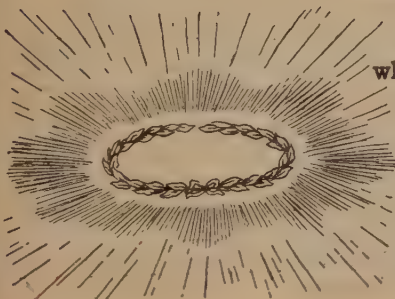


I have  
kept the



Henceforth there is laid up for me a

of righteousness,  
which the Lord, the  
righteous judge,  
shall give me at  
that day: and  
not to me only,  
but unto all  
them also that



his appearing.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS II. TIM. 4:6-18.

**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, keep me from all morbid thoughts of death by wisely employing all the golden hours of life. May I use my youth as wisely as Timothy did his, and may I be as well prepared for the event of death as was Paul. When I embark on the last voyage may there be no sadness of farewell, but may Jesus be my Pilot and my Friend. Amen.

"Twilight and evening bell,  
And after that the dark!  
And may there be no sadness of farewell  
When I embark;  
For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place  
The flood may bear me far,  
I hope to see my Pilot face to face  
When I have crost the bar."

—Tennyson.

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, Autumn, A. D. 65, Paul's second imprisonment. Place, written in Rome, probably in the dungeon of the Mamertine prison. Persons, Timothy, Luke, Mark, Tychicus, Demas, Crescens, Titus, Nero, and others. Style, dying words of lofty tone and Christian courage.

**Scripture Setting:** Gospel Sailors Nearing Port. The pathway to immortality and light. I Tim. 6:11-16. Lashed to the Gospel ship, I Cor. 9:23-27. Final refuge from storm, Isa. 25:4-9. Eternal comfort against present persecution, Matt. 10:22-28. The voice of many waters, Rev. 14:2-7.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents the saint's final thoughts of satisfaction on going home. 1. The glory of God nowhere shines more resplendent than in the faith of His saints at life's sunset. 2. Even the scholar closes up his book with keen satisfaction when the chimes overhead ring out the time of going home. 3. The faithlessness of friends and the injuries of enemies cannot break the calm and repose of the dying saint. 4. Our warfare against sin ceases only when life ceases; eternal wages are paid at the close of the day.

## PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY AND FAREWELL.

**Ready and Waiting at the Wharf.** "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." We can almost hear the swash of the waves against the wharf and the groaning of the great cables chafing to be loosed as the ship weighs anchor, in the words, "The time of my departure is at hand." The moment for sailing has come. Paul is starting across the narrow sea of death that will bring him soon to the heavenly Haven. This world traveller could hardly be caught surprised or unprepared however sudden or out of the usual his departure might be. He had undertaken many remarkable voyages before. Let him tell his own experience. "In deaths oft; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often; in perils of waters; in weariness, in painfulness, in watchings often." (2 Cor. 11.)

Phillips Brooks says of these last words of Paul, "His old age did not come creeping into port a wreck, with broken masts and rudder gone, but full-sailed still, and strong for other voyages in other seas. We are sure that his was the old age that God loves to see."

"And thou must sail upon this sea a long eventful voyage.

The wise may suffer wreck.  
The foolish must. Oh, then, be early wise!  
Learn from the mariner his skilful art—  
To station quick-eyed Prudence at the helm,  
To guide thy sail from Passion's sudden blasts,  
And make Religion thy magnetic guide,  
Which, though it trembles as it lowly lies  
Points to the light that changes not,  
In Heaven."

—Anon.

**The Bell of Faith in the Fogs of Death.** "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." It was fortunate that Paul did not die in the old unregenerate days when he was not ready; when he brought men and women of this faith bound unto Jerusalem, "breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." He lived to make sad and humiliating confession of his errors, "I did it ignorantly in unbelief."

In prison, with Demas forsaking, Timothy delaying, Luke only remaining, longing for his cloak, his books, and his parchments, the once despised Gospel was his best comfort. He who breaks down faith breaks the compass by which he steers, for life is a voyage around the world, and we pass in at last where first we sailed out.

Southey has told us in a noble poem how the holy abbot of Aberbrothock placed a bell over the Inchcape rock that sailors might hear its warnings when tempest waves hid the rock. Ralph the Rover in sport cut away the floating bell, then sailed on a long journey. He returned at last, laden with wealth, but near the rock his ship was caught in a fog. His sailors could hear the breakers, but could not see the shore. How they longed to hear the Inchcape bell which had been destroyed! Then Ralph the Rover first realized that he himself had destroyed his ship, his cargo, his crew and himself.

Paul through the years had kept the faith, and in death the faith kept him. Like the rhythmic cadences of some great bell upon the sea ringing to cheer and guide him he heard to the last, "Fought the fight, finished seafaring, followed the faith."

**Lamenting the Laborer Who Lapsed and Was Lost Overboard.** "For Demas hath for-



saken me, having loved this present world." Once when Paul was sailing the Mediterranean there came by the wireless telegraphy of faith this message through the storm: "Fear not, Paul; God hath given thee all them that sail with thee?" And as by miracle all of the two hundred and seventy-six were saved that day. But now he is saddened to think of one fallen overboard. As Paul closes forever the record of his earthly diary he makes a hasty roll-call of the heroic band that has labored by his side. Most are accounted for; they are standing at their posts. "Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia, Luke is with me, Erastus at Corinth, Trophimus at Miletum." One entry he chronicles not with ink but with tears, "Demas hath forsaken me."

No Gospel record, perhaps, would be complete, without including the temporary lapsing of a Peter and the eternal perfidy of a Judas. Even the hand that made the morning stars and that held upon the cross in its pierced palm the proclamation of our forgiveness was unable to hold a little group of twelve men unbroken by treachery. In one of the earliest chapters of the ministry of Jesus we read, "From that time many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him."

The saddest entries of a church record are those which must be made in invisible ink. Opposite one name is written, "removed by letter"; declaring the strength of that life transferred to another field; opposite another is written, "withdrawn," meaning for some unnamed reason a severance from Christian fellowship; after another is written, "died in the faith"; but saddest of all the records is an empty line after the name which to a pastor's heart means affections "removed" from the work of God, hearts "withdrawn" by the shrinkage of selfishness, and early faith that "died" ere it bore fruit. Even Paul the Apostle feared lest the tides of this world might sweep him off his feet—"lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." (I Cor. 9:27.)

**The Last Requests of the Old Captain.** "The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments." Like an old sea captain whose face is scarred and weathered with the storms Paul looked out from gray prison walls towards the Appian Way whence he would soon be led to his martyrdom. Probably he was in the dungeon of the Mamertine prison called the "Bastile of the old world." Here an African king who dared to war against Rome was starved to death about a hundred years before Christ. Paul wrote this last letter in the autumn of 65 A. D. Winter was fast ap-

proaching, and in the dampness of the underground prison he felt the need of extra clothing, so he urges Timothy to hasten with his cloak which in warmer weather he had left with his friend Carpus at Troas. Though death was approaching he would take the best care possible of his infirm body.

The last personal service that Paul requests is indicative of the man. "Bring with thee especially the parchments." All the sacred writings were usually written on parchment, the fine skin of a new-born lamb, polished with pumice stone for a writing surface. Many of the Old Testament writings and some of Paul's own original letters to the churches may have made up the collection of parchments. In the last hour of life, often as here the last request the lips frame, the Sacred Writings are asked for. Said that great writer of books, Sir Walter Scott, when dying, "Bring me the Book." After a pause he added, "There is only one book—the Bible." So St. Paul, the old sailor of the Mediterranean, asks to place his fingers once more on the traveler's chart, the pilot's compass—the Sacred Word.

**A Through Ticket to the Heavenly Haven.** "I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly Kingdom." Seutenius the historian called Nero "a wild beast." Paul called him "a roaring lion." In July, 64 A. D., he burned Rome and imputed it to the Christians. Then began the bloodiest of persecutions. Christians dressed in skins of lions were set upon by ravenous dogs. Others were burned as human torches. In a cheerful and serene old age Paul leaves his prison for his coronation. Let us forget the headsman's axe and listen to the singing and the shouting and the voice of praise like the voice of many waters. And Paul goes forth on the silent voyage reading his heavenly passport, "I was delivered; He shall deliver me; He will preserve me."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. For what reasons was Timothy urged to hasten to Paul? 2. What would lead Paul to believe he must die soon? 3. What reasons are there for supposing Nero was the "lion" Paul referred to? 4. Who had mistreated Paul; who deserted him; how many stood by him during his first trial?

**Challenge Text.** "So He — them unto their desired —." Psa. 107: (?).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Life is a kingly quest across seas towards the heights beyond. 2. Demas sits down to enjoy the present world; Paul traverses the world in quest of goodly pearls. 3. Demas sold out for pleasure, Judas for gold, Paul sails the seas of widest possibilities after one pearl of great price, "the inheritance of the saints in light." 4. The Christian merchantman watches for new markets in new fields, has the telescopic sight, takes advantage of the flood tide and the favoring gale.

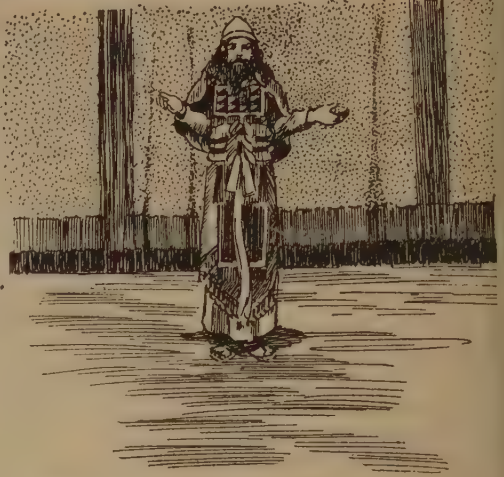
REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

## OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST.

Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens,



the Son  
of God,  
let us  
hold fast  
our  
profession.  
For we  
have  
not an



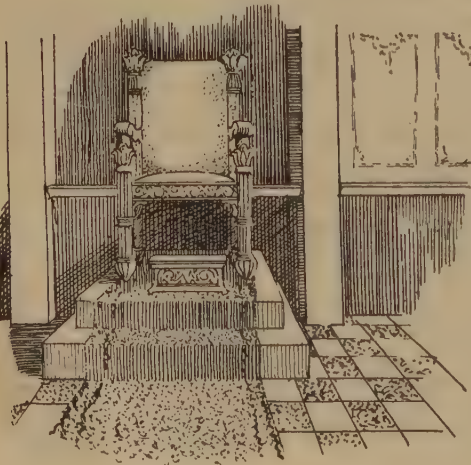
which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points



like  
as we  
are, yet  
without



Let us therefore come boldly unto the



of grace,  
that  
we may  
obtain



and find grace to help in time of need.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS HEBREWS 4:14-16; 5:1-6.

**Prayer:** "Father, the hour is come: glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son may also glorify Thee. I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given Me, for they are Thine. I pray not that Thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldst keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth."—Christ's high-priestly prayer.

"More simple and lowly the walls that we raise,  
And humbler the pomp of procession and praise,  
Where the heart is the altar whence the incense  
shall roll,  
And Messiah the King who shall pray for the soul.  
Oh, Father, come in! but not in the cloud  
Which filled the bright courts where Thy chosen  
ones bowed;  
But come in that Spirit of glory and grace,  
Which beams on the soul and illumines the face."  
Henry Ware Jr.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Hebrews was written to explain to Jewish readers how the ordinances of Leviticus were fulfilled and done away in Christ. Some believe it was the work of Apollos, but more probably it was from Paul's pen. It was written before the destruction of Jerusalem A. D. 70 to the Jews who had left the city on account of the war and were settled in Asia Minor. It represents the Levitical priesthood as a shadow of which Christ's priesthood is the substance.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ the Fulfillment of the Priesthood. The priestly garments and breastplate, Ex. 28:1-12. Consecration of Aaron and his sons,

Lev. 8:1-13. The eternal priesthood of Christ, Psa. 110:1-7. Christ's priestly supremacy, Heb. 7:22-28. Christ's Scripture proof of sonship, Matt. 22:41-46. Christ's priestly prayer, John 16:1-11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents Christ as humanity's perfect High Priest touching life on all sides. 1. In body He endured toil, exhaustion, hunger, thirst, pain, death. 2. In estate He endured poverty, persecution, contempt, rejection, misrepresentation, desertion. 3. In mind He endured fear, perplexity, disappointment, loneliness, sorrow. 4. In special temptation He resisted ambition, presumption, and promised possessions.

### CHRIST OUR UNCHANGING HIGH PRIEST.

#### Our High Priest Enters Within the Vail.

"Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." In the tabernacle as well as in the temple there hung a curtain or screen between the holy and the holy of holies. Composed of white linen and striped with threads of blue and purple and scarlet it bore the figures of cherubim in gold. In Herod's temple this vail was double and very thick, but on the afternoon that Jesus died it was rent from top to bottom by a mighty earthquake. It was forever done away with, since the death of Christ did open to all a new and more perfect way of access to God. The vail was also rent when Jesus ascended to Heaven, and a cloud received Him out of sight. As Jesus "passed into the heavens" earth receded, the moon and its satellites were left behind, and even the sun and the distant stars faded away as He passed on into the immediate presence of God. Thus the natural heavens became the vail through which He entered into the Holy of Holies.

"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." We never would have known the certitude of the resurrection if He had not risen and appeared to His disciples "the first fruits of them that slept." We never would have known the true nature of Heaven if He had not come to earth to declare, "If it were not so I would have told you." And now that He is seated in Heaven upon the throne of grace His priesthood is

established forever. Never more shall there be a vail between the needs of man and riches of God's grace.

#### The Sympathy of Jesus Better Than the Symbolism of Aaron.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." The Aaronic priesthood was based on the aristocracy of family which tended to develop selfish pride rather than generous sympathy. The law provided that sons, however unfit, were to succeed their priestly father. "The holy garments of Aaron shall be his sons' after him to be annointed and consecrated in them." Hence clothes in that priesthood counted for more than character. Hophni and Phinehas, the corrupt sons of the aged Eli, were cut down in their priestly offices because of their sins.

The selfishness of the priests passed into a proverb. "Every one that is left in the house of Levi shall come and bow down to him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices, that I may eat a morsel of bread." Aaron was a majestic figure, bearing on his breast the glittering stones that comprised the breastplate of the high priest. The sardius, topaz, carbuncle, emerald, sapphire, diamond, jacinth, agate, amethyst, beryl, onyx, and jasper were set in a golden frame.

But stones set in gold make a hard pillow for the head of the transgressor. When John

leaned his head upon the breast of his Divine Master he felt the confidence and satisfaction of leaning on One who knows all about our troubles. That breast, though stained with blood and tears, is infinitely more dear to man than the breast blazoned and be-studded with glittering gems. Though our great High Priest is now passed into the heavens He once passed our way. He never passed a cot of pain without a prayer and healing touch. He never passed blind beggars on the roadside without giving light and hope. He never passed the sorrowing sisters without words of love and immortality. He ever moved amid scenes of sin, healing its leprosy, yet remaining the sinless One and undefiled.

**A Brother on the Throne of Grace.** "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Our boldness in coming to God rests on two facts previously mentioned,—that Jesus has ascended into the heavens to become our changeless intercessor and that once He passed our way learning thereby our nature and our limitations.

Six thousand years ago a company of Hebrews, all brothers, journeyed on donkeys to Egypt seeking food in time of the great famine. They called at the governor's house, and lo, they were invited to dine in his banquet hall. With his golden chain of authority about his neck he seated them at the table giving the firstborn the place of honor and each according to his age down to Benjamin youngest of all. After the dinner he could stand it no longer, and he cried "Come near to me, I pray you. I am Joseph your brother. And God sent me before you to save your lives by a great deliverance." The character and conduct of Joseph foreshadowed Christ.

The Divine Ruler is our Brother, for He is of our blood and once dwelt in the tent of our humanity. In our helplessness and need we may with great boldness approach the throne of grace, for He who was left by sinful man to die alone is become the sinner's Friend, the Ruler of the skies. He bids us into His banquet house and seats us round Him as His own. He is clothed with all authority, but He knows us every one. We need not fear, for this Elder Brother in our time of need forgives us the past and provides for our future.

**The Priesthood of Aaron Passes Away.** "For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men, . . . and no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." The old Levitical priesthood was "from men" and was passed down from one to another. It was an honor conferred. But it was a

part of Christ's Sonship to be our High Priest. He was not appointed, but His office springs from His personality. In Aaron was sown a natural priesthood,—sown in corruption, dishonor, and weakness. In Christ it is raised a spiritual priesthood,—in incorruption, in glory, in power. He has power to save completely and continually, for of His government there shall be no end.

When the priesthood after the order of Aaron came to an end, then the entire dispensation of law, the old covenant, was replaced by a new and better covenant. The old covenant is the Old Testament wherein is Aaron as high priest; the new covenant is the New Testament wherein is Christ our great High Priest forever. Christ never formally abolished the old covenant; He came not to destroy; but He fulfilled the most spiritual teachings of its sacrificial types being Himself both priest and bleeding sacrifice.

**The Mystery and Meaning of Melchisedec's Priesthood.** "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec." The above passage is a direct quotation from the 110th Psalm. Christ Himself calls it David's Psalm, and declared that its language was a clear prophecy of Himself (Matt. 22:45).

Melchisedec is shrouded in mystery. Of his birth and genealogy nothing is said. Of his death no man knows. And the sacred silence is significant. He was king and priest, he suddenly appears and as suddenly vanishes. But the old Levitical priesthood acknowledged his superiority. Even Abraham, the patriarch, was blessed by him, and paid to him the tenth, the priest's portion. Melchisedec did not spring from the priestly family of Levi. Neither was Christ of the tribe of Levi but of Judah. In many ways then Melchisedec was the type and forerunner of Christ who had no beginning or end, who was superior to the Levitical priesthood, whose priesthood was not of family descent but through superior personality. The priest of the old dispensation came, stood to offer sacrifice, and went, a mere individual in a passing succession. But Christ does not stand; He sitteth at the right hand of God because He is our Priest forever. "For where there is forgiveness there is no more an offering for sin."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. How often did the high priest enter the holy of holies; on what day? 2. When was the temple veil rent; what did it signify? 3. What did the high priest wear upon his breast; what did it signify? 4. In what respects did Melchisedec typify the priesthood of Christ?

**Challenge Text.** "Wherefore Jesus also, that He might — the people with His own —, suffered without the —." Hebr. 13: (9).

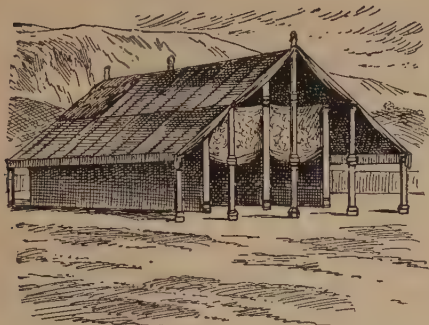
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Four things that Aaron did: Killed the sacrifices; entered with blood into the holy of holies; sprinkled the mercy seat with blood; kindled the incense whose smoke overspread the mercy-seat. 2. Four things Christ did: Offered up Himself as our sacrifice; ascended into Heaven to the Father; represented His death before the Father as the sinner's substitute; made intercession at the mercy-seat. 3. Four things we can do: Repent of our sins; believe in Christ; be baptized in His name; enter into His service.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

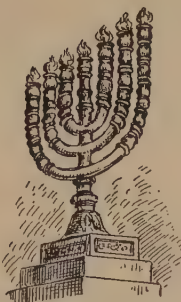


# THE SANCTUARY.

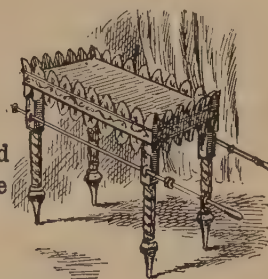
Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a



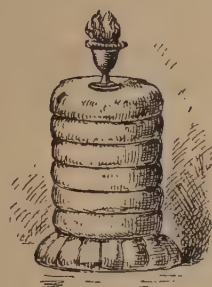
made;  
the  
first,  
wherein  
was  
the



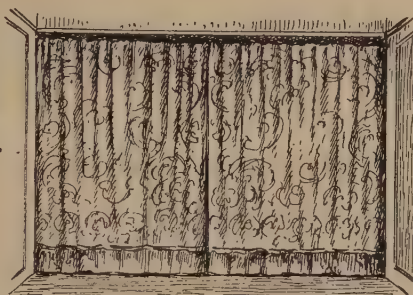
and  
the



and the



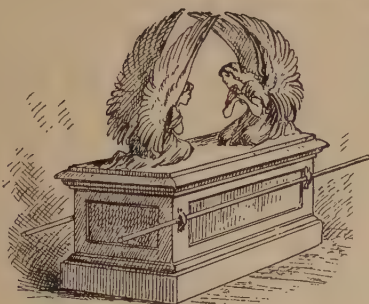
which  
is called  
the  
sanctuary.  
And  
after  
the  
second



the  
tabernacle  
which is  
called the  
Holiest of  
all; Which  
had the  
golden



and the



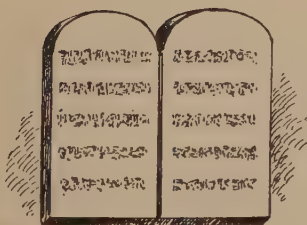
overlaid  
round  
about  
with gold,  
wherein  
was the  
golden



that  
had  
manna,  
and  
Aaron's



that  
budded,  
and  
the



of the  
cove-  
nant;  
And  
over  
it the



of glory  
shadowing  
the mercy-seat;  
of which  
we cannot  
now  
speak  
particularly.

## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS HEB. 9:1-12.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit, take the things of Christ and show them unto us. Reveal unto us the things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard,—the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. Feed us with the hidden manna, and whisper unto us the secret of God's delight. Lead us into the holy of holies where we shall see no one but Jesus only. Shine in the tabernacle of our hearts as the Shekinah lighted the mercy-seat with God's glory. Amen.

"There is a place where Jesus sheds  
The oil of gladness on our heads;  
A place than all besides more sweet:  
It is the blood-bought mercy-seat.  
Ah! whither could we flee for aid,  
When tempted, desolate, dismayed;  
Or how the hosts of hell defeat,  
Had suffering saints no mercy-seat?"  
—Hugh Stowell.

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** See previous lesson. Perhaps Hebrews is the most helpful of all books to connect the teaching of the Old Testament with that of the New. The types of the Old are treated as shadowy and temporary, but used most powerfully to throw light on the institutions of the New Testament. Analogy, comparison, symbolism, and allegory are extensively used.

**Scripture Setting:** The Form and Meaning of Worship. A heavenly pattern given. Ex. 25:8-22. The tabernacle consecrated. Ex. 40:1-12. A new spiritual house. I Peter 2:1-10. The highest form of worship. John 4:19-26. God's glory in the New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:10-16, 21-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage suggests five great teachings underlying the tabernacle: 1. Its careful measurements, harmony, and symmetry reveal the perfections of God. 2. Its walls, partitions, and furnishings make a dwelling place, suggesting the presence of God. 3. Its furniture and utensils anointed with oil suggest the holiness of God. 4. Its pattern given in the mount and its foundations laid on earth suggest the Divine source and the human application of Christian truth. 5. Its purpose was to provide a meeting between God and man which purpose was more fully accomplished in the union of the human and Divine nature of Christ.

### TABERNACLE FURNISHINGS AND THEIR FULFILLMENT.

#### Ancient Types and Truths of After-Times.

"The first tabernacle, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread." Three articles of furniture were placed in the first and larger room of the tabernacle, the table of showbread, the golden lampstand, and the golden altar of incense. Each was a great object lesson, and is therefore worthy of description. The table of showbread was made of acacia wood overlaid with gold. All the dishes, spoons, flagons and bowls placed thereon were made of pure gold. The rite was performed as a thank offering and the eating of the showbread by the priests was the acknowledgment that even the best men were in continual need of God. The golden lampstand holding the seven candles contained a receptacle for pure olive oil. The seven branches and seven lights were fed from a common reservoir. Every individual branch of the church and every separate congregation draws its life and nourishment from the one Spirit of truth.

Titus, the Roman conqueror, carried away the golden candlesticks, but no conqueror nor vandal can ever destroy the assurance of the spiritual union of all believers. The altar of incense was also made of acacia wood overlaid with gold. It stood so near the veil hanging across the entrance to the holy of holies that it is mentioned as if within the latter. The old version by a mistranslation calls it the golden censer. In the sweet incense that floated heavenward from this

altar is symbolized the efficacy of prayer. It prepared the high priest to enter the holy of holies even as the soul's pure aspirations and desires expressed in silent or audible prayer prepare the soul to approach the God of love and mercy. Instead of the showbread we now have the messages of the New Testament; instead of the golden lampstand, we now have Christ's wonderful prayer for the unity of believers; and instead of the rising incense, we have a Saviour seated at the right hand of God who ever maketh intercession for us.

#### The Saint's Blood-Sprinkled Mercy Seat.

"And after the second veil, the holiest of all; which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant, and the golden pot of manna, and Aaron's rod, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubim." The holy of holies was the inner room, a perfect cube of ten cubits. Its one article of furniture, besides sacred relics, was the ark of the testimony. It contained the tables of the decalogue or ten commandments. The ark was made of acacia wood covered with gold without and within. Above it was a slab of pure gold on which rested the two figures of the cherubim. This was called "the mercy seat."

The ark held the law, and the law declared the condemnation of sin. But the law is hidden and covered by a mercy seat. That mercy seat is sprinkled with the blood of atonement. The two winged cherubim



stood above facing each other at opposite ends, their overshadowing wings extending upward and forward till their points almost touched. Whenever the glory of God was visible it rested upon the cherubim. They were the beautiful symbols of the perpetual and brooding presence of God.

Many of the New Testament writers are fond of comparing the ancient mercy-seat to the throne of grace in Heaven, access to which has been opened by the blood of Christ, and over which broods the benign and watchful care of God. In this religion of types there was no intimation of idolatry. A proper use of symbols enables the mind to comprehend spiritual truths. But the mature worshipper walks by faith and not by sight. Most men, however, are spiritual cripples requiring crutches to lean upon. Forms of religion even in this late day seem necessary, but religion is not formalism.

**The First Forms but Figures of Future Reformation.** "The first tabernacle was a figure for the time then present, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." God adjusts His means of teaching religious truth to the capacities and requirements of a given age. Israel represents the childhood of the race, so He used kindergarten methods, pleasing symbols and bright pictures. The appeal was almost entirely through eye-gate, ear-gate and nose-gate. The flash of lightning, the pillar of cloud and fire, the Shekinah that filled the holy of holies, the crash of thunder, the voice speaking out of the cloud, the smell of roasting sacrifices, and the sweet odor of incense, were appeals to their physical senses. It is true that our modern houses of worship have no such displays of the Divine glory, since those were temporary devices, "figures for the time then present."

The book of Hebrews was written to show us that the tabernacle was only "a copy and shadow of the heavenly things,"—a figure of "the greater and more perfect tabernacle." The religion of Israel was an evolution,—that is, being a living thing, it was a growing, enlarging, developing religion. To borrow the language of Jesus who illustrated spiritual truth by natural law it was "first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear." It began with a heart yearning, then a stone altar under the open sky, then the tabernacle, a tent of cloth and skins, for temporary service, then Solomon's secure and magnificent temple on Mount Moriah, then the second house whose enduring glory was that of the presence of Jesus in the flesh. When Jesus came all types within the temple were fulfilled in Him, and as He foretold the temple's destruction, He also foretold the passing of both the temple worship on Mount Moriah and on Mount Gerizim, to be superseded by a spiritual, universal worship such as had not been before.

### The Greater Glory of God's Later House.

"But Christ by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, by His own blood, entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." The tabernacle is the type of Christ. For the tabernacle symbolized the meeting of God and man, thus typifying the union of the Divine and human natures which were united in Christ. There is no longer need for a symbolic meeting and union, for its spiritual reality is proved by our conscious experience. Religion is no longer to be a symbol. It is life, experience, the conscious presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart. In so far as Christ dwells in His visible church does the Christian church in our day feed the moral and spiritual life of the nation.

While Christ was in the flesh He said "In this place is one greater than the temple." At another time He said, "Behold a greater than Solomon is here." The temple that Solomon dedicated with elaborate pomp and ceremony, and Herod's temple to whose beautiful adorning the disciples called Christ's attention, were, after all, but weak symbols of the inward beauty of Christ's own character. As was said by the guests at the wedding feast in Cana that the wine Christ made was the last and best of all, so of all known forms and expressions of worship the best are the prayers, the parables, and the sermons of Jesus. If His words and example were such in life that His hearers said, "Never man spake as this man," what shall we say of the power of His character as it was exhibited in His sacrificial death?

It is the cross and not the cathedral that draws men to worship even in these days. Places of worship do not create the worshipful spirit, but the spirit of worship does create the noblest forms of architecture and the noblest edifices built by man. The death and resurrection of Jesus like the finger of some great church spire point to Heaven and immortal love.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What was the simplest and earliest form of worship; what two brothers quarreled over their sacrifices; what father was willing to bind his son on the altar? 2. Of what was the tabernacle composed; where and to whom was its pattern given; why was it not made of more enduring materials? 3. Who foretold the destruction of Herod's temple; what temple did He say would be rebuilt in three days; who conquered Jerusalem and carried off the golden candlesticks? 4. What was symbolized by the showbread; the golden candlesticks; the altar of incense?

**Challenge Text.** "Look thou that thou make them after their —, which was showed thee in the —. Ex. 25: (1).

**Practical Thoughts.** 1. If the sacrifices and symbols of the old covenant had been perfect there would have been no new covenant. 2. Not Sinai, Gerizim, nor Moriah, but Calvary is the hope of humanity. 3. The Mosaic economy was sprinkled with blood,—bleeding footprints leading up to Gethsemane and Calvary. 4. The holy of holies was accessible to only one man once a year, but Christ's ministry secured free access for us into the immediate presence of God.

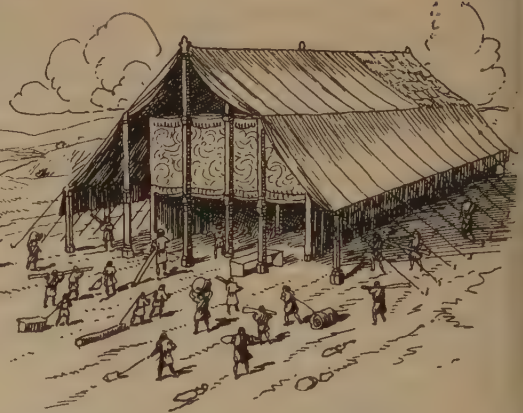
REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



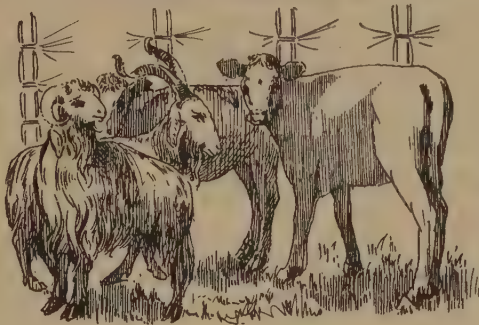
But Christ being come an



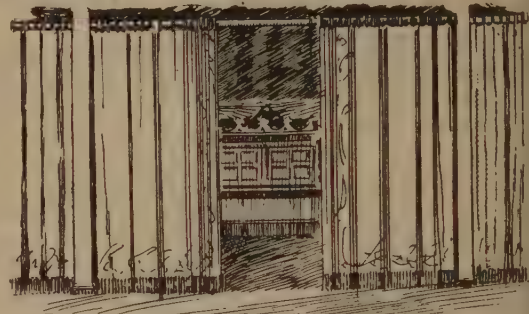
of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect



not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of



but by his own blood he entered in once into the



having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of



and of



and the ashes of an



sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of



who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS HEB. 9:13,14,24-28.

**Prayer:** O Lord, Thou who for our sakes became a sacrifice for sin, yet knew no sin, sprinkle the heavenly mercy-seat with the tears of Thy compassion, the blood of Thy atonement, and the prayers of Thy intercession. By Thee and Thee alone do we have access unto God. By Thee and Thee alone is the Spirit of grace and sanctification poured forth upon us. Thou who dost fulfill all types of sacrifice fill us with all grace. Amen.

"Not all the blood of beasts  
On Jewish altars slain,  
Could give the guilty conscience peace,  
Or wash away the stain.  
But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,  
Takes all our sins away;  
A sacrifice of nobler name,  
And richer blood than they."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** See the two previous lessons from Hebrews. The author, whose identity has not been proven, must have been fully acquainted with the laws and customs of Jewish sacrifices as well as understanding fully the completeness and universality of Christ's redemption on the cross.

**Scripture Setting:** **Sacrifice for Sin: the Typical and the True.** The bullock, the goats, and the ram. Lev. 16:6-16. Sin offering and burnt offering for the leper. Lev. 14:10-23. Solomon's sacrifice of dedication. 2 Chron. 7:1-8. The acceptable sacrifice. Micah 6:6-8. Our sacrifice for salvation. Eph. 1:7-14.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents Christ as our perfect and final sacrifice for sin. 1. Redemption includes a valuable consideration, a full discharge of all due the law, a substitute or surety, and a daysman coming between guilty man and Divine justice. 2. The continual sins of men called for continual sacrifices till Christ suffered once for all. 3. All the sins of all men of all ages were in one mass laid on Christ who not only atoned for sin but destroyed sin. 4. The sight of Jesus our Advocate and Intercessor presenting Himself before God for us as our eternally present offering satisfies God's requirements.

### THE SAVIOUR THE SUPREME SACRIFICE FOR SIN.

**Crude Ceremonials of Cleansing that Center in Christ.** "If the blood of bulls and of goats sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works?" In a most remarkable book, *The Blood Covenant*, Dr. Trumbull has shown how among the most scattered and savage races linger the traces of a once universal religious covenant in which blood sealed the compact between the worshipper and his deity. It existed among the savage tribes of Africa, the North American Indians, the migrating Asiatic tribes; it is found in Egypt and India; it is practiced by the Bedouin Arabs of the desert of Sinai and the Mussulmen on their pilgrimages to Mecca.

Dr. Edward Walsh describes a certain Indian village in this country in the center of which he found a council-house or temple. A high priest with his pontifical robe and a stomacher bearing religious symbols in beadwork stood by watching the kettle on the hearth. It contained a fat dog which when cooked was divided into small bits and served on a wooden platter. Then the high priest dipped a branch of hemlock pine in the broth and sprinkled it on the wall and over the men and women worshippers. The ceremony concluded with the circular dance and a weird chant. Humboldt heard this same chant in Mexico and supposed it to be synonymous with the Hallelujah of the Psalms.

But arguing from the less to the greater, if the blood and flesh of mere brutes could purify in any degree, how much more shall inward purification and eternal salvation be wrought by the blood of Christ in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead? Christ

offered Himself. The animals offered had no spirit or will to consent, but were sacrificed according to law. But from eternity Christ concurred with the Father's will to accomplish humanity's redemption through Himself. The animal victims must be without outward blemish; but Christ was a victim inwardly and outwardly stainless. The Israelite gave a living sacrifice; Christ gave His life; and we are to give, not dead works, but living works prompted by living faith in a living God.

**Our Atoning Advocate Always at the Altar Above.** "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, . . . but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." "Holy places made with hands," that is, earthly sanctuaries and earthly priests by their very nature could be only temporary. The temples were inadequate to hold all the worshippers at once; they were looted by conquering armies, and the high priests were imperfect men subject to sickness and death. The Jews were always in dread lest the high priest should perish in performing the services on the day of atonement. And since it was death for any one else, priest or layman, to enter the inner sanctuary, a cord was fastened to the high priest's foot, the end of which was left beyond the veil, so that in case he should die there, before the Lord, on the great day of expiation, his body might be drawn out without any one violating the sacred place or custom.

Christ seeing clearly how temporary and

limited would be his own earthly ministry, said to His disciples at its close, "It is expedient for you that I go away." Through the dispensation of the Holy Spirit He could reach all hearts; and as the ascended Son of God He could hear all prayers, see all human needs, and personally present all cases at the Father's throne.

The Scripture teaches that Moses in the construction of the tabernacle was admonished to make it a copy and a shadow of heavenly things. "For see, sayeth He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." The vessels, the sacrifices, and the purifying of all with blood were a copy of things in Heaven, the true holiest place. The blood of Christ made Heaven the real sanctuary and constituted the throne of the Most High a mercy-seat for men.

As Heaven is higher than the earth, as the true holiest place excels the typical one, so must the sacrifice of Heaven be more perfect than the sacrifice of the tabernacle. Heaven is Heaven because Jesus is there now to plead for us; will be there to receive us; and from His presence we "shall go out no more forever."

**The Tabernacle Atonements but Temporary Types.** "Nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others." The forgiveness of sins under the old covenant of priestly sacrifices was merely the putting off of retribution for one year. The blood of the beasts must be renewed as the annual day of atonement comes around. The reason why the atonement was unreal, and therefore only temporary, was that the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. The high priest entered with alien blood, that is "with blood of others," not his own blood. There was lacking in the sacrifice of the high priest the element of personal suffering, as well as personal righteousness and Divine authority. The most he could do was to keep alive in the conscience of his people the thought that man was sinful and that the Divine law required a penalty to be paid. "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. 3:20.)

The condition of the Israelite under law was not unlike the condition of a citizen whose farm and living are under a heavy mortgage he cannot possibly lift himself. His creditor does not foreclose, but allows the debtor to possess the farm undisturbed so long as each year he pays the interest money and keeps the mortgage alive. Unable to pay the debt he is reminded every time the interest paying period comes around that he is under law, a law he cannot fully satisfy. Such a state could not remain permanently. To this temporary expediency Paul referred as "the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God." The "blood not their own" was efficacious only for the brief period of a year and must then be renewed.

**The Finality of Christ's Offering of Himself.** "But now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." To continue the figure which we used in illustration above, Christ came to lift forever by the sacrifice of Himself the mortgage that weighed us down. It was more than a mortgage against property; it was a death sentence resting upon our souls.

His enemies once placed upon the shoulders of Jesus a scarlet robe, and in derision they led Him forth to die. But did not we all by our ingratitude, sin, and folly, place upon Christ a heavier burden and a greater shame than the scarlet robe, the wooden cross, or the humiliating death? As fair Portia came from afar to plead with her winning looks and tender words of mercy for the trembling merchant whose pound of flesh next to his heart old Shylock was bound to have, so Christ came to satisfy broken law, to pay our debt by the sacrifice of Himself,—to set us free from our bond, "having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross." (Col. 2:14.)

The high priest once each year entered the holy place and sprinkled the blood of the goat upon the mercy-seat to make atonement for the people. But in Christ's hand was the bond written against us once forever cancelled by the spike driven through his palm and blotted out forever by the sacrificial blood that flowed from His wounds. No more yearly interest to be paid by the flowing blood of bulls and goats! Christ hath himself paid the debt and set us free.

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What use was made of the blood of the bullock; the blood of the slain goat; what was done with the scape goat? 2. What should the cleansed leper bring to the priest for sin offering; for burnt offering; what other offerings might be substituted by the poor? 3. How many oxen did Solomon sacrifice at once; how many sheep? 4. What spoils of war did Saul save for sacrifice; why were they not acceptable; what did Samuel say was better than sacrifice? 5. Why is Christ called "Lamb of God"; why called "our High Priest"; why called "our Passover?"

**Challenge Text.** "Christ our — is — for us." I Cor. 5: (?).

**Practical Thoughts:** 1. Christ's death was symbolized by the slain goat; His resurrection by the living goat sent away. 2. Christ established a new covenant, attested by credible witnesses, ratified and sealed with His own blood, committed to His executors, the Father and the Spirit, commanded to be published universally after His death. 3. Christ's love freely paid our debt of sin; our only debt is a debt of love to Him. 4. In case of poverty doves were substituted as sacrifices; in our poverty Christ became our substitute and sacrifice, the costliest sacrifice ever offered.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.



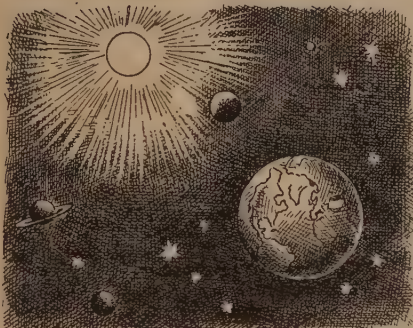
Now



is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the



obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the



were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent



than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was



that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this



that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must



that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.



## THE SCRIPTURE PASSAGE IS HEB. 11:1-10.

**Prayer:** "Lord, we thank Thee that we are sublime and eternal. We are not like the fire-fly that dances through the summer evening; but we are eternal past the stars. Our life is fitted in its mechanism to run on forever with the life of God. Great Son of God, thrill us with the majesty of the meaning of ourselves; fill us with the moment of our powers. Help us to fall in with Thyself, so that as we journey we shall have a light growing in our faces, a light that shines more and more unto the perfect day. Amen."—Bishop Wm. A. Quayle.

"After the storms have beat upon our pathway;  
After the winds have hushed their awful blast;  
Our little bark, though tossed upon the billows,  
Will safely reach the harbor-home at last.  
O, troubled heart, by faith look o'er the water,  
Hope clears the mists, to yonder city's dome,  
Where in that land, no storm-clouds ever enter,  
After life's journey comes our home, sweet home."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** See three previous lessons. The probabilities are that Hebrews was written by Paul in Rome between A. D. 65 and 68, while the temple was still standing. It was written for the Hebrew Christians of Palestine. Its style is unlike Paul's other writings, though its doctrines are the same.

**Scripture Setting.** Faith's Record and Requirements. Called and kept by faith. Isa. 43:1-6. Safe through faith. Psalms. 91:1-16. The test of Abraham's faith. Heb. 11:8-12, 17-19. Choice and venture of faith. Heb. 11:23-29. Honor roll of faith. Heb. 11:32-40.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The passage presents the pictures of the victors in the battle of faith. 1. The memory and influence of the men of faith never die. 2. The tallest men of every nation stand on faith facing duty. 3. The scars of patriots are honorable, and the arduous records of the patri-archs are full of renown. 4. To die too soon fighting for faith is valiant; to live too long fleeing from service is cowardly. 5. Stretching ourselves up against the heroism of others we grow to greater proportions.

### SEVEN STEPS ON A SHINING STAIRWAY.

**Point of Contact.** Taking but one name on this illustrious list of the Heroes of Faith, let us look at Jacob. While yet a young man he journeyed northward to the hills of Bethel. At sunset he toiled up the rough path which looked to him as a great staircase of rock and rag reaching from earth to sky, so different from the rolling pastures of Beersheba. Darkness comes on, and shepherd-like he lies down with his head upon a stone and covers his face with a corner of his cloak to shut out the light of the moon. The moonlight and the massive stone staircase become woven together in his dream. As he sleeps he sees a vision of angels thronging up and down between earth and Heaven, while at the top of the stairs stands Jehovah Himself. Only a dream, but next morning Jacob made a vow to God, building that dream into the very structure of his life.

**Step One: Faith and Definition.** "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Here is the massive solid foot of the stairs, a foundation definition of faith that satisfies the understanding. We can never take the first step towards Heaven till we plant our feet on this great foundation stone of faith. Moreover we cannot live the largest and most useful lives here unless like Jacob faith becomes the pillow on which we sleep at night and the stone on which we make our vow in the morning. What a noble modern roll-call of honor we could make out of the heroes of the faith who have climbed upwards to

noblest human achievements by following the evidence of things not seen.

There was Leverrier who believed in his calculations and so wrote to Galle, "Point your telescope on the ecliptic in the constellation of Aquarius in longitude 326°, and somewhere within a degree you will find a new planet looking like a star of the ninth magnitude," and sure enough the planet of Neptune which no eye had seen was discovered in the place indicated.

**Step Two: Faith and Creation.** "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." This is in reality a summary of the first verse of Genesis, "in the beginning God created." By faith matter was caused to spring from nothing, "so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." If the unbeliever finds this hard to think, what has he to offer that is any easier? How impossible and unthinkable it is to behold power and wisdom and plan everywhere, yet deny the existence of infinite Intelligence. It is Topsy denying her birth and parentage, "I just grewed."

Whether we think of creation as marked by distinct periods or as coming through evolution, that is, gradual growths and changes, the worlds are God's work by faith, whatever the mode He used. Says Charles Darwin, "An all-knowing Creator must have seen every effect which resulted from laws which He made." God did what Jacob did, what you and I must do, He dreamed His glorious dream, then proceeded to make it true.

**Step Three: Faith and Adoption.** "By



faith Abel offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." It is an error to suppose that the sacrifice of Cain was rejected because there was anything wrong with it as such. Nor was his work less acceptable to God because he tilled the soil rather than tended sheep. He did not possess faith in God nor love for man. He refused in any sense to be his brother's keeper, and because of hate became his brother's murderer.

But Abel the child of faith possessed an undying influence. "He, being dead, yet speaketh." He spoke in death to his guilty brother, his blood crying from the ground. He has been speaking ever since through the New Testament in three distinct references: to his faith, his righteousness, and his obedience; once in the present lesson, in Matt. 23:35, and in I John 3:12. Both of these were sons of Adam, but only one became a son of God.

**Step Four: Faith and Communion.** "By faith was Enoch translated that he should not see death: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please Him." Standing among those immortal witnesses to faith is Enoch the patriarch. "He walked with God three hundred years, . . . and he was not, for God took him." (Gen. 5:22, 24.) The phrase "walked with God" is best explained by a prophet's life spent in closest converse with the spiritual world. His life and deathless translation taught even in the old dispensation the possibility of immortality.

To all those who please God by a walk of faith death becomes but a trivial incident. Whether like Enoch we shall merely step out of time into the presence of God, or like Elijah we shall be carried to Heaven in a chariot of fire, it matters little. Our steps to God may be slow and toilsome, or swift and glorious, but if we please God we shall not long be separated from Him. And we can please Him best by walking with Him in our daily life and believing in His only Son. Jacob saw a ladder crowded with angels, flooded with light, leading to God, but we may lie down to sleep saying "Good night" to friends of earth and awake saying "Good morning" to God.

**Step Five: Faith and Salvation.** "By faith Noah prepared an ark to the saving of his house, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Noah lived in an age when wickedness was everywhere, when it was hard to believe. But he had faith in God's warnings of the coming deluge and faith in God's ability to keep him and his family alive in the ark. As year after year he labored at the building of that three-storied craft of gopher wood, in the meantime preaching a warning message to all, the

whole world in its unbelief held him in derision. But the world of unbelief perished, while the family of faith was preserved.

We cannot believe that the wife and sons and daughters-in-law were preserved simply because of their relation to Noah. We are not saved by families, nor because of our relation to anyone except our relation to God. Religion is above all else personal.

**Step Six: Faith and Obedience.** "By faith Abraham obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles." Abraham proved his faith by his obedience, at the command of God leaving his native land, his friends, his home, going he knew not whither, living in tents, owning not even a foot of ground except a small spot to bury his dead wife.

Pushing out from what seems easy and secure into untried realms at the call of God is never for our injury; it is not to break us but to make us; just as in a pottery each vase is struck by a piece of metal to prove its soundness, so hard conditions overcome certify to the resisting power of our faith. Every great enduring life like Abraham's is made up of a succession of acts of definite obedience.

**Step Seven: Faith and the Glittering Goal.** "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." We have now traced faith as a ladder of light reaching all the way from its firm foundation on earth where it satisfies the human understanding to the very foundations of God's city above where the soul is fully satisfied. The hardships by the way amount to little when they are overpast so long as the way leads home to God and Heaven. Whenever we grow earnest about life, whenever with faith we go to God to help us we see this stairway of hope where waits the helping Angel of prayer,

"How erect at the outermost gates  
Of the City Celestial he waits,  
With his feet on the ladder of light,  
That, crowded with angels unnumbered,  
By Jacob was seen, as he slumbered  
Alone in the desert at night."

**Quiz and Study.** 1. What Christian virtue does this lesson teach; what were the other two virtues Paul declared would abide? 2. How did Abraham show his faith; Moses; Noah; Joseph; Rahab? 3. To which disciple did Jesus say, "Be not faithless, but believing?" 4. To what woman did Christ say, "Great is thy faith?" 5. Who said, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief?"

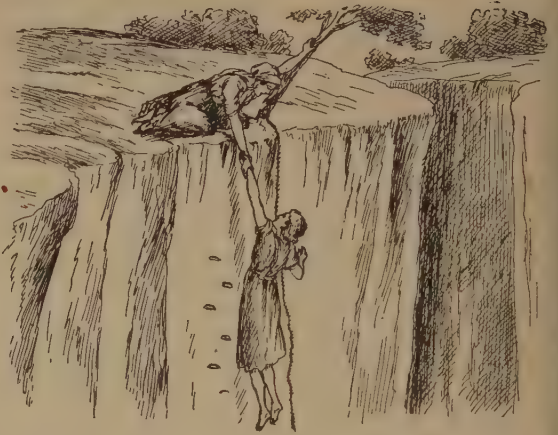
**Practical Thoughts.** 1. Where men have little faith in God they have little faith in each other. 2. Faith in God is the corner-stone of modern missions; faith in one's fellow-men is the corner-stone of modern business. 3. The strength of faith is seen in the absence of sight, but faith rests on evidence surer than sight. 4. Faith is born in anticipation but it ends in sight and complete realization.

REV. THOS. B. ROBERTS.

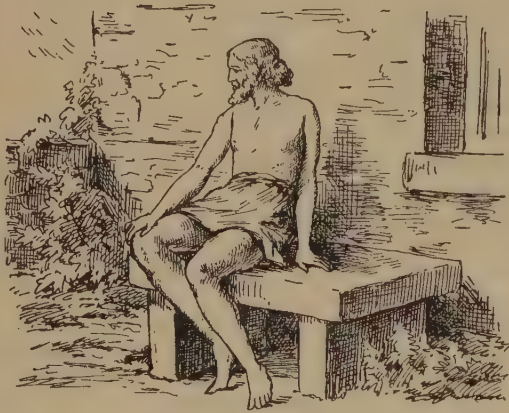
What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath



and  
have  
not  
works?  
can



If a brother or sister be



and  
desti-  
tute  
of  
daily



And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye



and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those  
things  
which  
are  
need-  
ful  
to  
the  
body;



what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not

is dead, being alone.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JAMES 2:14-26.

**Prayer:** Grant unto us, O God, the faith that saves and the good works that follow saving faith. Let our faith be divinely bestowed and humanly exercised; and may our lives be fruitful in works of righteousness, not unto our salvation but because by faith in Jesus Christ we have been saved. Amen.

"Stand, then, in His great might,

With all His strength endued;  
But take, to arm you for the fight,  
The panoply of God:  
That, having all things done,  
And all your conflicts passed,  
You may overcome through Christ alone,  
And stand entire at last."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The Epistle of James is intensely practical, with little purely doctrinal matter. He contrasts with Paul as a writer, though never in conflict with him. James was brother of our Lord, and became pastor of the "Mother Church" at Jerusalem, where he served until his death. He was peculiarly saintly in his life, and because converted Jews in Jerusalem and in all lands whither they had gone as exiles were too much given to discussion of doctrine and too little to diligence in Christian works, James wrote this noble letter of admonition.

**Scripture Setting:** Faith is: In Christ, Acts 8:12. Given by the Spirit, 1 Cor. 2:5. Works by love, Gal.

5:6. Gives peace, joy and hope, Rom. 5:1. Overcomes the world, 1 John 5:4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. One is not saved by faith alone, however full and scriptural that faith may be. 2. Nor can one be saved by works alone, however worthy and scriptural these works may be. 3. In the former case, man's righteousness would have no worth and man himself would be a mere automaton. 4. In the latter case, Christ would be dishonored as one who died in vain. 5. The true doctrine, therefore, is that faith and works go together, one leading to salvation and the other always coming after.

### HOW GOD AND MAN WORK TOGETHER.

**Paul's View.** People who shy at doctrine, and are fond of saying that they do not like "doctrinal preaching" or doctrinal Sunday School teaching, should remember that the greatest of all Bible preachers and teachers, next to our Lord, always preached and taught doctrinally. Of the twenty-one Epistles of the New Testament, Paul wrote fourteen. He knew that every Christian should be grounded in the doctrines of the Bible in order to be an intelligent worker in the church, and to resist the attacks of Satan and all those who teach evil doctrine. Paul made much of saving faith in his ministry. He sometimes so preached it and taught it with such prominence and urgency that there went out an opinion that all one had to do to be a Christian was to believe in Christ and do nothing more the rest of his life—a doctrine very far from Paul's mind and heart. The reason for his large emphasis of faith was that he had always in teaching Jews to overthrow their notion that because they were descended from Abraham as Jews they needed no other ground of salvation.

**James' View.** Then came another great Apostle, next, some think, to Paul himself. He was our Lord's brother, and was held in great reverence, partly for that reason but more for the fact that he was pastor of the great mother Christian church at Jerusalem and was recognized by foes and friends as a pure and devoted Christian. He discovered that there were many fanatical Christian Jews who had the wrong idea of faith, and were going about saying: "All we need is

to believe in Christ as Son of God and son of David, as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and that He died on the cross to save us from our sins. Because He thus died to redeem us from sin we need do nothing of ourselves, Christ having done everything." James took them in hand, saying: "Yes, Christ indeed died for all men, and all who believe in Him with both mind and heart will be forgiven their sins. But that is only the beginning of your salvation. If you are really saved, if you have the right kind of faith, your love for Christ and gratitude to Him, and your strong desire to get others saved, will cause you to work unceasingly to the day of your death. Any other kind of faith than that is no better than the faith of devils, for they believe and tremble."

**What Is Faith?** The trouble with the Jewish fanatics in their day and with many professing Christians in our time is in their ignorance of what true saving faith is. It believes in Jesus Christ, but it is more than that. It is a belief of the intellect and heart and will, all combined. The intellect or mind accepts what the Bible says about Christ, and especially what Christ said of Himself, but it can believe all this and yet have not a scintilla of saving faith. "With the heart man believeth," and so there must enter into all true faith a heart-trust and confidence and surrender to Christ. Every thought of the mind, every feeling of the heart, must center upon Him as one's personal Saviour from sin. Then must come the final act of faith in a full and perfect surrender of the

will, a set purpose, inflexible and life-long, to serve Jesus Christ by every word and work as Master and King. Nothing less than these three elements constitute faith: To know Christ; to trust Him as Saviour; to own and serve Him as Lord.

**What Are Works?** Whatever a man does for love of Christ is a Christian work. No man can love Christ until he is "born from above," through the regenerating power of the Holy Ghost. Once he is converted or changed into a "new creature in Christ," he cannot help a desire to do whatever Christian work he is capable of doing. The mark of every young convert in a revival is his wanting "to do something" for Christ and the church. His gratitude for the forgiveness of his sins; his love for Christ whose death atoned for his sins; the new life that the Holy Ghost has implanted in him—all of these constrain him to set about Christian work. It may be to go out among his comrades and persuade them to accept Christ. It may be the faithful discharge of the duties of an officer in the church. He may do his work as a Sunday School teacher.

Once Mr. Moody found a young Swede in Chicago who knew two words, "Howdydo" and "Come in," and he placed him at the door of Farwell Hall and gave him that one thing to do—to shake hands with everybody and to say, "Howdydo," "Come in." It was the one work the young man could do, but it was a great work. But note that it is always a work done for Christ, and as an expression of love and gratitude for what Christ has done for us.

**Jewish Conceits.** God had singled out the Jew thousands of years before Christ came. It was the plan of God, as shown by the Bible, to train and set apart the Jewish nation as evangelists for the world. Out of that nation He purposed that Christ should come and with Abraham, the founder of the nation, He made a covenant that "in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed," meaning Christ as the seed through whom the blessing would come.

God manifested Himself to the chosen nation by a thousand miracles and signs, and sent them messages by a hundred prophets, and gave them His Holy Bible to guide them. But the Jew grew worse and worse in his conceits. Because God had covenanted with Abraham, the Jews began to cherish the opinion that God, for Abraham's sake,

would never allow a son of Abraham to be lost, and that blood descent from Abraham would save a Jew without any other agency. A saying among Jews was like this: "Father Abraham will follow a Jew to the gate of hell and draw him back from it." So strong was this pride of race and nation that even our Lord Himself could do little to convert the Jew, as Paul also found to be the case later. This is why the great doctrine of faith in Christ had to be constantly preached and taught to the Jews.

**Modern Conceits.** But Jewish conceit of its peculiar kind was much the same with various forms of conceit among Christian churches of today. One man says, "If I am only baptized that will save me," and he depends upon a little water to save him. Another says, "If I join the church and pay liberally to the preacher's salary and expense account that will do in the judgment." Another says, "If I can enjoy my whist and theatre and dance during the week and go regularly to church and Sunday School and teach a class, that will save me." And many are saying, "Let me alone. Don't urge me to accept Christ and join a church. I am moral. I have no bad habit. I will trust to that." It was needed that Christ and Paul and James should say over and over that man cannot save himself by cold intellectual acceptance of Christ on the one hand, or by trusting to his own works of self-righteousness on the other hand.

**The Personal Word.** Go to Christ. Believe in Him as you believe in father and mother—in your own existence. Lean upon Him with all your strength of mind. Trust Him with all the confidence and love of your heart. Give yourself to Him wholly by act of your will, for time and eternity, for long life or short life. Then do all the work you can, because you will be happy only in your work and for love's sake, to bring others into the church and Kingdom.

"Work, for the night is coming  
When man's work is done."

**Quiz.** 1. Why did the Jew need to be taught as to faith in Christ? 2. Why did James need to emphasize works? 3. Was there any real conflict between the doctrines of Paul and of James? 4. Why will true faith always lead to works? 5. What conceits do some hold in our own day?

**Challenge Text.** "Ye see then how that by — a man is justified, and not by — only." James 2 — (?)

**Summing Up.** 1. Love comes first, then follow works. 2. One who is trusting in himself is dishonoring the Christ who died for him. 3. Faith and works are like the two arms a man has, both working together, yet each at times working independently. 4. A genuine Christian cannot help working for his Master. 5. A backslider is one who has quit work.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# THE SINS OF THE TONGUE.

And the tongue is a fire, a

of iniquity:  
so is the  
tongue among  
our members,  
that it  
defileth the  
whole body,  
and  
setteth on



the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of



and of things in the



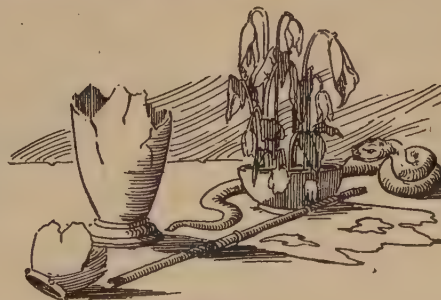
is tamed,  
and  
hath  
been



of  
mankind:  
But the  
tongue  
can no



tame;  
it is an  
unruly



full of  
deadly  
poison.

# THE SINS OF THE TONGUE.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS JAMES 3:1-18.

**Prayer:** Free us, O God, from the tongue of slander, of levity, of social gossip, and of all uncharity. Let no profane or unclean word defile our lips, and teach us and our children after us to hate a lie. Give unto us the firm and steadfast control of speech, and cause our tongues ever to

be instruments of worship unto Thee and of love to our fellow-men. Amen.

"Teach me to feel another's woe,  
To hide the fault I see;  
That mercy I to others show,  
That mercy show to me."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The Scripture lesson, as a part of the Epistle of James, was written at Jerusalem, about A. D. 60, ten years before the destruction of city and temple by the Roman army. James was pastor of the "Mother Church" in that city and the time was one of much luxury and vice without the church and much dissension and hypocrisy within.

**Scripture Setting:** When to hold one's tongue, *Psa. 39:1*. The prating fool, *Prov. 10:10*. A regulated tongue, *Eccles. 3:7*. The judgment of the

tongue, *Matt. 12:36*. What the tongue is for, *Eph. 4:29*.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. One's tongue, according to James, if perfectly controlled leads to perfection. 2. It controls the owner or, like bit and bridle, is subject to control. 3. Like a handful of kindling, it can set on fire a whole neighborhood. 4. There are double-tongues, blessing God at church and abusing men in the streets. 5. There are tongues of strife, getting oneself and neighbors into wrangling and hatred.

## THE TONGUE A DYNAMO.

**Religion of the Tongue.** One, after reading the strong and severe words of James as to the power for good or evil of the human tongue, would think at first glance that the case was surely exaggerated or at least, as James exhibits it, an exception to the rule. But the more one studies the sins and weaknesses of himself and his fellows and classifies and foots up the causes and occasions of sin, he will discover that the Apostle has not commended nor condemned the tongue too strongly. It is really a dynamo of good or evil, generating more happiness or pain than all other human instrumentalities. A dynamo gives light, heat and motion, as does the tongue. Men are moved to do the right or the wrong by the power of the tongue. A preacher like Moody with his tongue could turn a hundred thousand men from vice to goodness. Ingersoll with his caustic infidel tongue could blast as many more. In three-score years and ten, what a world of happiness or sorrow a single tongue, set to good or evil, can accomplish! Practical religion is five-fold—a religion of the heart, that loves supremely God and one's neighbors; a religion of the head, that knows the truth as revealed in God's Word; a religion of the hand, that whatsoever it findeth of helpful service to do, does it with all its might; a religion of the foot, that, like the Master, "goes about doing good;" and, last but not least, a religion of the tongue, a never-failing dynamo of pleasure or pain.

**A Wise Tongue.** Usually a wise tongue is a still tongue, given to a minimum of words and a maximum of thought. Most wise men have been famous for silence. If their speech

was silver, their silence was golden. To say just the right thing, at the right time, in the right way, is the mark of a wise tongue, and few there be that have it. Sometimes when one is comforting himself upon what seems to be a wise tongue, thinking to himself that now I am listening to a self-controlled and wise man, there comes a slip of the tongue and the great man falls from the high pedestal. Watch a truly wise man, and he has the proverbial "still tongue."

**A Boastful Tongue.** So James found in his day. It was the noisy, officious, boastful would-be teachers whom he is after with a sharp stick when he says, "Be not many masters" (or teachers). There were getting into the Jerusalem church certain who aspired to know everything and whose tongues had what John Randolph called a "flux of words and constipation of ideas." They wanted to run things and to set up standards patterned after their own ways of life. How many of us, for instance, in our modern prayer-meetings and Sunday Schools, have had to suffer in mind and body while some good brother (or sister) was boasting of what the Lord had done for him, but especially what he had done for the Lord. The tongue of the boaster is always a silly and irritating thing, and, as "pride goeth before a fall," we are not sorry when the boaster's fall has laid him low in the dust.

**The Profane Tongue.** Of all evil tongues the tongue of profanity has least excuse for an existence. Yet it has many users, to their shame and confusion be it said. Mere boys, sometimes from reputable Christian homes, are vicious profaners of the name of God. They are not the sons of the dwellers in the



slums, but have been reared respectably. How the evil habit is acquired is not easy to explain, one bad user of profanity perhaps leavening the whole lump.

Nothing so degrades a so-called gentleman as a profane tongue, and indeed it is to be doubted if one has a right to be called a gentleman who swears at all. One who defended his habit by saying, "I am a gentleman; I never swear in the presence of ladies," failed to consider that some men detest profanity quite as much as the best of women, and as gentlemen have the right to be free from the presence and speech of the swearing man.

**The Gossipy Tongue.** Women are generally accredited with gossip, but men are quite as much addicted to the vice. Vice it is, especially in the upper social classes of our American society, and many a heart has been broken and reputation ruined by the gossip's tongue. It grows by what it feeds upon. It begins at first with idle, petty chit-chat about neighbors and friends that means little and hurts little, except as the first step downward. By and by, fed by the evil spirits of revenge and slander and envy, the habit that was silly becomes a cruel and brutal vice, strewing in its path the wrecks of good and honorable names.

At least three of the Presidents of the United States, either in themselves or in their families, were made to suffer worse than death by what was excused and partly palliated as mere gossip. Dr. Barrows, of Chicago, used to liken the gossips—male and female—to "the blue-bottle flies of society," an apt and evil likeness in the world of material filth.

**The Tongue of Strife.** Here is the "little fire" that kindleth a great matter and sets individuals and nations "by the ear." Many of the great wars of history, among them more than one of our American wars, has been caused by the tongue of strife. The White House itself has echoed the contentions of evil and ambitious politicians who were trying to set two nations at war, as street loafers incite quarrelling curs.

The now almost extinct "code duello" was noted for a hundred years of our republic as a bloody means of silencing what James calls the tongue of venom, likening it to the tiger's claw or the poison-fang of the serpent. Once let the saloon furnish its inspiration to anger and wrath, there will be found innumerable tongues of passion, inflamed by strong drink, to scourge peaceful, law-abiding people. It is not a rash statement that whisky gives inspiration and occasion to

nine-tenths of all our strife and bitterness between men and communities.

**A Lying Tongue.** Last, and meanest in the list of evil tongues, is the tongue of the liar. Dr. H. C. Trumbull, the long-honored editor of the Sunday School Times, wrote a book to show that a lie is never justifiable, no matter what the occasion. It was a good and timely service the writer rendered to the cause of truth. "A lie," says the Bible, "is an abomination to the Lord," and among the objects of Divine hate enumerated in the Old Testament are "lying lips."

No wonder that among decent men, even outside the circle of Christianity, the liar has come to be despised. He deserves contempt heaped upon him. His lying is either to take advantage of another, or in cowardice to shield himself. There are no "white lies"—they are all black, the children of their father the devil.

Recently there appeared a book on child life and training, in which lying by children was excused as the "work of childish imagination, an innocent thing." In a generation, if such foolish and unscriptural teaching obtains, one who "tells the truth and shames the devil" will be the exception and the liar will be the rule.

**Bridle and Bit, Helm and Fire.** Such are the expressive figures that the Apostle James uses in portraying the tongue. First, the tongue is like the small bit that horsemen put into the mouths of their steeds, by which their big bodies are turned about at the will of the driver. Trifling as the bit appears, it practically rules the mettlesome steed. So the tongue unbridled is like the runaway horse, while the tongue under control is of great and needed service. Next is the figure of the helm of the great ship, which though small and mean in comparison with the ship, directs the pathway and assures the safety of the vessel. Third, James' most striking figure is of a little blaze, easily kindled, which in a brief time becomes a great conflagration. Some of us have known how the tongue on fire with hate and slander has burned its way through entire communities. Perhaps the strongest of the Apostle's figures is that which likens the tongue to the fang and venom of a serpent striking in the dark at a good character and infusing its poison into a home of innocence and happiness. Last but not least is the double tongue, cursing and blessing in alternate motions.

**Quiz.** 1. Why is James' Epistle called a "practical epistle"? 2. How many different kinds of tongues does it suggest? 3. Of all kinds of tongues, which is the meanest? 4. What kind of tongue is least defensible? 5. Are women the only gossips?

**Challenge Text.** "If any — offend not in — the same is a — man, and able also to — the whole —." James 3 — (?)

**The Gist of It.** 1. A little thing can be the instrument of great evil. 2. Childhood is the time to learn control of one's tongue. 3. By God's help one can master his tongue and speak or be silent. 4. A soft answer turneth away wrath. 5. Think thrice before you speak once.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

For even hereunto  
were ye called:  
because Christ also  
suffered for us,  
leaving us an example,  
that ye should  
follow his steps:  
Who did no



neither was  
guile found in  
his mouth: Who,  
when he was



reviled  
not  
again;  
when he



he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare  
our sins in his own body on the



that we, being dead to sins, should  
live unto righteousness: by whose



ye were healed.  
For ye were as  
sheep going astray;  
but are now  
returned unto the



and Bishop of your souls.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS 1 PETER 2:19-25.

**Prayer:** Thou Thyself, O Christ, art the Way, the Truth and the Life, and Thy perfect example as Son of Man is our pattern. If we fall far short of it, yet lack not in earnest effort, Thou wilt not chide. If sometimes in our ignorance and weakness we wander from the way, constrain us by Thy grace and bring us back to Thee. Amen.

"A heart in every thought renewed,  
And full of love Divine;  
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,  
A copy, Lord, of Thine!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Peter, one of the twelve Apostles, wrote two brief Epistles, from the first of which the Scripture passage is taken. The Epistle was written about A. D. 64, shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem. Peter wrote from Babylon, whither he had gone to minister to two million Jews of the dispersion.

**Scripture Setting:** The sinless Christ, John 8:46. The obedient Christ, John 4:34. The merciful

Christ, Heb. 2:17. The forgiving Christ, Luke 23:34. The Man of sorrows, Isa. 53:3-4.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. The Christian must expect to suffer wrong with patience, for conscience' sake. 2. To suffer for one's own blunders is not Christian suffering. 3. Christ set a sure example of wrong-bearing. 4. Without sin, He suffered all things at the hands of sinners. 5. His one answer to His oppressors was to suffer death for all men.

### FOLLOWING OUR GUIDE.

**For Conscience' Sake.** One of the objects, if not the sole object, of the two Epistles of Peter, is to admonish and encourage Christian Jews everywhere to patiently endure suffering for the sake of Christ. Readers of the Gospels will recall how the impetuous Peter was rebuked by our Lord for foolish speaking, and that Jesus said to him: "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith may not fail. When thou art cured of thy rashness, then become a strengthener and comforter of thy brethren."

By hard experiences and earnest effort Peter had overcome his grave fault, and now, growing old, he was indeed a helper to the suffering Jews. For their sakes he had crossed the great Syrian desert and made his home among the Jews of the dispersion at Babylon, ministering to their comforts in their afflictions. The sufferings of the Jewish Christians at the time were peculiarly severe, persecution falling upon them both from Jews and Gentiles at once. Their lot was near at all times to martyrdom. Their counsellor, the Apostle, does not attempt to make light of the persecutions, but seeks to turn them into blessings by patient endurance of grief. If you are called to suffer wrongfully, he says, do it "with conscience toward God," letting the peace and comfort of the Heavenly Father fill your souls. Such suffering is "thankworthy."

**For Folly's Sake.** But if suffering comes upon you, and man oppresses and persecutes you, Peter goes on to say, not because of your religion and your conscience, but by reason of your own folly and blundering, if you take it patiently there is no glory or credit to you from God or man. You are simply paying the inevitable price of your

own folly, which all men must pay, whether they will or will not. But when you are doing right before men and God, and are called to suffer for the sake of the right, then is your "patient endurance" accepted with God.

The distinction needs to be made as truly to-day as in the days of Peter. Too often the Christian when called to suffer for his own wrongdoing confuses conditions and charges his suffering upon "Providence" and assumes the role of a martyr for the sake of righteousness. The one whose extravagant living has reduced him to poverty talks of it as though God had swept away his fortune. So the glutton or the breaker of the law of health sometimes charges upon the Almighty the result of his own folly and sinfulness. A mother who in sheer neglect so exposed her child that it died of pneumonia tried to make of it a "Divine providence," and herself a sorely smitten parent.

**Christ's Suffering.** The one example to all Christians in joy or sorrow, in happiness or affliction, in wealth or poverty, in age or youth, is that of Jesus Christ. Christ suffered not for Himself, but for us. His life, from the cradle to the cross, was a lifelong career of suffering. He suffered in body, in mind, in spirit. There was no depth of suffering He did not fathom. No possible humiliation was spared Him, and no sort of indignity was witholden from Him. He endured the humiliation and helplessness of infancy and childhood for our sake that His example might include every stage of human life. He was homeless and a wanderer on the face of the earth. His countrymen hated Him, taunted Him, sought to take from Him every friend and believer in Him, and

at last put Him to death. The twelve men He chose and trained for three years, save possibly one, deserted Him in the saddest hour of His life. The common people to whom He had given love and healing power beyond words turned upon Him at the last and joined the mob that cried "Crucify Him, crucify Him."

After a life of supreme devotion to His countrymen, when choice was given them between His life or that of a murderer and robber, Barabbas was chosen to live. Yet not one word of impatience or resentment escaped His lips or for a moment did His great love and tenderness towards His persecutors relax.

**Christ's Sinlessness.** Mixed with our own lives at their best is the consciousness and fact of sin. All our days it is a conflict between the good and the evil in us. From our ancestors into our own blood there passes from generation to generation an inheritance of evil, an insistent tendency to wrongdoing. Men prate of childish innocence and of a good or bad "environment," but behind all of their mitigating theories there is born with us a wrong disposition. It is a lifelong war between the spirit and the flesh. Not so with Christ, who, Peter declares, "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." Of all the sons of men, He alone could say, "Satan cometh and findeth nothing in me."

From Bethlehem to Calvary there was no stain of sin upon this "Perfect Pattern" of human life. That we, too, may be perfected (though never attaining His perfection) He has promised unto us as His disciples. Step by step as we follow Him closely, we are more and more transformed into His likeness by the power of His grace. Joy not sinless ourselves, let it be our highest joy that we have a sinless Saviour.

**Christ's Patience.** Peter adds another golden link to the chain of Christ's virtues when he says of Him: "When He was reviled, He reviled not again; when He suffered (or was made to suffer), He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously"—a perfect patience marked our Pattern. Such patience as He had is infinitely beyond us, but there comes to every earnest soul who makes Christ his example a quality of patience that has no counterpart among those who know not Christ. But it comes through suffering, often as the ripe fruit of prolonged affliction.

The word patience denotes suffering. It comes from a Latin verb, "patior," which means "I suffer," and no true Christian patience comes other-

wise than through and by suffering. Some people pride themselves upon their patience who do not know its first principles. There are some who think little, care little, feel little and can suffer little because of a natural lack of sensibility. Let these not mistake mere physical good nature for the Divine patience of Jesus Christ or of His human imitators.

**Christ's Death.** "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye are healed." So the Apostle sets before us the supreme event in the life of our Lord. Note the simple, strong, clear statement of how "Christ paid the debt of sin we owe."

There are those nowadays, even in Christian pulpits, who are trying to pluck from the cross of Christ this the most priceless jewel—His death for sinners. He died, they say, not that His blood should atone for the race, but as a noble example of patience and loyalty to His convictions. First they try to take away His immaculate birth as Son of a virgin mother; then they rob the cross of its atoning purpose and power and do despite to the blood of the Son of man. Shame upon them for it!

**Christ the Shepherd.** The last picture Peter paints of Christ he must have borrowed in part from our Lord's noble words of Himself in the Gospel of John, in which he says over and over, "I am the Good Shepherd," "I know my sheep," "I call them by name," "The Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Or possibly Peter, as student of the Psalms of David, had in mind that ever-beautiful "Shepherd psalm" beginning, "The Lord is my Shepherd; He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Here too we His followers may imitate His example. Some of us are pastors, which means shepherds and feeders. Like Christ, we can know and lead, and love, and, if need be, die for our sheep. Some of us are Sunday School teachers, and we can shepherd our boys and girls and guide them into lives of Christian usefulness. Some of us have "other sheep" that are not of our church or Sunday-School fold. We can go out after them and bring them home rejoicing, to Christ.

**Quiz.** 1. Is all our suffering from God? 2. Why do men so often charge their own wrong-doing to Providence? 3. What virtues does the life of Christ set before us as a pattern? 4. In what way is Christ's death an example? 5. Why ought we to emphasize Christ's death as an offering for our sins?

**Challenge Text.** Who did no —, neither was — found in His mouth; who when He was reviled, — not again." 1 Peter 2: (?)

**The Personal Word.** 1. When wrongfully treated, in what way can you follow Christ's example? 2. When one suffers wrong patiently for Christ's sake, what is his reward? 3. What does Peter say as to Christ's death? 4. Why is the death of Christ on the cross of infinite value to us?

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your



virtue;  
and to  
virtue



And to knowledge



and  
to tem-  
perance



and to patience godliness; And to godliness



and to  
brotherly  
kindness



For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

II PETER I: 5-8.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS II PETER 1:1-11.

**Prayer:** Whatever we are or have, O God, is Thy gift. Whatever grace of character has come to us is of Thy bestowing. If we have faith as a foundation, Thy word doth declare that it is Thy gift. If, step by step, we climb to purer heights of Christian living, it is Thy gracious Spirit who leadeth the way. Bestow Thy gifts and graces in such measure that our lives may abound unto all fruitfulness in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Amen.

“Onward, ever onward,  
Journeying o’er the road  
Worn by saints before us,  
On their way to God;  
Leaving all behind us,  
May we hasten on,  
Backward never looking  
Till the prize is won.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The Apostle Peter probably wrote his second Epistle, from which this passage is taken, at Babylon, about the year 66 or 67 A. D., just before his martyrdom at Rome.

**Scripture Setting:** Faith comes by God’s Word, Rom. 10:17. Love comes from the Holy Spirit, Rom. 5:5. We are led by the Spirit from grace to grace, Rom. 8:14. Till we come unto a perfect man, Eph. 4:13. Christ our example, John 13:15.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Peter’s own triumph over himself is our encouragement to like victory. 2. The Bible abounds in “precious promises” to help us grow. 3. Faith is God’s gift as our working capital, but we add other graces by our own effort. 4. Christian growth is along all lines at once, and is not “lop-sided.” 5. With Christ as our pattern and His grace to help us, there is no limit to our growth.

### THE CHAIN OF CHRISTIAN GRACES.

**Simon Peter.** Our Lord had called him “Petros,” the rock, and he had lived to make good the title. He had been impetuous, rash, and had offended again and again in these qualities to the point of severe rebuke by his Master, who had said to him: “I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; when thou art turned from thy fault, strengthen the brethren.”

After Peter’s fall, at the time our Lord was on trial, Peter entered upon a new and better life. His old faults dropped away from him as the burden of leadership in the company of the Apostles came upon him. His courage and self-control rang clear, and his counsel was authoritative during the storm and stress of the Apostolic church.

During the severe persecutions he journeyed to Babylon, the home of very many dispersed Jews, and ministered to them and there wrote his Epistles. The old corrupting Gnostic theory, that evil resides only in matter and not in spirit, and the general laxity of religion and fear of persecution among the Jews, led him to write these brave, strong letters to all Jewish Christians. He was near to death as a martyr, but he had won the title of the “Rock” and “Strengthened” of the church.

**“Precious Promises.”** Peter begins his second Epistle by introducing himself as a “servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ,” as Paul had professed himself to be both “bond slave” and Apostle. He looks backward over the Gospels (part of which had been written a generation earlier, and copies of all but John’s being now among the churches) and he recalls how truly Jesus Christ had taught all things that pertain unto life and godli-

ness. He saw that the story of Christ’s wonderful ministry was sprinkled with the “exceeding great and precious promises” which Christ Himself had made to His people, and he sets forth the remembrance of these promises as a foundation for and incitement to the Christian progress of His Gentile-Christian readers. What were these promises? They were the same that preachers in modern pulpits put forth in Christ’s name to convert and comfort sinners and to build up weak Christians into vigor of life and service.

One of these precious promises, for instance, was “Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.” Another was that “Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.” Another was, “If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you.” Throughout the Gospels these precious promises glitter like stars of hope and assurance to all who are striving for Christian progress.

**Faith the Foundation.** Faith is the rock on which the Christian life must be built; the precursor to all Christian growth; the pledge of all Christian progress. “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” According to one’s faith, both in quality and quantity, will progress be attained. It is a comfort to know that to every human creature God gives enough of faith to enable the possessor to enter upon the Christian life. When this initial gift of saving faith is put into practice and exercised in ways of Christian devotion and service the faith given at the beginning grows and continues



to grow until it may come to be an all-conquering faith that removes mountains and laughs at difficulties. It is a simple, sheer trust in God through the shed blood of Jesus Christ; a faith that takes God at His word against all appearances to the contrary, and obeys Him if need be even to the death. It is faith both of head and heart; both of reason and feeling; always and everywhere full of courage and holy self-sacrifice.

**Virtue and Knowledge.** Upon the foundation of a living, vitalizing faith in God and Christ and the Holy Spirit, one is to enter upon Christian progress by adding "virtue" to faith. The word virtue has its own Scriptural meaning, which is courage. Not physical but moral and spiritual courage is meant, though physical courage is often essential to success in Christian endeavor. It takes much courage of body as well as of soul to suffer and to die as a martyr for Christ, but it takes more courage to live for Him. Faith would be like a dead, useless capital in the hands of one who had not the courage to hazard and invest and use and multiply it.

But courage is often rash and impetuous and unguarded, as in the case of Peter himself who had large faith and much courage, which, unbridled and misdirected, came near making shipwreck of his faith. Therefore, says Peter (doubtless in part confirmed by his own bitter experience,) to your faith and courage add knowledge of God, of truth, of one's duty, to the end that when one has faith to believe, and courage to undertake, he may also have knowledge to direct his Christian progress.

**Temperance and Patience.** With faith in God and Christ, with courage to do and dare for the Kingdom and the church, with knowledge of one's duty as a guide to growth, there comes the added need of temperance or self-control, lest knowledge beget conceit and self-indulgence. Temperance, in the Bible, means the control by one's will of all desires and passions and deeds. Not the constraint of food or drink only, as is too often taught and preached, but a steadfast, even control and balance of all one's powers for good or evil—self-mastery, in short. Bible temperance applies as much to one's speech or other habits of body or mind, as to drinking intoxicating liquors. Too often the partisans of temperance in drink are themselves intemperate in their words.

After temperance, but along with it, is made necessary the grace of *patience*. One who is temperate in all things tends to become pharisaic and intolerant of others who lack self-mastery. Asceticism is given by a noted writer as a peril which often entraps the temperate man. One who has

suffered in self-denying discipline needs to add to the other graces that of patient endurance of the imperfections of his fellows.

**Godliness and Brotherly Kindness.** He who has learned well in the school of patience the lessons of Christian progress has by that fact drawn near to godlikeness, or godliness, which Peter would have us add to our patience. God is eternally and perfectly patient. It was said of Jesus Christ by Isaiah that He would be as a sheep before His shearers, dumb, and opening not His mouth, and when our Lord came in the flesh, men had perfect confirmation of the prophesy in the serene and infinite patience with which Jesus met the persecutions of His enemies even unto the cross.

It behooved Him, the God-Man, to exhibit the perfect union of patience with godliness, as we must, by His grace, endeavor to follow. Then we will need to learn that true godliness—God-like-ness—means a religion filled and running over with the one choicest fruit of *brotherly love*. Any other godliness which keeps itself aloof from the world and seeks not to flow out in active love for others is an austere "sour godliness," which repels rather than attracts.

**Charity.** The last and crowning element in Christian progress is charity, or spiritual love to all men, saints and sinners, rich and poor, great and small, bond or free, learned or ignorant. It is the world-wide catholic and cosmopolitan grace that only the religion of Jesus Christ can impart.

Pantheism teaches that everything is God, man or brute or tree or stream. God is so widely diffused throughout creation, material and immaterial, that there can be no *personal* God. Buddhism holds that human beings are completely absorbed into God and become "nirvana," or nonentity. Christianity teaches that "God is love," that the Divine principle and motive of an all-conquering love for all men is so implanted in us by the Spirit of God—"the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost"—that we become more and more like unto God in spirit and life, and thereby and therewith draw all men unto God and His most holy religion.

**Quiz.** 1. Why does Peter call himself a "servant"? 2. What growth in grace did his own life illustrate? 3. Why is faith the starting-point of the Christian life? 4. What is the Bible idea of temperance? 5. What is the crowning grace of Christian progress? Why is it so?

**Challenge Text.** "For so an — shall be ministered unto — abundantly into the — — of our Lord and Saviour — —." 2 Peter 1: (?)

**The Heart Word.** Do not look at the *end* of the Christian life; take the step, do the duty, that is nearest to you. Do not try to begin with faith, then after a time seek to add virtue, and a little later add also knowledge, and so on. Cultivate *all graces together*, not one at a time. Try to be faithful, bold, knowing, temperate, patient, all at once. Strike every key of the Christ-chord at a stroke. Use the whole chain together, not separate links one at a time.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



If we  
say  
that  
we  
have



with  
him,  
and



we lie,  
and do  
not the  
truth:  
But  
if we



as he is in the  
light, we have  
fellowship one  
with another,  
and the blood of  
Jesus Christ his  
Son cleanseth  
us from all



If we say  
that we have  
no sin, we  
deceive  
ourselves,  
and the



is not in  
us. If we  
confess our  
sins, he is  
faithful  
and just  
to forgive  
us our  
sins, and to



us from all unrighteousness.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I JOHN 1:5-2:6.

**Prayer:** Deliver us, O Lord, from the ancient snare of Satan—that one can be a disciple of light yet dwell in darkness. Where Thou art there is no darkness, and Thy saints, like Thee, are dwellers in the light of truth and righteousness. Amen.

“Sun of my soul, Thou Saviour dear,  
It is not night if Thou be near:  
O may no earthborn cloud arise  
To hide Thee from Thy servant’s eyes.”

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** The passage under study is from John’s chief Epistle, written to the church at Ephesus, about A. D. 80, during the time of John’s pastorate over that renowned city of Asia Minor.

**Scripture Setting:** Christ is the light of the world, John 1:4. Christians are the reflected light, Matt. 5:14. Christ’s disciples shall have the “light of life,” John 8:12. How to escape the darkness, Isa. 50:10. From darkness to light, John 9:25.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** The tests of the Chris-

tian life are set forth in this passage as follows:

1. God is all light, and fellowship with Him excludes all darkness.
2. If we are in fellowship with God we have true fellowship with one another as Christians.
3. When we are in sin we *know* it, and if we deny our sin we deceive ourselves.
4. Jesus Christ is the Advocate before the Father for sinners.
5. If we keep Christ’s commandments we may thereby be assured of our salvation.

### HOW TO SEE OURSELVES.

**The Christian’s Lighthouse.** One who has sailed on the sea or along the great lakes will understand and appreciate the figure of the lighthouse as applied to our Lord Jesus Christ. He is “the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” Heathen religions have set up other lighthouses along the great and perilous sea of human life, but Jesus shines on when all pagan lights have gone out. One at sea on a dark and stormy night, filled with fear of the hidden rocks, has his heart wonderfully warmed and cheered as there flashes out of the thick darkness a great piercing light that both warns and comforts. Sleep and peace and quietness of soul come to the fearful traveller as he looks out of the window of his ship at the friendly light that signals safety across the storm-tossed waters.

**The Light of the World.** Children love to sing a song the refrain to which is, “The light of the world is Jesus.” So says John in the passage we study—“God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” He needs no sun or moon or stars to light His glorious and ever-shining way, and when Jesus came to earth as His only begotten Son, He brought His Father’s light in all its brightness.

How is Jesus the Light of the world? There are many answers. First, He opens the Scriptures to us and makes plain many hard things in the Bible concerning our happiness here and hereafter. He has told us how to live, what to believe, how God loves us, and how we can make our way to Heaven. He has lifted the curtain and shown us much of the life to come. He has given us commandments that will bring peace and joy and success to us if we keep them faithfully. He has broken the power of death and made us to know that death is but a gateway into an everlasting life of happiness or sorrow, and He has promised to help us to gain the one and to be saved from the other.

**False Teachers.** Others, claiming to be leaders and saviours of men, have set themselves up as teachers of the world. In the days of John the Apostle, who wrote much of Jesus as the Light, there were those who taught doctrines full of danger and of such a seductive kind as to tempt many to their ruin. Very many professing Christians were being swept away from lives of purity and loyalty to Christ. These teachers—known as “Gnostics”—taught especially that there could be a perfect purity of soul in the midst of the most abominable practices; that there could be in the same person both sanctity of life and depravity of conduct.

They held that one, in fact, might be an outrageous violator of the law, yet a pure and holy saint. Their contention was that sin was in the body or flesh, not in heart or spirit, and that if one had mental knowledge of God he could abandon his body to any sort of vice and licentiousness. At the bottom of their teaching was the ancient heathen doctrine so corrupting to the old world that sin is in the material body, and not in the mind and spirit of men. Sin being of the body only, they claimed that what the body did was not to be considered as a sin of one’s will.

**John the Defender.** John was the beloved disciple, the youngest of the Twelve, a cousin to Jesus, the “Son of thunder,” as Jesus called him. He was the only Apostle who had dared to stand with our Lord’s mother beneath the cross, as he had dared to enter the high priest’s judgment hall. He outlived all others of the Twelve and died at the end of the first century, near to a hundred years old. In this time of great heresy it fell to him to defend the Gospel of his Lord against evil

and seducing Gnostics. They taught "purity in sin"; John taught "purity from sin" through faith in Christ.

Paul had repeatedly warned Christians against the incoming of this corrupting doctrine, and no one could have been an abler or braver defender of the truth than John, "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Read the entire "First Epistle" written by him as a defense of Christianity, and see how sharply and plainly he denounces the Gnostic doctrine, that one may be rioting in bodily sin yet say, "I have committed no sin of mind, therefore I have not sinned."

**John's Defense.** How did John go about overthrowing this old corrupting heresy and setting Christian believers upon the foundation which Christ had laid? To get a better idea of the deadly teaching that threatened to ruin the church, a passage from Irenæus, one of the "fathers" of Christianity, concerning the Gnostics is given: "They, the Gnostics," he says, "say that we must do good works in order to be saved; but they will be saved, not by practice, but because they are spiritual by nature, and thus as gold though mingled with mire does not lose its beauty, so they themselves, though wallowing in the mire of carnal works, do not lose their own spiritual essence."

John threw himself, as last of the Apostles, into the battle against error. He uses the plainest words, and does not spare the heretics. There is no mawkish sentimentality in his defense of his Master against the destructives of his day. First, he sets forth God as "all light," and that those who pretend to fellowship with God cannot mix darkness and light in His name. Next he challenges their pretension that they have not sinned, though professing the contrary, and that only the blood of Christ can cleanse both heart and body alike. Lastly, he shows that while professing to be followers of Christ they wilfully and shamefully break His commandments, and that "the truth is not in them."

**The Cleansing Blood.** John puts his emphasis upon this foundation doctrine of Christianity—that only the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse and keep one clean from sin. His opposers professed to need no cleansing. They taught—as Irenæus said of them—that they needed no practice in righteousness but were spiritual by nature.

The cross and the shed blood of Christ were nothing to men who counted themselves pure by nature, yet who were defiling themselves with all abominations daily. John set forth a real purity, a genuine cleansing from all unrighteousness, whether of body or spirit, by the blood of Jesus Christ. This was the only remedy for sin, the only possible cleansing. "The Spirit of God, through Christ's real blood, produces a holiness the absolute oppo-

site of all sinful practice, the center of which holiness is love, a Divine love making us one with a perfectly pure God, and ourselves pure both in body and soul."

**Christ Our Advocate.** John sets forth a great and comforting doctrine for all Christians when he says, "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." An "advocate" is an attorney; one who pleads in our behalf. So Jesus in the court of Heaven, before the Father Almighty, pleads for us.

As sinners we are on trial before God and the trial lasts as long as life itself, because throughout life there is, to the best of Christians, something of mercy to be pleaded for and of forgiveness. No one can say the Lord's Prayer without a sense of his daily need for pardon and his further need that Christ who is one in person with God, and man—the God-Man—shall become his Advocate day by day before the bar of Heaven's Court.

Christ, the sinless One, has no transgression of His own, and of all the sons of men He alone can stand in the presence of God His Father and make intercession for us. Do we realize that each day of our lives this Mighty Attorney-at-Law with never-failing power has our case upon His heart and tongue pleading for us?

**The Final Test.** Whether we are walking in the light or in the darkness of sin, is made very plain and simple to us by the final test which John gives in concluding this passage from his First Epistle. It is so simple that a child ought to understand it without comment: "Hereby we do know that we know Him" (Christ the Saviour), "if we keep His commandments. He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

The word "Gnostic," as applied to the false and corrupt teachers against whom John was contending, means one who "knows." John again and again turns their own name in shame upon them and tells them how they may really know that they know Him—and this only when they keep His commandments. So Christ Himself had said fifty years before. John reaffirmed it. "If you love Me," said Jesus, "you will keep My commandments." We may profess our love for Him; we may join His church and be baptized with His baptism, but if we do not obey Him our religion is in vain.

**Quiz:** 1. What dangerous doctrine was held by the Gnostics? 2. Why was John the most proper person to oppose them? 3. What does John say about "darkness?" 4. In what sense is Christ our Advocate? 5. By what simple test may we know that we are walking in the light?

**Challenge Text:** He that saith he is in the —, and — his brother, is in — even until now. 1 John 2: (8)

**The Last Word:** 1. Have we anything like the doctrine of the Gnostics today? 2. In what ways is Christ a light unto men? 3. If Christ is our Advocate before God, by what right can a priest assume to take His place?

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# PERFECT LOVE.

Beloved, let us



one  
another  
for



is of God; and every one that



is born of  
God, and  
knoweth  
God. He that



not  
knoweth  
not  
God;  
for



In this  
was  
mani-  
fested  
the



of God toward us,  
because that God  
sent his only begotten  
Son into the world,  
that we might live  
through him. Herein is



not that we



God,  
but  
that  
he



us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

I JOHN IV: 7-10.

# THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS I JOHN 4:7-16.

**Prayer:** Thy love, O God, has been the joy and comfort of our lives. Shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, that love, in Christ, has banished darkness and doubt and filled the troubled heart with peace. We thank Thee for that love that reached down from Heaven to us in our unworthiness. Help us to love in return with all our heart and soul and mind, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

"Teach us to love each other, Lord,  
As we are loved by Thee;  
None who are truly born of God  
Can live in enmity.  
Heirs of the same immortal bliss,  
Our hopes and fears the same,  
With bonds of love our hearts unite,  
With mutual love inflame."

## THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Written about A. D. 80, by John, last of the Apostles, in his controversy against the "Gnostics," the most dangerous perverters of Christianity in the first century A. D.

**Scripture Setting:** Love greatest of all, 1 Cor. 13:13. Thinketh no evil, 1 Cor. 13:5. Covereth all sins, Prov. 10:12. Love is unmixed with fear, 1 John 4:18. Love is the sum of all commandments, Mark 12:28-31.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. One who loves God

## THE GREATEST THING IN THE WORLD.

**Amor Omnia Vincit.** This is a truer proverb than the one that reads, "Labor omnia vincit," which declares that labor conquers all things. Stronger than labor is love, which is the only power in earth or Heaven that can overcome all things. Henry Drummond, Mr. Moody's friend, the one he thought "the purest and best man he ever knew," wrote a beautiful little book, entitled, "The greatest thing in the world." He began by saying that if one should go as a missionary, to Africa, for instance, there would be years of waiting and hard study before the missionary could tell of Christ in the tongue of the natives. All culture and learning and books would fail him for a time. "But," said Drummond, "from the moment you land on the shore of the Dark Continent the Divine love in your heart will shine out of your eyes and ooze from the tip of your fingers, so that the most ignorant African will begin at once to know and understand in part your message of love."

Love like this, it needs to be said, is not the kind that poets sing of and painters put in winsome faces upon canvas. It is not mother love, the most sacred of merely human kind, nor father love which is quite as good, nor love of brother and sister or of husband and wife. It is these, but vastly more than these, because they are begotten in earth and belong to this life only; while the love that the Apostle John is describing for us is born in Heaven and is the gift of God Himself to man. It is part of Himself, for "God is love."

"**God Is Love.**" It was reserved for the one who as youngest of the Twelve pillowed his head on our Lord's breast and was known as "that disciple whom Jesus loved" to be

will also love his neighbor as a result of it. 2. The converse is also true—that one who truly loves his neighbor will also be found loving God. 3. God's love is infinite, and is our pattern in that He loved us as aliens and enemies. 4. God's love is implanted in our hearts by the Holy Spirit when we become Christians. 5. One whose love is perfected has neither fear nor distrust toward God or his neighbor.

the author of this noblest of all word portraits of the invisible God. Coming near to the end of the Bible, it sums up in three short words the character of the Almighty Father. It is more than saying that God is our "Father," for fatherhood in human experience is sometimes generous and just but not strongly characterized by love. It ought to sweep away from the minds of many men that God is an austere Being, enclosing in His hand the sword of justice, intent upon vindicating His power and authority, and sitting high in the heavens apart from His creatures.

Not of their own fault, many poor souls have come up from their mistaught or untaught childhood to think only of a God to be feared and propitiated by our human suffering. So the Indians torture themselves to please God. So the "flagellants" of the dark ages lashed themselves into streaming blood to win the favor of their God. Not so with the picture painted by the beloved disciple. And very far from the truth is it, as Jesus Himself declared when He said: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" to die for it.

**God's Son.** As this is being written the writer can look out of his window and see the ripple and sparkle of another Christmas, as it fills the hearts of the children with great delight and makes tender and forgiving the hearts of the old. It is only one of the signs that Christ, God's Son, has been given to this old world and as the generations go by, is filling the world with peace and good will.

God is a Spirit, invisible, whom no human eye can behold. We can worship Him in spirit and in truth, but at our best we cannot comprehend Him because He is beyond our



finite minds. But when God would reveal His love to the sons of men, because they could not understand His words, He sent His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, that in Him and His works and words we might know God.

Instead of sending us a written message to tell us how He loved us or dispatching a mighty angel like Gabriel to bring us word of His love, He sent the one "brightest and best of the sons of the morning," the Crown Prince of Heaven, above all angels and heavenly dignitaries, His Divine Son, Jesus Christ.

**Christ's Love.** The story of Christ never grows old nor loses its charm. He came as a helpless baby, in poverty and loneliness, that He might take full part in human sorrow and want. He gave His life in holy ministry to the poor, the sick, the oppressed in body and spirit. He was untiring in healing the suffering and in comforting and instructing the common people who most needed it. There is not a record of His ever turning away unanswered one who came to Him for healing or help. He fed the hungry, He opened the eyes of the blind and unsealed the ears of the deaf, and loosened the tongue of the dumb. He cast out evil spirits and cleansed the leper and raised the dead. "His miracles were parables and His parables miracles." At last, he gave the supreme proof of His love by dying upon the cross for the sins of the world, His executioners being those to whom He had especially shown His love. There was no other, and is "none other name under Heaven whereby we must be saved."

"Jesus paid it all,

All to Him I owe;

Sin had left a crimson stain,

He washed it white as snow."

**Loving One Another.** When nearing the end, with the shadow of the cross upon Him, Christ said to the Twelve: "A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another." In the upper room, the night before He died, He also said: "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you." John, in the study before us, admonishes us that if "God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." As an encouragement and stimulus to our growth in grace, He further says, "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us."

One of John's hard sayings that cut like a knife, but needs to be severe and plain is this: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" Even so, sometimes if the reader of these

lines be troubled himself, or has a friend in trouble over whether he is a true Christian or not, let him apply this simple, sure test of John's Epistle: "Do I love my neighbor? If I do truly love him, then I know that I love God, and that I am a Christian."

**Confessing Christ.** John's definition of Divine love is in these words: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Our love to God means infinitely much to us, but it is God's own pure and changeless and eternal love to us that is the standard and definition of what love really is. After pointing back to that cross on Calvary whereon the Son of God did die, with John himself as witness, the Apostle says further: "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."

Here is another test of whether one is a Christian — *the confessing of Christ as one's Divine and personal Saviour.* Mark those italics. It is not enough to have a merely intellectual belief that Jesus is Son of God. One may believe every word literally which the Bible contains, yet be damned. To confess Christ truly is to take Him into one's loving heart as a Saviour from sin, to trust Him wholly as the Divine Son of God, to make Him one's King and Master, as Paul says, "Whose I am, and whom I serve," and to take up his own cross, denying himself, and following Christ to the end of his days. That is confession.

**Love without Fear.** Most of us love, but most of us fear. We are strange in our religion, stranger than in other matters of life. A son or a daughter in the home who had the habit of loving father or mother one day and drawing back in distrust the next day would be a strange child. Yet a boy said not long ago to the writer: "I trust my mother fully with all my heart, but it's different with papa." The difference was this—with the mother the boy's trust and love was "with all his heart." With his father it was love and fear or distrust comingling.

So it is with us in our relation with the Heavenly Father. We have "torment," as John says, because our love and trust are not perfect towards Him.

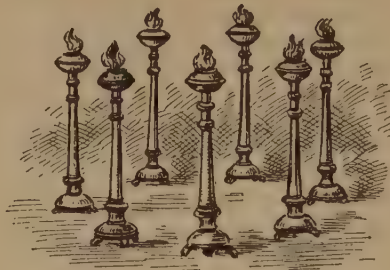
**Quiz:** 1. What is John's definition of God? 2. What does he say as to our neighbors? 3. How did God show His love to men? 4. How did Christ show His love to us? 5. How may we best show our love to God and Christ?

**Challenge Text:** There is no fear in —, but perfect — casteth out —; because fear hath —. He that — is not made perfect in —. 1 John 4: (?)

**The Personal Word.** Do you love God? How would you prove that you love Him? Would it be proof by word or deed? How much do you love Jesus Christ? Do you love Him enough to obey His commandments? Would you like to learn to love Him perfectly with your whole heart? Will you ask Him to help you do this?

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

And I turned  
to see the voice  
that spake with  
me. And being  
turned, I saw  
seven golden



And in the  
midst of the seven  
candlesticks one  
like unto the  
Son of man,  
clothed with a



down to  
the foot,  
and girt  
about the  
paps with  
a golden



His  
head  
and his  
hairs were  
white  
like



as white as



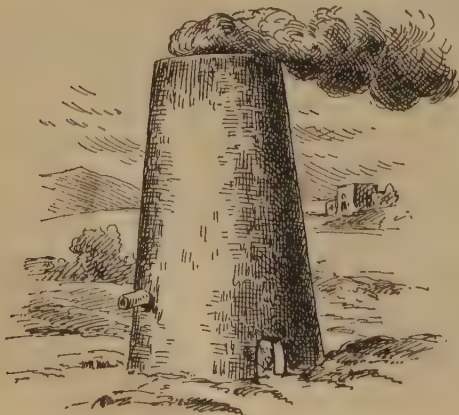
and  
his  
eyes  
were  
as a  
flame of



And  
his



like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a



and  
his  
voice  
as the  
sound  
of  
many





## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS REVELATION 1:9-20.

**Prayer:** Not in glorious vision do we behold Thee here, O Lord, but by Thy grace we trust to come at last into Thy presence with great joy and thankfulness. Cleanse us and perfect us and make us worthy to stand before Thee among Thy blood-bought saints. Amen.

"O Master, it is good to be  
Entranced, enwrapped, alone with Thee;  
And watch Thy glistening raiment glow  
Whiter than Hermon's whitest snow;  
The human lineaments that shine  
Irradiant with a light Divine;  
Till we, too, change from grace to grace,  
Gazing on that transfigured face."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** John, the writer of Revelation, was the last surviving member of the Twelve. During the reign of the Roman emperor Domitian, he was sent into exile, about the year A. D. 95, probably between the 12th and 14th year of the reign. The place of his exile was the island Patmos, about 100 miles southwest of Ephesus, the apostolic home of John.

**Scripture Setting.** Christ, the image of God. Col. 1:15. Christ the Lord of lords. Rev. 17:14. Our Great High Priest. Heb. 6:20. Christ equal to the Father. John 10:30, 38. Head of the

Church. Eph. 1:22. Saints shall behold Him in Heaven. John 17:24. The final Judge of all men. Rom. 14:11.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Like John, the vision of Christ comes to us in the midst of affliction. 2. Christ will ever be found "walking in the midst" of His churches. 3. Even the holiest of men are abashed before the supernatural. 4. Though the vision of the glorified Saviour be seen by the few, all of us may have Him in our hearts. 5. Christ is pledged to be with us even to the end of the world.

### "TILL I COME."

**The Aged John.** After the crucifixion of our Lord, John made Jerusalem his home, going from it on missionary tours into Syria. When Paul returned to the Jerusalem council, A. D. 50, after his first tour into Asia Minor, he found John as one of the "pillars" of the "Mother Church" of the city. Probably upon the death of Paul, John went to Ephesus as an overseer of the growing churches planted by Paul in Asia Minor. His later years, according to all traditions, were spent in Ephesus and Asia Minor, from whence he wrote his Epistles as he had already written his Gospel. Ephesus was the dual Asiatic centre of both paganism and Christianity, and it became the mother of many renowned Christian preachers, leaders and scholars, John being its resident Apostle and the last link between the Twelve and their successors, the Church Fathers. When about ninety years of age or more Domitian banished him to the isle of Patmos, where he was permitted once more face to face to look upon his Lord and to receive His message to the Asiatic churches of which John had the oversight.

Remembering how Jesus more than three-score years before had said on the shore of the Sea of Galilee to the inquisitive Peter, "What is it to thee if he (John) tarry till I come?", there will appear both pathos and significance in this Patmos vision by John of the glorified Saviour. Sixty years had passed between the promise and the coming.

**Persecution.** Shortly after the death of Christ the fires of persecution began to burn, lighted first by the Jews and later by pagans. The death of James marked the

first great persecution begun by Herod. Later came Nero to the Roman throne, and the fiercest of all persecutions was enacted by him, tens of thousands of men and women being put to the most violent and shameful deaths by this monster of cruelty. Among the victims were Peter and Paul, who suffered death about 66 A. D. Again under Vespasian, emperor of Rome, persecution set in, including both Jew and Christian, and the temple and city of Jerusalem were destroyed by Roman armies.

In A. D. 95, or near to that time, the Emperor Domitian surpassed in some respects all previous persecutions, and under this ruler John was exiled to Patmos. The more the persecutions the greater became the strength and spiritual power of the church, the blood of the martyrs "becoming truly the seed of the church." The causes of the ten imperial persecutions that marked the first three Christian centuries were the greed of priests and the sheer hatred of vile men for the pure morality of Christ.

**Patmos.** The "isle called Patmos" was a great rock jutting out of the southern end of the Ægean Sea, lying southwest of the port Miletus in Asia Minor, a distance of perhaps sixty or more miles from that harbor. Then and now it is marked by desolation and loneliness. How long John was an exile, or who sent him there, is not surely known, but the general opinion from an early age has been that he was a victim of the wrath of Emperor Domitian.

In modern times there has been erected by the Catholic Church a fine group of buildings on the highest part of the rock, near the center of the

island, known as the "Apocalyptic Monastery of St. John." A grotto is shown where it is claimed John dwelt when he saw the Saviour.

**"The Lord's Day."** A parallel phrase to the "Lord's Supper," as given in 1 Cor. 11:20, indicating that both institutions were founded by our Lord. Beginning with the morning of the resurrection of Christ, His church has named as its Sabbath the day on which He rose from the dead, in commemoration of that mighty and crucial event, and because the old order of Judaism had been replaced by the new order of Christianity, and this change was divinely ordered as one of the signs of that transition.

The early church historian, Eusebius, wrote: "Christ translated and transferred the feast of the Sabbath to . . . the Lord's day, the first day of the light in which the Saviour obtained the victory over death."

**The Vision.** While John was "in the Spirit," that is, under supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, there came first the voice of an angel bidding him write. The angel was no more than herald to the Lord, who later revealed Himself to the eyes of the Apostle. John first saw the seven golden candlesticks, symbolizing the seven chief churches of Asia Minor; then in the midst of the candlesticks he saw one "like unto the Son of Man"—Jesus Christ, the risen and glorified Saviour.

His wonderful appearance John describes, but the reader will better understand the vision in its completeness if the mental picture given as a summary by a great Bible student is here presented. He says: "Let us form a mental picture of the Personality described. Before the eyes of John stands a colossal figure, robed entirely in white, His face and feet alone bare; the former of sunlike splendor, the latter of a white-heat brilliancy. Locks of snowy whiteness crown His head; He speaks, and His words flash like a double-edged sword from His mouth, and His voice resounds through space like many waters. He extends His arm, and on His palm is resting a circle of seven stars, and He walks majestically between the two rows of lamps blazing upon their stands."

Seeing the vision, John fell as one dead, until aroused by touch and voice of his Lord, who says to him: "Fear not; I am the first and the last and the living One. I became dead, but lo! I shall live forevermore, and I hold the keys of death and hell." Then John is bidden to write whatever words or message shall be spoken to him, the symbols used in the vision being first made plain to him.

**The Seven Candlesticks.** The "mystery" of these symbols was given as follows: The seven stars in the palm of the outstretched hand of Christ were the angels of the seven churches, to each of whom John would be given a message of warning or comfort.

The seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches of Asia to whom the several messages must go. There is no question among Bible students as to the symbolism of the golden candlesticks. That they were seven in number does not mean that only seven Christian churches had been planted in Asia, but that the scriptural symbol of completeness, the number seven, stood for whatever number there were.

The candlesticks were really lamps, with oil and wick, probably like those in the temple with three lamps of gold on either side of a central lamp and pillar, to which the seven were attached. The lamp symbolized a church; the oil, God's grace; and the flame the light of the church to the world spiritually. The vision of Christ walking in the midst of the lamps signified that He is the head of the church whether in its organic unity and entirety or over the individual and local church.

**The Seven Stars.** The stars in the hand of the vision were symbolic of the "angels" of the seven churches of Asia, but opinion has widely varied among Bible students as to the meaning of the term "angels." One opinion is that the seven angels were a "collective body of rulers" of these churches, which has little foundation. Another, that they were seven "messengers" sent from the churches and present with John, is incredible.

The better and more commonly received opinion is that the angels represented by the seven stars were ministers set over them severally, just as the pastors of modern churches are the spiritual guides and "overseers" of their respective charges. "Such were appointed, from a need of the times, as a stronghold against heresies and as authentic preservers of the apostolic doctrines and of the sacred New Testament canon." To these administrators of church government and maintainers of orthodoxy the messages committed to the Apostle would most fittingly fall.

**Quiz:** 1. Why was John an exile on the isle of Patmos? 2. How did persecution affect the apostolic church? 3. What vision did John see on Patmos? 4. What did the Saviour say to John? 5. What were represented by the candlesticks and stars?

**Challenge Text:** "I am — and —, the first and the —; and what thou seest write in a —, and send it unto the seven —, which are in —." Rev. 1: (9)

**What It Means.** This strange vision that came to the last and oldest Apostle, in a time of sore trouble and persecution, is not to be studied because it was supernatural, or because it was foretold that the Saviour would come again to John, or that we might know the meaning of golden candlesticks and shining stars. Far from these is the reason of our study. It is to set before the mind and heart of all Christians who shall read these lines that Jesus Christ is in the world, clothed with infinite power, filled with infinite love, walking in the midst of the churches as their great ever-living Head and giving to them His most watchful care.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# THE MESSAGE TO THE CHURCHES.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the



To him  
that  
over-  
cometh  
will I  
give to



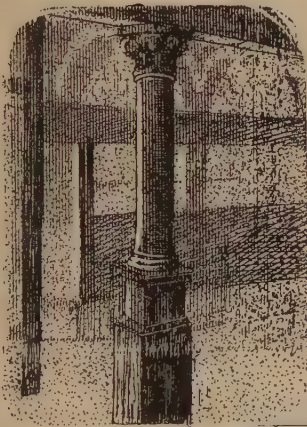
of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. He that overcometh, the same shall be



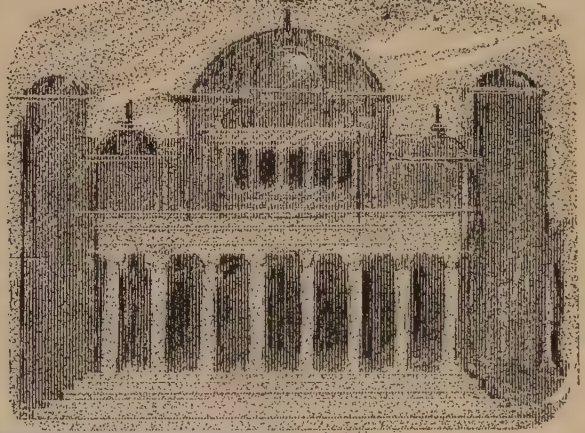
in white  
raiment;  
and I will  
not blot out  
his name  
out of the  
book of life,  
but I will  
confess his  
name before  
my Father, and



Him  
that  
over-  
cometh  
will I  
make a



in  
the



of my God,  
and he shall  
go no more out:  
and I will write  
upon him the  
name of my  
God, and the  
name of the



of my God,  
which is new  
Jerusalem,  
which cometh  
down out of heaven  
from my God: and  
I will write upon  
him my new name.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS REVELATION, CHAPS. 2 AND 3.

**Prayer:** Thy Church, O Lord, is the centre of our hopes, the chief solace of our sorrows, the unfailing fountain of our piety, and the inspiration to our labors. Bless our ministers and church managers; give unction to our teachers; and add many souls to Thy Kingdom through their service. Amen.

"I love Thy church, O Lord,  
Her walls before Thee stand,  
Dear as the apple of Thine eye  
And graven on Thy hand.  
Beyond my highest joy  
I prize her heavenly ways,  
Her sweet communion, solemn vows,  
Her hymns of love and praise."

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** Time, A. D. 95. Place, Isle of Patmos. Person, John the Apostle in exile, under the persecution of Domitian of the Roman empire.

**Scripture Setting.** Precious is the death of His saints. Psalm 116:15. The saints shall take the Kingdom. Dan. 7:18. Christ will be glorified in His saints. 2 Thess. 1:10. A new Heaven and a new earth. Rev. 21:1. The Heavenly City of the saints. Rev. 21:10-27.

**Life and Conduct Setting.** 1. Every church member is a factor in the church's success. 2. There is no such thing in the Kingdom of God as collective responsibility. The Kingdom rests upon individuals. 3. The weak church members are the measure of a church. 4. Nothing so cripples a church's success as fanatics and faddists. 5. God prefers an outright sinner to a milk-and-water saint.

### THE GOOD AND BAD IN CHURCH LIFE.

**The Church of Ephesus.** Paul founded it, coming first to Ephesus on his second missionary tour and finding only a handful of John the Baptist's disciples. He taught in the school of Tyrannus and on his third tour served Ephesus three years, thus building up the great mother church of Asia Minor. The city was rich, of great commercial importance, a centre of paganism, witchcraft and magic, and famous for the temple of Diana. In three years Paul had broken the power of Diana and wrought a religious reformation. Then came Timothy and John as pastors in succession and the Ephesian church multiplied itself in smaller churches throughout Ionia.

John's message from Christ to this church was one of sadness and warning. The membership had grown cold and neglectful, but for the sake of its former great name and work and its loyalty to the truth, repentance is urged upon them. The Nicolaitanes, whose doctrine was hated by the Ephesian church, held the old corrupting Gnostic doctrine that sin is in matter only and that therefore one could use his body in vile licentiousness yet keep clean in spirit.

**The Church of Smyrna.** Fifty miles nearly, north of Ephesus, lay Smyrna, on the sea or so near it as to be the finest harbor of western Asia. By whom the church here was founded is not known, probably by some one or more from Ephesus. A great Roman postroad connected the two cities, and it was easy for Christians of Ephesus in Paul's pastorate to have organized the Smyrna church.

Our Lord's message to this church was full of high praise, with not a note of censure, the noblest message received by any

one of the seven churches. Full of labor, of persecution and of poverty, nevertheless the Smyrna church was "rich" in spiritual power and service. Greater persecution would follow, but the greater honor and the crown of life should be its reward.

**The Church at Pergamos.** Sixty miles northeast of Smyrna was Pergamos, once a famous capital. It had a temple to Eesculapius, whose symbol was a serpent, to which very many superstitiously came for healing. The partisans of this god and temple were exceeding bitter against Christianity and slew Antipas, the reputed Christian bishop of Pergamos.

This church is warmly commended, but incurs one rebuke—it had too patiently tolerated within its membership, followers of Baalim and of the Nicolaitanes, the two forms of corrupt and licentious worship. Baal worship was Shemitic in origin, while the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes was Aryan. The former was a kind of nature-worship, with Baal and Astarte as male and female deities. Baal was god of all sexual generation in nature, and his temples were served by prostitutes, and licentiousness was an act of religion. If possible, the worship of Astarte was even more degrading. The Nicolaitanes were different only in their origin and doctrines, chief of which was the doctrine that all evil resided in matter. They grew to be as licentious as the followers of Baal, and were corruptors of the church at Pergamos.

**The Church at Thyatira.** To the southeast of Pergamos, a little off from the great Roman road that led to Sardis, was the flourishing manufacturing city of Thyatira, planted by Alexander the Great after he



had expelled the Persians from Ionia. The city was originally peopled by Macedonians, Alexander's countrymen. The Lydia whom Paul found at Philippi was from Thyatira.

The message to the Thyatiran church strongly commends its charity, service, faith and patience, but sharply condemns "that woman Jezebel," a real feminine personage, styled Jezebel because her infamy as a corrupting teacher and example to the Christians of Thyatira resembled the wicked Jezebel, wife of king Ahab. She had been warned, but had continued her evil course, winning disciples even from the membership of the church, which was now ordered to put an end to her evil and seductive work under the guise of Christianity.

**The Church at Sardis.** Thirty miles to the southeast of Thyatira was the renowned "Queen of Asia Minor," the rich and prosperous city of Sardis. Here Cræsus, famed for his riches, once ruled, and later came the great Christian bishop Melito, renowned for his learning. A country exceedingly fertile surrounded the city, but not a trace of its ancient greatness remains to our time.

The message to John concerning this church of deadness, that "I will come on thee as a thief," has been abundantly fulfilled. Only the site of the once great city and church can be identified. Warned to "strengthen the things which remain," to "hold fast and repent," they were given time and encouragement, but in vain. The "few names that have not defiled their garments" could not save the church or the city from being "blotted out."

The promise of the Lord that these unsoiled saints should "walk with him in white" has long ago been fulfilled, but the heart grows inexpressibly sad over the failure of the others to heed the warning that came so tenderly to them by the pen of John. Over this memorable city and church can be written the epistle, "Blotted out—the church at Sardis, whose one memory worth keeping is of its few undefiled saints."

**The Church of Philadelphia.** Due east of Sardis, between river and mountain, the Roman road ran to Philadelphia, the site of another of the seven churches. The name signifies "brotherly love," but it originated with its founder, Attalus II., king of Pergamos. The city lay in the noted earthquake district, and was often a victim of earthquake visits, once being overthrown and well nigh destroyed. The soil of the surrounding district was famous for its production of grapes and other fruits, and the modern city is still noted for wheat, cotton and fruits.

The church had a "little strength," whether in membership or spiritual power is meant seems not certain, yet with singular emphasis the church is commended because it had "kept the word of Christ" and had not "denied His name" amid all persecutions that had befallen it. Their persecutors evidently were from the "synagogue of the Jews" in the city, to whom the message gives warning. Of all the seven churches, this one alone at Philadelphia, while not receiving unstinted praise, yet has the honor of meriting not a word of reproof or condemnation. The comforting promise was made to the church that the Saviour "would keep them in the hour of temptation which should come upon all the world."

Almost alone of all the churches, this least of them in numbers has been singularly preserved throughout the centuries. Gibbons, the historian, says: "The desolation of Ephesus is complete; Laodicea is now peopled with wolves; Sardis is a miserable village; the God of Mohammed is invoked at Pergamos and Thyatira. Philadelphia alone has been saved by prophecy or courage."

**The Church of Laodicea.** The rich and powerful city of Laodicea, capital of the province of Phrygia, lay sixty miles southeast of Philadelphia, and is the last of the seven churches to whom the Divine message came through the Apostle. It was a magnificent Roman city, founded in the third century B. C. by Antiochus II., and was much favored by Roman emperors. It had its famous theatres and aqueducts, and its ruins in modern times show its ancient splendor. It had a church "rich in goods but poor in faith," a "lukewarm church that was neither hot nor cold." Riches, luxury and ease had begotten neglect of Christian duty, and it was a church of well-to-do backsliders.

Most severe and direct of our Lord's rebukes is His Word to this proud and profitless church: "I will spew thee out of my mouth," or more accurately, "I am about to spew thee out of my mouth." He counsels them to buy gold of character and white raiment of purity, and spiritual eye salve, that they may be saved from their lost and backslidden condition.

**Quiz:** 1. Which of the seven churches had a spotless name? 2. In what respect was it blameless? 3. Which church was being corrupted by a bad woman, and in what way? 4. Which church was blotted out, and why? 5. Why was the Laodicean church so sharply rebuked?

**Challenge Text:** "I know thy —, that thou art neither — nor —; I would those wert — or —." Rev. 3: (?)

**Summing Up.** 1. Out of seven churches, only two are without censure, though not as perfect as they might have been. 2. Two of the churches were careless as to heresies and corrupting teachers. 3. One church was dominated by a wicked woman. 4. Two suffered from the licentious doctrine of the Nicolaitanes. 5. One was dead but for a few faithful souls, and one had lost its first love and zeal.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



After this  
I beheld,  
and, lo,  
a great



which  
no man  
could number,  
of all nations,  
and kindreds,  
and people,  
and tongues,  
stood before  
the throne,  
and before

the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. And all the angels stood

round about the



and about the



and the

and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God. Saying, Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever.

Amen.



## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS REVELATION 7:9-17.

**Prayer:** For all Thy saints, living or dead, we give Thee thanks, O Lord. For their pure lives and loyal service in Thy Kingdom we are debtors to them and to Thee, in that it has made our love stronger and our labors more abundant. When toil and life are done may we, too, pass from Thy

church militant to join the company of Thy saints above. Amen.

"Who are these arrayed in white,  
Brighter than the noonday sun,  
Foremost of the sons of light,  
Nearest the eternal throne!"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** A part of the vision of the Apostle John, while in exile for righteousness' sake, on the Isle of Patmos, about A. D. 95.

**Scripture Setting:** The final judgment. Rev. 20:11-12. The resurrection. Rev. 20:13. The New Jerusalem. Rev. 21:2-3. The judgment of the righteous. Matt. 25:34-36. The judgment of the wicked. Matt. 25:41-43.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. Death is only the

gateway to another existence, awaiting the resurrection. 2. There will be to all of us a literal and universal resurrection of the body. 3. Christ will be the final Judge of all men and angels. 4. The judgment will be according to the light each had on earth. 5. All who are saved through Christ will be given entrance into Heaven, and the wicked will be condemned to hell.

### A PICTURE OF THE CITY OF GOD.

**The Invisible Country.** We make too much of what we call the "mystery of death." Our loved ones go from us through the gates of death, and we robe ourselves in black and think and speak of them as if they were wandering to and fro in some strange land, with small prospect of our meeting them again. We cry for the "touch of the vanished hand, the sound of the voice that is still"; and though we profess to be Christians and believers in the promises of Christ we show little real faith in His repeated declaration of a life of infinite peace and joy beyond the grave. There is not much of "mystery" about it, if we take the Bible for it. In both Old and New Testaments, particularly in the words of Christ and Paul, we have abundant testimony to the fact that "in the Father's house are many mansions," and that a "place" has been prepared for each of us who bear the mark of the blood of Jesus Christ.

One trouble has been that the doctrine of the resurrection, of the recognition of and reunion with our loved ones in the world to come, of their real and vital happiness in that unknown land where they await our coming, has been too little preached and taught from pulpit and Sunday School pew in the terms the Scriptures use in speaking of them. We have made a "mystery" too often of what the Bible plainly sets forth.

**The Dead in Christ.** Between the redeemed and those who die without Christ there is a great gulf fixed, across which none may pass. Our Lord's parable of Dives and Lazarus clearly determines this. Dives sought to send warning to his brothers yet living in the flesh not to come to that place to which he himself had been assigned; and

Abraham and Lazarus as types of the saved are represented as in a state of happiness awaiting the resurrection.

That the redeemed do not at death come into the full enjoyment of the blessings of eternity is clearly taught in the Scriptures. At the day of judgment their bodies and spirits shall be reunited and at that day not only the redeemed but the lost shall receive their final reward. To His disciples just before His death Jesus said, "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself that where I am, there ye may be also." And to the thief on the cross He said, "Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."

**The Resurrection.** Nothing concerning the life to come is more clearly taught in the Scriptures than the doctrine of the resurrection. In the Old Testament are many references to it, and one could construct out of the various passages relating to it a full though less complete and vivid picture of what the resurrection will be. In the New Testament, however, with the word of our Lord, confirmed and elaborated by Paul and Peter and John, there is no warrant or excuse for one misunderstanding or perverting the doctrine.

"The hour is coming," Jesus said, "in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." When He had risen from the dead, He appeared before His affrighted and skeptical disciples, saying to them: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself." If it be said that this body of His which He showed was after-

ward changed in some glorious way at His ascension, the answer is that it was the same body that was crucified, entombed and resurrected and glorified—always the identical body.

**The Judgment.** The one tremendous tragedy of the world's history was the crucifixion of Christ, but that great day of suffering will find its awful parallel in the day of final judgment, at which all the mighty host of humanity throughout all generations shall come to be judged for the deeds done in the body by Jesus Christ as Judge. Any other day of greatness in the history of the race will be as dust in the balance compared to this last day and scene in human history. Our Lord, with Paul, Peter and John, have painted the picture of this judgment. Paul declares that "the Lord Himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air."

Peter fills in the picture with these words: "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up.... Nevertheless, we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth."

**Old Testament Saints.** John's vision of the judgment and of the saints who passed from it into Heaven is full of magnificent symbolism. The "four angels," representing the goings forth of Divine power, the "four corners," representing the four points of the compass, command a silence in wind and sea and tree, that there might be peace and quiet while the "servants of our God" shall be "sealed in their foreheads." The mark of redemption is to be put, figuratively, on all the redeemed.

First of the mighty host come all those who constitute the saints of the Old Testament church. They knew not Christ in the flesh as when He was on the earth or in the record of the New Testament as we of later time know Him. With imperfect knowledge, though with obedience and trust, as members of the church of Judaism or of the Patriarchal age, they lived up to the light of revelation given to them and are accounted worthy to stand with the New Testament saints.

**The New Testament Saints.** Along with the saved Israel and the Jewish church of the Old Testament, is a vast multitude whom no man can number constituting the redeemed saints of the Christian church, to-

gether probably with all the saved of all time who are not "of the circumcision" or of Christianity, but who by living up to their knowledge are given place among the redeemed. They are clothed in the white robes that symbolize Christ's righteousness, and in their hands they carry palms in token of the victory they have won through Christ. They represent all time, all classes, all nations, saved by the "blood of the Lamb."

Among them are innumerable children whose little lives went out in the dawn of life; young men and maidens who died before the battle of life had well begun; and many veterans of the cross who had fought a good fight and had finished their course. When one recalls that the two hundred generations of the redeemed are of this vast Old and New Testament multitude, he will realize the truth of the prophecy that Christ "shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied."

**The Heavenly Chorus.** Music, as on earth, will be one of the joys of Heaven, though without the minor notes of pain and sorrow that mar the hymns of the church militant. John's vision of Heaven includes strikingly the great chorus of the redeemed as led by the angels and the twenty-four elders representing the church of Moses and of Christ merged into one. They surround the throne in their spotless robes and with waving palms of victory they sing:

"Salvation to our God,  
Which sitteth upon the throne;  
And unto the Lamb."

Then the angels and elders falling prone upon their faces join in the refrain:

"Amen.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving,  
And honor and power and might  
Be unto our God forever and ever.  
Amen."

Then a clear celestial voice rings out the cry,  
"What are these which are arrayed in white robes?"

And the answer peals forth:  
"These are they which came out of great tribulation  
And have washed their robes and made them white,  
In the blood of the Lamb."

**Quiz.** 1. What churches are represented in John's vision of Heaven? 2. Why is the multitude of Christianity so much greater than the other? 3. What are signified by white robes and palms? 4. What great tribulation of the saints is meant?

**Challenge Text.** "And God shall wipe away all — from their —; and there shall be no more —, neither — nor — neither shall there be any more —." Rev. 21: (?)

**Heart Truths.** 1. A day in Heaven will compensate for a lifetime here. 2. We will meet many in Heaven we did not expect, and miss some we counted on. 3. Our greatest surprise will be that we ourselves are permitted to go there. 4. Any place will be Heaven which has no death, nor tears.

DR. H. M. HAMILL.



# THE GREAT INVITATION.

And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I



before  
the  
feet  
of the



which shewed  
me these things.  
Then saith he  
unto me,  
See thou do  
it not: for  
I am thy  
fellow-servant,  
and of thy  
brethren the

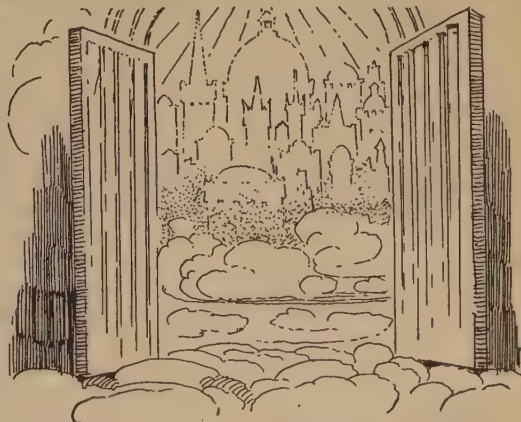


and of them which  
keep the sayings  
of this book:  
worship God.  
And he saith unto  
me, Seal not the  
sayings of the  
prophecy of this  
book: for the time  
is at hand. He  
that is unjust, let  
him be unjust  
still: and he  
which is filthy,  
let him be filthy  
still: and he that  
is righteous, let  
him be righteous

still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the



and  
may  
enter in  
through  
the



into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

## THE SCRIPTURE LESSON IS REVELATION 22:8-21.

**Prayer:** From childhood unto age Thou art calling us into Thy Kingdom, O Lord, and none of Thy children are beyond Thy love and mercy. Grant that all we who have heard and heeded Thy invitation may extend it unto others. Hasten Thou the time when all those beyond the sound of Thy Gospel shall have heard the message and turned their steps homeward to their Father's house. For Jesus' sake, Amen.

"Sinners, turn; why will ye die?  
God, your Saviour, asks you why;  
God, who did your souls retrieve,  
Died Himself, that ye might live,—  
Will you let Him die in vain,  
Crucify your Lord again?  
Why, ye ransomed sinners, why  
Will ye slight His grace and die?"

### THE SUBJECT IN ITS RELATIONS.

**Historical Setting:** About A. D. 95, on the Isle of Patmos, the conclusion of John's vision as contained in the book of Revelation.

**Scripture Setting:** The call to Abraham. Gen. 12:1. The call to Moses. Ex. 3:4. The call to Israel. Joshua 24:14-15. John the Baptists' call to repentance. Matt. 3:1-2. Our Lord's invitation. Matt. 11:28-30.

**Life and Conduct Setting:** 1. God sets a limit to

His mercy and gives place to justice. 2. Every man will receive judgment according to his light and opportunity. 3. Heaven is for those who "do the commandments" of Christ. 4. No human being, even in heathen lands, will fail to receive Christ's invitation either by the mouth of His ministers or by the call of the Holy Spirit to the human conscience. 5. The last word of the Bible is a warning to those who would pervert it.

### THE LAST WORD OF THE BIBLE.

**The Last Apostle.** Nearly a hundred years had John the beloved lived. He was the last of the Twelve. His brother James had been first to go, under the sword of Herod. Peter had perished at Rome under the axe of Nero, at the same time that Paul had suffered martyrdom. John had been the "baby Apostle," a blood cousin to Jesus, a young man of spirit and temper, and of high ideals. Our Lord had called him and James, Boanerges, "sons of thunder," but John had learned to control his spirit. He was the one Apostle who had dared to stand at the cross while Jesus was dying, and to him our Lord had committed His mother at death. The old tradition is that she lived twelve years more with John, who then set forth upon his great ministry, first at Jerusalem, then at Samaria, later at Ephesus, and last as an exile at Patmos. The "son of thunder" had become in his old age the "apostle of love," who calls upon the church as his "little children" to "love one another."

**The Last Book.** Nothing could more fittingly close the great Book of God than this vision which John was given to see as last of the Apostles and sacred writers. It bears much the same relation to the New Testament that the book of Daniel does to the Old Testament. That book of prophesy looked forward especially to the coming of the Kingdom of Christ, and its displacement of all other kingdoms. Revelation starts with the close of the first Christian century and carries us in prophetic vision to the end of time, through the ever-changing but all-conquering leadership of Christ. It looks into the world to come, to the "new Heaven

and new earth," to the fixing of the last seal upon human history and destiny.

**The Last Word.** More fitting still is the last word in this last book of the Holy Bible. After the messages of warning, rebuke and commendation with which the book began, and the mighty movements depicted on earth and in Heaven in the middle portion of the book, the last chapter and last words turn away from the battles of the Kingdom as John's vision pictured them and with great solemnity and tenderness renews the invitation to sinning men to come to Christ and be saved before it is eternally too late. By every plea and in many mouths this invitation had echoed through the pages of the Old and New Testaments, and now with greater power it closes this last book of Revelation, as the curtain rings down before the Judgment. Surely the Word of God has not left man in darkness as to his place in this world and his prospects in the next. And if the tragedy of life ends with any soul unsaved it will not be because the man had no chance. From the first book of Genesis to this closing chapter of Revelation there is scarcely a page on which there is not the sign of the blood of Calvary and the plea of God to lost men.

**The Holy City.** Not the least of the vision of John was the glimpse of the beauty and glory of the New Jerusalem, "coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Into it, through its gates of pearl, along its golden streets, upon the banks of the river of life and beneath the tree of life, enter the vast company of the redeemed saints, each with the seal of the Lamb upon him. Without, in the eter-



nal darkness and desolation of the lost, are the workers of wickedness and those who rebel against God and reject the salvation provided through His Son—the unclean and impenitent haters of God and man, who can no longer vex and oppress the men and women who by the grace of Jesus Christ spent their years on earth trying to make it the brighter and better for their sojourn. Not the least of the delights of the Holy City will be the unbroken fellowship with the true, the beautiful and the good!

**The Morning Star.** Then in words of singular beauty and charm Jesus Himself speaks His last word in the closing of His vision to John. The New Jerusalem, a glittering picture, with its light celestial, and its gates and streets resplendent, passes from view, as Jesus points to Himself as the “bright and morning star,” the “root and the offspring of David.” This new world, says one, is the morning of an endless existence, and in its gray dawn happy is the man upon whose faith beams this “bright and morning star,” the promise and harbinger of an eternal day. “I have sent mine angel,” He says, “to testify unto you these things in the churches.” And now that the multi-form vision, stretching through many centuries of time, ushering in eternity and its mysteries, is ending, and John’s Master and Saviour passes from sound and sight in this great apocalypse, the words of the “great invitation” are spoken.

**The Spirit and the Bride.** Jesus had comforted the hearts of the eleven in the upper room the night before His death by telling them that His going away would be the signal for the coming of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who should “reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment to come.” The mighty Spirit came in great convicting and converting power at Pentecost, and again and again in Jerusalem and Samaria and Judea and to the ends of the earth. Though only two generations had passed since the Cross, millions of men and women had been turned by the Spirit from sin to holiness, and in all the great cities of the world the white standard of the Christian church was uplifted. The Spirit had been saying Come, and very many had heard

and heeded the invitation. The church, too, the Heaven-born “bride,” had been organized and extended in all lands, with its houses of worship, its inspired Scriptures, its holy ordinances, its Apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers, and the Gospel was everywhere proclaimed, and the church’s invitation to lost men had accompanied the call of the Holy Spirit.

**The Christian’s Obligation.** Not only do the Spirit and the church, its great and Divine Head leading the way, invite men into the Kingdom below, and finally into the New Jerusalem above, but every Christian man and woman, because they have heard and accepted the invitation, are under bonds to reveal and extend the invitation to all who are without the Kingdom and the church. Every saved soul must become a soul-winner.

**Whosoever.** As if all other invitations to salvation—of Jesus, of the Holy Spirit, of the church, of every individual Christian—were not enough, there rings out like a trumpet the “whosoever will” as the final all-inclusive invitation to “come” into the Holy City. No one hungry for salvation but he shall be filled. No one athirst but he may enter and drink of the river of life.

**The Last Seal.** Then comes the angel and puts his last seal upon the closed book of revelation and inspiration in these most solemn words of warning: “If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the Holy City.”

**Quiz.** 1. Who are within the Holy City? 2. What classes are to be without it? 3. In what sense is Jesus the bright and morning star? 4. From whence does the great invitation to salvation come? 5. How did Jesus warn against disturbing the Holy Bible?

**Challenge Text.** “And they shall see His —, and His — shall be in their foreheads.” Rev. 22: (?)

**Heart to Heart.** As you lay down this book, having read of God’s great Book, of His wonderful ways in human history, of His Son Jesus Christ and His death on the cross for sinners, can you say truly: “I have read with gratitude and profit. I have accepted the invitation of the church, I have been born from above, I seek the New Jerusalem as my eternal home.”

DR. H. M. HAMILL.

N. B. — 64 pages are here added to account for the full page half-tone engravings and descriptions of same; also little biographies of old masters and pages in New Testament of this volume not counted in the regular folios making a total of 639 pages.

















# **International Sunday School Lessons Calendar**

**1925-1927**

**CONTAINED IN**

## **"The New Bible Teacher"**

Before the organization of the International Sunday School Association, every denomination selected its own Sunday School Lessons. This resulted in poor work and much dissatisfaction; hence it was suggested by several great Sunday School workers, that if an arrangement could be made whereby all Sunday Schools would use the same Lessons, a great deal more progress could be made in Sunday School and Church work.

About fifty-three years ago representatives of the different denominations met and organized the INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION. They agreed to study the same Sunday School Lessons in all Sunday Schools regardless of denomination and location. So today all Protestant churches whether Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, etc., study the same Sunday School Lesson every Sunday throughout the entire Christian world.

During this period of over 53 years the International Sunday School Lessons have covered the Bible about eight times. The International Lesson Committee decided at its meeting held in Chicago, April 6th, 1915, to issue the Sunday School Lessons for an eight year period. We print herewith the LESSONS from 1925-1927 inclusive, giving the DATE of the LESSONS, SUBJECT OF LESSONS AND PAGE IN THE CHOSEN WORD METHOD.

TEMPERANCE LESSONS. For the convenience of Church workers it was thought advisable by the COMMITTEE who arranged the LESSONS to put together under one head all the TEMPERANCE LESSONS whether in the Old or New Testament. These will be found on pages 567-656 in the Old Testament of THE NEW BIBLE TEACHER.

In order to render the greatest service to SUNDAY SCHOOL WORKERS AND CHURCH PEOPLE, the INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTIVE S. S. LEAGUE publish every three years a CALENDAR showing the Date, Subject of the Lesson and the Page on which it is found. These calendars are furnished FREE for all time to come to the users of THE NEW BIBLE TEACHER. When the LESSONS in this calendar are exhausted, write the League at the address given below and receive a calendar FREE containing the Sunday School Lessons for the next three years.

INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTIVE S. S. LEAGUE  
318 WEST WASHINGTON ST.,  
CHICAGO.

# The International Sunday School Lessons

## IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES: COURSE FOR 1925

PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMITTEE

### The Life of Jesus (Harmony of the Gospels)

#### FIRST QUARTER

(Third Quarter of a Nine Months' Course)

| Date    |                                                  | Page in the New Bible<br>Teacher where subject<br>is found. |             |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Jan. 4  | Christ's Triumphal Entry (Luk. 19:29-44)         | 242-244                                                     | (New Test.) |
| Jan. 11 | The Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46)               | 275-277                                                     | "           |
| Jan. 18 | The Lord's Supper (Luk. 22:7-30)                 | 284-286                                                     | "           |
| Jan. 25 | Jesus Comforts His Disciples (Jno. 14:1-31)      | 293-295                                                     | "           |
| Feb. 1  | The Vine and the Branches (Jno. 15:1-27)         | 290-292                                                     | "           |
| Feb. 8  | Christ's Intercessory Prayer (Jno. 17:1-26)      | 296-298                                                     | "           |
| Feb. 15 | Jesus Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-42)                 | 299-301                                                     | "           |
| Feb. 22 | Good Citizenship (Temp. Les.) (Rom. 13:1-14)     | 626-628                                                     | (Old Test.) |
| Mar. 1  | Christ Before Pilate (Matt. 27:11-31)            | 311-313                                                     | (New Test.) |
| Mar. 8  | The Saviour on the Cross (Luk. 23:33-46)         | 317-320                                                     | "           |
| Mar. 15 | Our Lord's Resurrection (Jno. 20:1-18)           | 324-326                                                     | "           |
| Mar. 22 | The Forty Days and His Ascension (Luk. 24:13-53) | 345-347                                                     | "           |
| Mar. 29 | REVIEW: Closing Period of Christ's Ministry.     |                                                             |             |

### The Spread of Christianity (Studies in the Acts and the Epistles)

#### SECOND QUARTER

(First Quarter of a Nine Months' Course)

|         |                                                            |         |             |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Apr. 5  | The Blessing of Pentecost (Acts 2)                         | 351-353 | (New Test.) |
| Apr. 12 | The Cripple at the Beautiful Gate (Acts 3)                 | 357-359 | "           |
| Apr. 19 | Life in the Early Church (Acts 4:1)                        | 354-356 | "           |
| Apr. 26 | Stephen the First Martyr (Acts 6:1)                        | 372-374 | "           |
| May 3   | The Benefits of Total Abstinence (Dan. 11:1-20) (1 Cor. 9) | 635-637 | (Old Test.) |
| May 10  | Philip and the Ethiopian Treasurer (Acts 8:26-39)          | 378-380 | (New Test.) |
| May 17  | Saul Becomes a Christian (Acts 9:1-9)                      | 381-383 | "           |
| May 24  | Saul Begins His Great Career (Acts 9:20-31)                | 384-386 | "           |
| May 31  | Peter at Lydda and Joppa (Acts 9:32-43)                    | 387-389 | "           |
| June 7  | Peter's Broadening Vision (Acts 10:1)                      | 390-392 | "           |
| June 14 | The Church in Antioch (Acts 11:19-30)                      | 396-398 | "           |
| June 21 | Peter Delivered from Prison (Acts 12:1-24)                 | 399-401 | "           |
| June 28 | REVIEW: Stories Retold                                     |         |             |

#### THIRD QUARTER

(Second Quarter of a Nine Months' Course)

|          |                                                   |         |             |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| July 5   | The Beginning of Foreign Missions (Acts 12:25)    | 402-404 | (New Test.) |
| July 12  | The Gospel in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:13-52)  | 405-407 | "           |
| July 19  | The Gospel in Lystra (Acts 14:1-28)               | 408-410 | "           |
| July 26  | The Council at Jerusalem (Acts 15:1-35)           | 411-413 | "           |
| Aug. 2   | The Epistle of James (Jam. 1:19-27)               | 546-548 | "           |
| Aug. 9   | Beginning the Second Missionary Tour (Acts 15:36) | 414-416 | "           |
| Aug. 16  | Temperance Lesson (Gal. 5:13-24)                  | 638-640 | (Old Test.) |
| Aug. 23  | The Macedonian Call (Acts 16:6-15)                | 414-416 | (New Test.) |
| Aug. 30  | Paul and the Phillipean Jailer (Acts 16:16-40)    | 417-419 | "           |
| Sept. 6  | Paul Writes to the Phillippians (Phil. 1-4)       | 508-509 | "           |
| Sept. 13 | Paul in Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 17:1-12)     | 420-422 | "           |
| Sept. 20 | Paul Writes to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. 1-5)   | 519-521 | "           |
| Sept. 27 | REVIEW: Stories Retold.                           |         |             |

#### FOURTH QUARTER

(Third Quarter of a Nine Months' Course)

|         |                                                                                  |         |             |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Oct. 4  | Paul in Athens (Acts 17:16-34)                                                   | 423-425 | (New Test.) |
| Oct. 11 | Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:1-17)                                                   | 426-428 | "           |
| Oct. 18 | Paul Writes to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12:1)                                     | 488-489 | "           |
| Oct. 25 | Paul in Ephesus (Acts 18:18)                                                     | 429-431 | "           |
| Nov. 1  | The Fight Against Strong Drink (World's Temperance Sunday) (Isa. 5, Eph. 6:1-20) | 597-599 | (Old Test.) |
| Nov. 8  | Paul's Farewell at Miletus (Acts 20:1-38)                                        | 435-427 | (New Test.) |
| Nov. 15 | Paul's Arrest at Jerusalem (Acts 21:17)                                          | 438-440 | "           |
| Nov. 22 | Paul Before Felix (Acts 23:1)                                                    | 450-452 | "           |
| Nov. 29 | Paul Before Agrippa (Acts 25:1)                                                  | 453-455 | "           |
| Dec. 6  | Paul's Voyage and Shipwreck (Acts 27:1-44)                                       | 456-459 | "           |
| Dec. 13 | Paul in Melita and Rome (Acts 28:1-31)                                           | 460-462 | "           |
| Dec. 20 | Paul's Summary of His Life (2 Tim. 3:10, 11)                                     | 528-533 | "           |
| Dec. 27 | REVIEW: From Athens to Rome.                                                     |         |             |



# The International Sunday School Lessons

## THE IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES: COURSE FOR 1926

PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMITTEE

### The Message of the Gospel According to John

#### FIRST QUARTER

| Date    |                                                                           | Page in the New Bible<br>Teacher where subject<br>is found |             |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Jan. 3  | The Son of God Becomes Man (Luk. 2) (Jno. 1:1-18).....                    | 16- 18                                                     | (New Test.) |
| Jan. 10 | Five Men Believe on Jesus (Luk. 3:15-17) (Jno. 1:19-51)...                | 34- 36                                                     | "           |
| Jan. 17 | Jesus and Nicodemus (Jno. 3:1-17).....                                    | 54- 56                                                     | "           |
| Jan. 24 | Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (Jno. 4:1-42).....                          | 57- 59                                                     | "           |
| Jan. 31 | Jesus Feeds Five Thousand Men (Jno. 6:1-71).....                          | 146-148                                                    | "           |
| Feb. 7  | Jesus Heals and Saves a Blind Man (Jno. 9:1-41).....                      | 179-181                                                    | "           |
| Feb. 14 | Jesus the Good Shepherd (Jno. 10:1-30).....                               | 182-184                                                    | "           |
| Feb. 21 | Jesus Raises Lazarus from the Dead (Jno. 11:1).....                       | 212-214                                                    | "           |
| Feb. 28 | Jesus Teaches Respect for Law (Temperance Lesson)<br>(Matt. 22:7-22)..... | 254-256                                                    | "           |
| Mar. 7  | Jesus Washes His Disciples Feet (Jno. 13:1-17).....                       | 281-283                                                    | "           |
| Mar. 14 | Last Words of Jesus with His Disciples (Jno. 14-17).....                  | 287-289                                                    | "           |
| Mar. 21 | Jesus Dies and Rises from the Dead (Matt. 28) (Jno. 18:1).....            | 324-326                                                    | "           |
| Mar. 28 | REVIEW: The Gospel of John.                                               |                                                            |             |

#### SECOND QUARTER

|        |                                                                   |         |             |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Apr. 4 | Jesus appears to His Disciples (Easter Lesson) (Jno. 20:24) ..... | 333-335 | (New Test.) |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|

#### Messages from Genesis

|         |                                                          |        |             |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------------|
| Apr. 11 | The Story of Creation (Gen. 1:1).....                    | 27- 29 | (Old Test.) |
| Apr. 18 | The Beginning of Sin (Gen. 3:1-24).....                  | 33- 35 | "           |
| Apr. 25 | The Story of Cain and Abel (Gen. 4:1-26).....            | 36- 38 | "           |
| May 2   | God's Covenant with Noah (Gen. 5:28) (Gen. 6:17-20)..... | 39- 41 | "           |
| May 9   | Abram and the Kings (Gen. 12, 14:1-24).....              | 48- 50 | "           |
| May 16  | Abraham and the Strangers (Gen. 18:1-8).....             | 57- 59 | "           |
| May 23  | Isaac and His Wells (Gen. 26:12-25).....                 | 66- 68 | "           |
| May 30  | Jacob at Bethel (Gen. 27, 28).....                       | 72- 74 | "           |
| June 6  | Jacob and Esau (Gen. 25:19-34).....                      | 69- 71 | "           |
| June 13 | Joseph's Fidelity (Gen. 39:1-33).....                    | 81- 83 | "           |
| June 20 | Judah's Plea (Gen. 44:18 45:1-6).....                    | 87- 89 | "           |
| June 27 | REVIEW: What We Have Learned from the Book of Genesis.   |        |             |

#### Early Leaders of Israel: From Moses to Samuel.

#### THIRD QUARTER

(First Half of a Six Months' Course)

|          |                                                             |         |             |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| July 4   | Israel Enslaved in Egypt (Exo. 1:1-14).....                 | 99-101  | (Old Test.) |
| July 11  | Childhood and Education of Moses (Exo. 2:1-10).....         | 102-104 | "           |
| July 18  | The Call of Moses (Exo. 2:11).....                          | 105-107 | "           |
| July 25  | The Passover (Exo. 11:1).....                               | 114-116 | "           |
| Aug. 1   | The Deliverance at the Red Sea (Exo. 13:17-22).....         | 117-119 | "           |
| Aug. 8   | The Giving of the Manna (Exo. 16:1-36).....                 | 120-122 | "           |
| Aug. 15  | Jethro's Wise Counsel (Exo. 16, 18:1-27).....               | 121-123 | "           |
| Aug. 22  | The Ten Commandments: Duties to God (Exo. 19:1).....        | 123-125 | "           |
| Aug. 29  | The Ten Commandments: Duties to Man (Exo. 20:12-21).....    | 123-125 | "           |
| Sept. 5  | The Tent of Meeting (Exo. 32, 33).....                      | 126-128 | "           |
| Sept. 12 | Gifts for the Tabernacle (Exo. 35:4).....                   | 129-131 | "           |
| Sept. 19 | Obedience to Law (Temperance Lesson) (Lev. 10:1-3, 26)..... | 573-575 | "           |
| Sept. 26 | REVIEW: Early Leaders of Israel.                            |         |             |

#### Early Leaders of Israel: From Moses to Samuel.

#### FOURTH QUARTER

(Second Half of a Six Months' Course)

|         |                                                                                |         |             |
|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Oct. 3  | Israel Journeying Toward Canaan (Num. 9, 10:11-36).....                        | 141-143 | (Old Test.) |
| Oct. 10 | The Reports of the Spies (Num. 13:1).....                                      | 144-146 | "           |
| Oct. 17 | Moses Honored in His Death (Deut. 32:45-52) (Deut. 34:1-8).....                | 159-161 | "           |
| Oct. 24 | Joshua, Israel's New Leader (Num. 27:18-20) (Jos. 1:1-6).....                  | 164-166 | "           |
| Oct. 31 | The Evils of Strong Drink (World's Temperance Sunday)<br>(Prov. 23:29-35)..... | 594-596 | "           |
| Nov. 7  | The Fall of Jericho (Josh. 6:12-20).....                                       | 173-175 | "           |
| Nov. 14 | Caleb's Faithfulness Rewarded (Josh. 14:6-15) (16:10-13).....                  | 179-181 | "           |
| Nov. 21 | Joshua Renewing the Covenant (Josh. 24:14-25).....                             | 185-187 | "           |
| Nov. 28 | Gideon and the Three Hundred (Jgs. 7:1-25).....                                | 193-195 | "           |
| Dec. 5  | Ruth and Naomi (Book of Ruth).....                                             | 199-201 | "           |
| Dec. 12 | The Boy Samuel (1 Sam. 1, 3).....                                              | 205-207 | "           |
| Dec. 19 | Samuel, the Just Judge (1 Sam. 7, 12).....                                     | 211-213 | "           |

OR

CHRISTMAS LESSON: The Saviour's Birth (Luk. 2:8-20). 16- 18 (New Test.)

Dec. 26 REVIEW: Moses to Samuel.



# The International Sunday School Lessons

## IMPROVED UNIFORM SERIES: COURSE FOR 1927

PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMITTEE.

### Studies in Christian Life

#### FIRST QUARTER

Page in the New Bible  
Teacher where subject  
is found.

| Date    |                                                                 |         |             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Jan. 2  | The Christian a Follower of Jesus (Mar. 1:16-20) (Phil. 2:5-11) | 510-512 | (New Test.) |
| Jan. 9  | The Standard of Christian Living (Luk. 6:27-48)                 | 102-104 | "           |
| Jan. 16 | The Christian's Use of the Bible (Deut. 6:4-9)                  | 156-158 | (Old Test.) |
|         | (2 Tim. 3:14-17)                                                | 528-530 | (New Test.) |
| Jan. 23 | Prayer in the Christian Life (Mar. 1:29-35)                     | 72-74   | "           |
| Jan. 30 | The Christian Overcoming Temptation (Luk. 4:1-13)               |         | "           |
|         | (Rom. 8:31-39)                                                  | 474-476 | "           |
| Feb. 6  | The Practice of Christian Stewardship (Matt. 25:1-30)           | 272-274 | "           |
| Feb. 13 | Making Our Homes Christian (Eph. 5:25) (Jno. 4:7-10)            | 561-563 | "           |
| Feb. 20 | Serving In and Through the Church (Matt. 5:13-16)               |         | "           |
|         | (1 Cor. 12:4-27)                                                | 488-489 | "           |
| Feb. 27 | Making the Community Christian (Temp. Les.) (Gal. 5:13-25)      | 638-640 | (Old Test.) |
| Mar. 6  | Sharing the good news (Acts 8:4-8)                              | 375-377 | (New Test.) |
| Mar. 13 | Making the World Christian (Matt. 28:16-20)                     | 342-344 | "           |
| Mar. 20 | The Christian's Hope (Jno. 14:1-3)                              | 287-289 | "           |
| Mar. 27 | REVIEW: Studies in the Christian Life.                          |         |             |

### The Life and Letters of Peter

#### SECOND QUARTER

|         |                                                           |         |             |
|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Apr. 3  | Peter Becomes a Disciple of Jesus (Mar. 1:14-34)          | 72-74   | (New Test.) |
| Apr. 10 | Peter's Lesson in Trust (Matt. 14:22-33)                  | 149-151 | "           |
| Apr. 17 | Peter's Great Confession (Matt. 16:13-24)                 | 161-163 | "           |
|         | OR                                                        |         |             |
|         | The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Easter Lesson)        |         |             |
|         | (Matt. 28:1-10)                                           | 324-326 | "           |
| Apr. 24 | Peter at the Transfiguration (Matt. 17:1-7) (Mar. 9:2-10) | 167-169 | "           |
| May 1   | Peter's Denial and Repentance (Mar. 14:53, 54)            | 308-310 | "           |
| May 8   | Peter and the Risen Lord (Matt. 28:3-8) (Jno. 20:1-10)    | 324-326 | "           |
| May 15  | Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2)                               | 351-353 | "           |
| May 22  | Peter Heals the Lame Man (Acts 3:1)                       | 357-359 | "           |
| May 29  | Peter Undaunted by Persecution (Acts 5:17-42)             | 366-368 | "           |
| June 5  | Peter Preaching to Gentiles (Acts 10, 11)                 | 392-398 | "           |
| June 12 | Peter Delivered from Prison (Acts 12:1-17)                | 399-401 | "           |
| June 19 | Peter Teaches Good Citizenship (Temperance Lesson)        |         |             |
|         | (1 Pet. 2:11-17, 4:3-9)                                   | 647-649 | (Old Test.) |
| June 26 | REVIEW: Life and Letters of Peter.                        |         |             |

### Early Kings and Prophets of Israel: From Samuel to Isaiah.

#### THIRD QUARTER

(First Half of a Six Months' Course)

|          |                                                          |         |             |
|----------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| July 3   | Saul Chosen King (1 Sam. 9 & 11)                         | 217-219 | (Old Test.) |
| July 10  | Samuel's Farewell (1 Sam. 12)                            | 220-222 | "           |
| July 17  | Samuel Anoints David (1 Sam. 16:1-13)                    | 228-230 | "           |
| July 24  | David and Goliath (1 Sam. 17)                            | 231-233 | "           |
| July 31  | David and Jonathan (1 Sam. 18:1-4) (1 Sam. 20:39-41)     | 237-239 | "           |
| Aug. 7   | David Spares Saul (1 Sam. 26) (1 Sam. 24:8-11)           | 240-242 | "           |
| Aug. 14  | David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem (2 Sam. 2:1-4) (6:2-4) | 252-254 | "           |
| Aug. 21  | God's Promise to David (1 Chr. 17) (2 Sam. 7:8-13)       | 255-257 | "           |
| Aug. 28  | Nathan Leads David to Repentance (2 Sam. 11:1, 12:1-15)  |         | "           |
| Sept. 4  | Solomon's Wise Choice (1 Ki. 3:4-15)                     | 270-272 | "           |
| Sept. 11 | Solomon Dedicates the Temple (1 Ki. 8)                   | 276-278 | "           |
| Sept. 18 | The Kingdom Divided (1 Ki. 12:1-24)                      | 285-287 | "           |
| Sept. 25 | REVIEW: The Early Kings of Israel.                       |         |             |

### Early Kings and Prophets of Israel: From Samuel to Isaiah.

#### FOURTH QUARTER

(Second Half of Six Months' Course)

|         |                                                                  |         |             |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------|
| Oct. 2  | Elijah On Mount Carmel (1 Ki. 18)                                | 303-305 | (Old Test.) |
| Oct. 9  | Elijah Hears God's Voice (1 Ki. 19)                              | 306-308 | "           |
| Oct. 16 | Elijah in Naboth's Vineyard (1 Ki. 21)                           | 309-311 | "           |
| Oct. 23 | The Call of the Prophet (1 Ki. 19:19, 20)                        | 306-308 | "           |
| Oct. 30 | Amos Denounces Sin (Amos 2:4, 6:1-4) (World's Temperance Sunday) | 611-613 | "           |
| Nov. 6  | Amos Pleads for Justice (Amos 5, 7)                              | 548-550 | "           |
| Nov. 13 | Hosea Preaches God's Love (Hos. 6, 11, 14)                       | 542-544 | "           |
| Nov. 20 | Micah Champions the Oppressed (Mic. 2-6)                         | 557-559 | "           |
| Nov. 27 | Isaiah Teaches True Worship (Isa. 1:1-20)                        | 488-490 | "           |
| Dec. 4  | Isaiah Teaches Right Living (Isa. 3:1, 55:1-7)                   | 506-508 | "           |
| Dec. 11 | Isaiah Counsels Rulers (Isa. 7:3-8, 31, 36 and 37)               | 491-493 | "           |
| Dec. 18 | REVIEW: The Early Prophets of Israel.                            |         |             |
| Dec. 25 | Christmas Lesson (Luk. 2:1-20)                                   | 16-18   | (New Test.) |





